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Orleans County Historical Association

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1892 - 1978

George Keople, Active Civic Leader Dead

George Herbert Keople, 85, of Clarendon, died Tuesday in Lakeside Memorial Hospital, following several months illness.

Mr. Keople was born in Cuba, N.Y., and had been a resident of Clarendon area since 1912.

He was self employed as the owner of the Clarendon Brand Cheese Factory, Clarendon.

He was a former Clarendon Town Clerk, Justice of the Peace and a Clarendon Town Supervisor.

He was active in county politics and community affairs, including the Boy Scouts and Friends of the Holley Library.

He was known as the "Father" of the Clarendon Town Park, and was responsible in 1916 for organizing the effort to bring electricity into the Town of Clarendon.

A charter member of the Rotary Club of Holley, he served as a past president of that organization, and was a recent recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow Award. He had 43 years of perfect attendance with Rotary.

He was a 50 year member and past master of Murray Lodge No. 386 F&AM, a member of the Clarendon Grange No. 1083, a member of the Clarendon Fire Department, the Disciples United Methodist Church, and the Holley Rod and Gun Club.

He also served as a trustee of the Holley Cemetery Association, was a life member of the Trojan Club of the Farmers and Traders Life Insurance Co. of Syracuse, and an honorary member of the Orleans County Judges Association.

Friends may call Thursday (2-5 and 7-9) at the Merrill-Grinnell Funeral Home, 39 Geddes St., Holley, where funeral service will be held Friday at 2 p.m. Interment will be in Hillside Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Clarendon Fire Department or the Disciples United Methodist Church.

11-15-1978

George H. Keople

In the death of George H. Keople of Clarendon Eastern Orleans and its environs will be deprived of the services and devotion of one of its most illustrious citizens.

There was not an institution of service to mankind represented in the area of which he was not a part and once the association was established he remained active as long as his health would permit.

A striking example was his association with the Rotary Club of Holley. He was not only a charter member of the club, but during his 43 years of membership he had not been recorded as having missed attendance at one weekly meeting. Rotary claims as one of its basic influences regular attendance and surely the fact that he had been at a Rotary meeting for some 2,256 weeks without a skip certainly qualified him for the Paul Harris Award even without the fact that he occupied leadership in every post in his local club.

He has served his party as a Republican ably over half a century and while he held every elective office in his township, his greatest contribution was his service as justice of the peace during which time approximately 3,500 persons appeared in his local court.

Upon his retirement he proudly pointed to the fact that in no instance did he sentence a youth to confinement to a penal institution.

George Keople will be missed. But the results of his lifetime will remain in the local archives as long as written history exists.

J-R Medina
a.H. Nov. 17, 1978

Orleans County Oral History Project

This project is being conducted by the Orleans County Historical Association. Its purpose is to collect information about the development of Orleans County by means of tape-recorded conversations with people whose experiences reflect the County's development. These tapes will be located in the Orleans County Historian's Office where they may be used as an educational resource and for purposes of publication.

George H Keople
Signed
1-24 1978
Date

Understood and agreed to:

John B Munger
Interviewer
1/24/78
Date

K George H. Keople

M John B. Munger

M Today January 12, 1978 we're talking to Mr. Herb Keople, on top of the hill, in Clarendon.

M First Herb, when and where were you born ?

K I was born in Cuba, New York on November the 17th, 1892.

M And from Cuba, you went to school there ?

K I went to the Cuba school and then I got involved in a milk plant and there was something about it that appealed to me.

M Where was this milk plant ?

K The milk plant was in Belmont. And at that time they was just handing fluid milk but that only was for a few months and then I went back to Cuba, ^{N.Y.} and I got a job in the Cheese Cold Storage and I worked with the inspector, who inspected the cheese as it was brought in from the ~~different~~ different factories, probably over a ~~radius~~ radius of 15 miles, ~~and~~ He was an old expert at cheese making and everytime that he would plug a cheese, he would break off a little sample and sometimes he would give it to me. ~~and~~ In the meantime, he would say, "Well this one has got too much cook or this hasn't enough cook, this one has got too much acid or not enough". ~~and~~ The experience that I was getting at that time, I didn't realize that within the next year I'd be making cheese myself, independently, and that information would be very valuable to me.

M A plug in a cheese is taking a sample out of it ?

K Taking the sample out of the cheese, the smelling of it, tasting of it, or putting it ~~through~~ through your fingers.

M What kind of cheeses would these be ?

K That would be what we call a Cheddar Cheese and they would weigh around, actually about 35 pounds each; round Cheddar Cheese.

M In a big wheel.

K A big wheel. Yep.

M What made you decide to go into business yourself ?

K, Well, I had an opportunity to take a job in this private cheese factory. A man down in Farmersville Station owned around, somewhere around 90 head of cattle.

M Farmersville Station is where ?

K Down in Cattaraugus County, south of Rushford.^{N.Y.} And he had been closed out of the factory for being late so many times that he built a cheese factory and hired a cheese maker to operate it. And I got the job. And I was there, of course, through the summer, through - - - while they had the heavy milk supply and made this cheese there just outside of Farmersville Station. And that was my first experience in making cheese. And then I decided that the best thing for me to do would be get out of town to make cheese. So I advertised, 'Position Wanted By Cheese Maker'.

M What would you advertise in ?

K Elmira Telegram. I advertised in the Elmira paper. And I got a letter from the Holley Cheese Company, Holley, New York and they were looking for a cheese maker. Well at that time my older brother lived in Rochester, who was connected with the schools, and I thought, "well now that's not far from Rochester, it's on the Trolley Line, I'll go to Holley;" which I did. And I made cheese there for 3 years. And one year we made ice cream, different kinds of ice cream.

M Do you remember any of the names of the ~~people~~ people in the cheese factory in Holley ?

K The factory in Holley was owned by the Holley Cheese Company and it was composed of Fred W. Church and Clayton Bartlett. They were the owners of the business.

M And where was that located ?

K And it was located right down next to the old Trolley Station, down by the Canal.

M Trolley Station by the Canal.

K And I was there 3 years with them and at the same time I became acquainted with my wife, who is now deceased, and her brothers suggested that he thought a cheese factory in Clarendon would pay off because there was none here, and hadn't been for a good many years. So we came up here and built the cheese factory. I drove with my brother-in-law, who was ~~William H. Inman~~ William H. Inman that lived just across the street, to the radius farmers who had a few cows to see what the ~~possibilities~~ possibilities were of getting sufficient milk. And we ~~found~~ found that within a - - well the ~~farrest~~ farthest would be about West Barre. That by running a milk route, these farmers that got some cows, would gladly send their milk to the cheese factory where they'd get pay for it. And my brother-in-law, who was at that time a very wealthy man, went with me and introduced me and the fact that most everybody around this neighborhood knew Mr. Inman, felt that if he was my brother-in-law they wouldn't have to worry so much about their ~~cheese~~ checks. With a result that we opened the cheese factory in May on 1914.

M Now where was this building located ?

K The cheese factory - - - the building is still standing out here now but it's occupied by Gordon Ferguson who has a roofing business. And in 1943 we lost our milk supply, they could get more money for their milk, fluid milk, in Rochester, than we could pay for it out of cheese, because at that time cheese was selling wholesale for about 9¢ a pound. The result was that we closed down thinking maybe the next year we'd open; but actually the next year never came. So we decided we probably were all through making cheese and we closed the factory and sold the equipment. And that terminated our cheese industry here in town. We were making at that time in the flush of the season which would usually be the last of May and June, about 1000 pounds of cheese a day. Now it takes 10 pounds of milk for 1 pound of cheese on an average. Which meant

10,000 pounds of milk for 1000 pounds of cheese and that was our daily output through the summer months. And then there came a time in which as I say they'd get more money for fluid milk and the route that I had depended on for bringing milk in decided he could get more for drawing his milk into Rochester than he could from me with a result that we lost our milk supply. So we kept the cheese maker down for awhile till he could find a job and we made cheese at a lose because we wasn't getting enough money out of the cheese we were making to even pay a cheese maker. And that year we closed it up. Thought maybe the next year we might start in again but next year never came.

M Let's go back. How do you make cheese ?

K Well you make cheese by - - - you have to use a starter. Now a starter consists of - - - you buy like a quart of milk that's been sterilized and the little ~~pk~~ pellets put into it to sour it. Sour it so far as making cheese is concerned, but you wouldn't hardly notice it by taste. We would put about 80, or about 10 gallons rather, of starter into a vat which was holding probably 5000 pounds of milk to hasten the bacteria, the working of the bacteria in the milk. And that was about it. The making it. Now we stored that cheese on shelves, which each shelf would hold about 15 of these flat 35 pound cheese and we had to turn them every day. In the summer time we could get them off as a mild cheese to local stores in approximately 10 days. Those that we didn't have sale for we would paraffin 'em, box 'em up in wooden boxes and put them in Brockport Cold Storage, where we would keep them until the time came in the season when we were short of cheese. But our demand for cheese got so great that we couldn't supply by our own make so we hired cheese made. Some of was made in Cuba, New York, some of it was made in Nile, a little town near Friendship, New York by other cheese

makers who made and used our process. Because we made soft, home-trade cheese and it was made that way because we didn't cook it quite so much and then we washed the curd in water. After we washed the curd in water and drained the water off, then we would salt the curd and put it in the hoops, then in the press; then after you got it in the press you would put the pressure on which is done by cranking it, a gimmick on there, and press those hoops so that they would quit draining whey. ~~and~~ After they had set there for 10 or 15 minutes we'd go right back and un-hoop them, taking off the cover of the filler and put on a cap cloth, pulling in the bandage, put the cover back on and pressing them over-night. The next morning we'd take all those cheese out and put them on shelves. ~~and~~ Each shelf would contain about 15 cheese; that's 35 pound cheese. And in the summertime, as I say, anywheres from a week to 2 weeks they would be ready for market.

M Well that's real interesting the cheese business. You've had some other adventures on the road when you first started picking up that ~~cheese~~ MILK.

K Picking up the milk ?

M Picking up the milk. Any particular adventures on that ?

K Not in particular. I think that my biggest asset in picking up this milk, because I of course was a stranger here although my wife's people had lived in the Town of Clarendon, was the fact that my brother-in-law was very wealthy. People knew because he was driving me around to ~~see~~ see the farmers about purchasing their milk that chances are probably the pay would be O-K.

M How did you get through in bad weather and what were the roads like ?

K Well in bad weather we run the cheese factory the year around which had never been done before. It was always closed up along about November and wait till the First of April to open again. But the farmers as they got more and more cows wanted an outlet for their winter milk as well

as the summer milk so the result was that we made cheese the year around. In the winter time we would only make maybe every other day or every third day. And we had a milk truck that we went out and picked up this milk even up into West Barre and I think we had around, at that time, about 60 farmers that was ~~brining~~ bringing milk together with those that shipped it, you know the big truck that was supplying us with milk.

M When you first started was there any log roads or corduroy roads ?

K Yes there were some bad roads. There's a road that goes up - - - I forget what they call it - - - what they call that road - - - it's a short cut from the roads down through Manning up onto the Barre Road, there Albion road - - - I don't remember what they do call that road.

M That'd be the Hindsburg Road ~~ix~~ now ?

K It'd be from the Hindsburg Road west. To the Barre Road. There was a road that sometimes in the winter time because of it's impassability that we would have to, they would bring their milk down to where we could load it onto the truck until the roads got repaired enough so we could get through.

M Well now another question, if you think of something more on the cheese we'll come back to it - - - can you tell me anything about the Clarendon Hotel ?

K The Clarendon Hotel was owned and operated at the time we, about the time we moved here, by a fellow by the name of Charlie Hinds. And they had license here at that time but there was no license in Holley. And the Hotel closed up back in, darned if I can remember what year it was, and Charlie went to down to Avon, N.Y.

M You said had license; that's license to sell alcoholic beverages ?

K Yeah, yeah. And there used to be a little place down here on the corner where a fellow could sell beer, in cans but not to drink on the premises.

-- Well that takes us maybe into Prohibition.

K Yep.

M And speak-easies and other such things.

K They had Prohibition was on in those days but this town voted Wet, up here. Holley was Dry. So from Holley they had to come up to Clarendon to get their booze.

M And the Hotel, that was ~~xxx~~ a regular hotel with rooms by the week and the night and so forth ?

K They had both rooms by the week and it was - - well maybe on a Saturday afternoon Saturday night you would pretter-near have to elbow ~~xxxxxx~~ your way to get through to get to the Bar.

M Maybe there'll be some more stories about that later. How about awhile back when they tried to have a Power Company here in Clarendon ?

K Well back in 1919 Herb Allis who used to run a grocery store down here, the old Stone Store, that store had been here for years and years, it was orginally owned by the Copelands. Copelands was ~~ix~~ quite a ~~xxxxx~~ prominent name around Clarendon. One of the Copelands was down in Auburn, a ~~chaplin~~ chaplain, another one lived up here in Manning.

M That's the Auburn State Prison ?

K Right. And the other one lived here in town. And the - - I lost my chain of thought now.

M Well we're talking about the Power Company.

K So Herb Allis and myself, we decided that we'd go up to Medina at that time and see Charlie Swett because the Power Company was at that time owned by A.L. Swett and Company and Charlie was the main guy. And he came down and told us that we'd have to have at least 15 customers that would use electricity in their business places or houses and also that we would have to have some Street Lights. Well next thing - - - how do we pay for the street lights ? Well he says "There's 2 ways, one you can make a small district or as it has been done in some towns, put the whole town on." So in order to get the whole town as a lighting district however the lights would be within the village

we had to go out and get a petition signed by 51% of the farmers in order to get electricity into Clarendon. So on December 1919 we had a Christmas Tree down here and Archie Brown was the head electrician for the Power Company here and he also got a string of lights from Allie Lawrence in Holley and we lit the Christmas Tree. We got the organ out from the school on a bob-sleigh. And Bill McAllister was Supervisor and they played the organ, sang Christmas songs and Bill McAllister gave a talk. That was our first lights in Clarendon.

M Well where was the power supply for this ?

K Niagara-Mohawk had poles going through here and they simply hooked on to Niagara-Mohawk.

M Oh I see, it wasn't your own power company.

K We never had a power company.

M Never had one, if you had that would have been down here where the Grange built the Village Park.

Well that's hard to say John, because there never had been any talk of any power company in Clarendon. We just thought we were lucky if we got the power company to come in here with lights.

M Oh I see. I got that wrong I always thought that there was a project to build a dam here and have power.

K Nope, nope.

M All right now you mentioned awhile back the Trolley. You'd have to go to Holley to catch the Trolley, I guess they ran every hour or so didn't they ?

K They ran about every hour. That was the B. L. & R., Buffalo, Lockport and Rochester Trolley. And the old Station was down near the Lift Bridge or the Canal, down East Avenue., In Holley.

M It took about an hour to get to Rochester.

- M Well Herb the last time we were talking on the other tape, you were telling about the location of the Trolley Terminal in Holley, down by the Canal, and we'd gotten to the where I was asking you about the location in Rochester.
- K Of the Canal ?
- M Of the Trolley Terminal.
- K Oh, the old Rochester, Buffalo, and Syracuse.
- M Yeah.
- K Well I was trying to think where that - - a - over-all, shall we say, a - - stopping was, I think up on Clinton. (*Street*).
- M Would it have gone in to the Central Station, there ?
- K No, I don't think so, John. I was trying to figure that out. See we lived in Rochester for the winter of 1914. The year that we were married. And I worked at the Brighton Place Dairy, making butter and cottage cheese, general work up there. Seven days a week.
- M Well maybe we can go into that a little bit. That's when the milkman loaded up his wagon at , what 3 o'clock in the morning ?
- K That's right.
- M And delivered the milk from the wagon to all the houses.
- K Well you had a truck that did that and of course these were all horse - drawn, and then you had the route that took care of the hotels and the larger consumers of milk.
- M I can remember those.
- K Yeah, I boarded there up at, part of the time, up at the hotel and then I finally went into a boarding home. Right there in Brighton.
- M By the Brighton Dairy.
- K Yep. And I worked there until the First of April and then we, or I rather, decided to just to get out into the country where I could hear the birds sing. I never was sorry that I made that change. Although it

was interesting work making butter and cottage cheese, but there was something about it that you still felt a little bit insecure. The people were nice people. Cogswell was quite an original man and he usually come out with the statement "Things you could do if you wanted to bad enough" all you had to do, other words work - - along that line.

M Going back to cheese making for a minute. What did you do with the whey, after you packed the cheeses ?

K The whey we elevated that into a storage tank up and then it came down ~~XHIA~~ and went through the separator. The separator took the cream out of the whey, what there was left, which was a very small amount. But that whey cream was bought by the Pavilion Creamery in Rochester and made right into butter.

M Made into butter.

K Right into butter. And he used to run it on Maple Street. I can think of one time, John, way back years ago when they was rationing butter, they'd have a line standing out there, maybe 50 people, waiting to get a quarter of a pound of butter.

M That would be during World War I ?

K Yep. And of course he had bought cream here and as I went up to get some, well I suppose, what they was to let me have, butter, he says "Herb how much do you want ?" And I says "Let your conscience be your guide". Well I could have had all the butter I wanted but I didn't want that much.

M That brings us to another subject. World War I and World War II. Do you remember any stories about "Black-Marketing" ?

K Yes. I know I sold cheese to a very prominent groceryman down on Arnett Boulevard at the time and he kept those cheese, you might say, under the counter. But good customers, his customers, come in and say "Al, got a little cheese ?" - - "Sure have" - - and he'd cut 'em off a ^{good} slice of cheese, you know - - a pound, two pounds, three pounds.

whatever. And - a - we sold cheese wholesale back in that time to ~~the~~ Armour and Company as low as 9¢ a pound. Now that'd bring you milk worth about 70¢ a hundred.

M That was World War II ?

K Yep. World War I, let's see, '17 that was the year my oldest daughter was born, just so happens she was born when they was ringing the bell over here that the thing was over with.

M The Armistice. November 11th.

K Yep.

M On the other tape you mentioned Copeland's Store. Now I remember Bill Copeland. Now who ran the store ?

K A man by the name of Henry Copeland. I think it was George H. Copeland. Ran the old stone store down here. He also had a horse and wagon on the road in which he carried certain supplies with him that he would sell to the people as he would drive along.

M A regular huckster.

K That is right, yeah.

M Henry and Bill, were they descendants of the Copeland who wrote "Copeland's Clarendon" ?

K Yes, they were. Just how I don't know as I can tell you. Now Bill Copeland was the son of, I think, Herbert. And there was Herbert - - ah - - they were very strong Democrats. And - a - Bill, sad as it may seem, done away with himself.

M I remember that.

K Yep.

M I remember hearing some stories about Bill Copeland and he was quite a personage in the Town of Clarendon. Can you tell me some stories for the record about Bill Copeland ?

K Well I don't know of anything, John, that's outstanding in that. I do remember this in particular though, that when I first to Supervisor, he came here to ask certain questions relative to my work as Supervisor. And I remember back in those days we had a, and of course the cheese factory out here at that time, and upstairs, half of that was divided off so that the rationing board and also the election inspectors would meet in the factory, Way back in 1913 - 14, '14 I think it was.

M Well the story I had in mind was that he'd gotten his education through a correspondence course.

K Copeland ?

M Yeah. And then went to South America and worked in the mines. That's where he lost his hand ?

K That I don't know.

M And then he came back here with a settlement and he had lots of money then; that's when he started buying farms. They tell me that he - -

K Bill.

M Bill Copeland.

K Yes, he invested down in, I think South America into, I don't recall what kind of mines they were.

M Well he worked in them too, didn't he ?

K He worked in them. And he invested in them. And that's where Bill really made his money.

M And then when he came back here he prided himself in having the best Surry and the best team in the town. That's the story I did hear at one time.

K No, I never heard of that. I know Bill was very much interested in town politics, cause he would come here at different times and see what my reaction was relative to certain issues that were coming up on the Town Board.

M Well let's go back to being Supervisor. When did you start being Supervisor and what important things happened while you were Supervisor ?
K Well, let's see, 1938 I think it was when I went in as Supervisor. And I was Supervisor until 1946, I believe. I started in as Town Clerk. I was Town Clerk for 12 years. And then I went in for Supervisor and after I went out as Supervisor, I'd finished my 8 years, I went back on the Board as Justice of the Peace. And I was on there for 21 years.

M Did you handle any big decisions as Justice of the Peace ?

K I was Justice of the Peace, no the most of those were little things like some kids maybe they stole some gas out of a truck and they were brought in here, actually it was "red-handed" because they had the containers that the kids got this gas in and their parents came with them; and well it was my feelings as J.P. that every kid can make a mistake. The only thing was that they didn't keep doing it. And I've had many young people in here in which I have talked to and with and found that I did more good that way than some other way. Right now I'm thinking of a - - back one night when I had this party in here and I married them and as we sat there at the desk and I'm making out her marriage certificate, his marriage certificate, or his and hers, - - a - - he said to me, he says, "Well Judge, what's the damages ?" and I says, "There's no fixed price" or "whatever". Why these words ~~XXXXXXXX~~ ever came out, I don't know, but I said to him, "What do you think your wife is worth ?" So he layed down a twenty dollar bill and another twenty dollar bill and a ten. \$50.00. I says "no I don't want that kind of money, you want to leave a \$5.00 or something like that that's O-K." But everytime I would see him in Holley. He was actually from New York. And he and his family were doing quite a bit of business back and forth between New York and Holley. And I always think of that time, "whatever you think she's ~~XXXXXXXX~~ worth?" when he layed down that money. And then, when I saw him in Holley, it was

the first time after that, he says, "Hello you damned old Jew."

They were quite involved, especially in cabbage, cause I know that he had quite a bunch of cabbage on hand and there came a freeze and I think that there was also a fire and at that time what he did, what he wanted to do, rather, was to settle the ^{loss} ~~leese~~ according to what the paper said. Well he was also insured with a company in Batavia, so we went together down there and they says "no, what you've got to do is take that cabbage at its fair value where it is and settle on it accordingly." Which we did. It worked out quite all right.

M You mentioned the freeze. You were here during the Big Freeze in the early '30 s ?

K '34, let's see was the year it froze the apples. The apple trees.

M Can you describe that a little for us ?

K Well except that the thermometer hovered way below zero there for several days. It just ~~never~~ kept it up and up, it was a continuation of that cold weather. It ruined some orchards.

M Well I've heard tell that the people could sit in their farm-houses and hear the trees exploding, just like rifle shots.

K Yep. That was a Cold, one of the coldest winters that well, of course we ^{HAVE} ~~could~~ live here since 1914, that was the coldest winter that we've ever seen.

M Well that's the year that Lake Ontario froze over.

K Yep, I believe so, yeah.

M You, I think, were involved with establishing the Rotary Club in Holley ?

K No. I wasn't responsible for establishing it - - I don't think I was.

M Didn't I see something in the paper from Rotary with you not too long ago ?

K You could have seen something in there, yes, it was the oldest member with consecutive meetings; 41 years without a miss of meetings.

M That is quite a record.

K 52 meetings a year. And I've made up in Medina and Rochester. I've made up in Albany. I've made up in Batavia, Elba, Oakfield, you name it, I guess I've been there.

M Now let's go to another subject. Can you locate some of the Flour and Grist Mills that were in the area? When you first came here.

K In Holley there was Coppings Grist Mill and here in Clarendon was a Grist Mill that did grinding and that was run by Ward Housel. Here in town. At that time.

M Well the Housels used to live up on the Manning Road.

K Yes, now there were several Housels. There was Charlie Housel who was President of the Bergen Bank. Frank Housel who was President of the Lyndonville Bank. Bill Housel was, at one time, President of the State Exchange Bank in Holley. Lyndonville, Holley, and Bergen.

M Well the Housels still own the bank in Lyndonville, I believe.

✓ I don't know.

M I think so. You've been also involved in the Grange.

K Well yes. I was Master and Overseer with ~~the~~, with Charlie Hamil and a about every year or two I'd go in for Master and he'd take Overseer and the next year we'd change it around again. Only to keep the Grange a-going.

M Well back in the early days didn't the Grange buy cooperatively for the farmers in the area?

K Our Grange never did.

M This Grange never did. Going back to the Grist Mills again, did you ever play the game, I think they called it "Snatching The Bag"? Where you put the bag of grain on your instep and then snatched it in one motion to your shoulder?

Nope. No.

M How about Blacksmiths Shops ?

K There used to be a Blacksmith shop here in town for years and years. And it was run, primarily at the time, by a fellow name of Ralph Bowen.

M Now where was that located ?

K That was located right down in the building next to the Park, On the west side of the road, Of the 237.

M That's where the Feed Store is now ? Or right near there ?

K Yeah. That Park, by the way, was a piece of land that I think it had been held up for taxes and it was bought by a - - I was trying to think who bought that - - - ah - - a fellow in Rochester, used to be on the Board of Education, - - a - - bought that, and he in turn gave it or turned it over to the Holley, some club or something in Holley. And it's being located in Clarendon, Holley didn't particularly want it, so they ~~gave~~^{deeded} it to Morris Brackett. Morris was a, he had retired as a, I think, Deputy Commissioner from Albany.

Commissioner of what ?

K Of a - - well let's see - - - their work was out, like "Lank" O'Brien used to be. Lank was out of Medina. Catching poachers or people violating the - -

M Game Warden.

K Game Warden, yeah. "Lank" O'Brien was around at that time. In fact, believe it or ~~not~~^{not}, I got a card from "Lank," I think it was this last year. He was a heavy man, 250 pounds, I guess.

M That's a big man.

K And I can remember he's being up to Medina one time on, what was it, on rollar skates, I guess. Some LIGHT fellow picked him up and whirled him and whirled him around.

M Milo Pratt was the - -

K He was the cop.

He was quite a machinist as I remember.

K Yes. Milo run a garage up here at Manning in which he did a lot of repair

work. Milo was Town Constable. Cause I remember that we had a Republican case come up here in town where the fellow never got his pay for his, I think it was hay-binder, not hay-binder but grain-binder. And it had him in court here. And he was, someone from Brockport was representing him and Heath or Gillette, I believe, was for the fellow that had the, that went and got the corn-binder. What he did, he took Milo Pratt along with him and he thought maybe he have to shoot the lock off the door.

end of TAPE

- K People who hadn't done something they should, or did something that they shouldn't have done, and we sat up there in the, I remember, in the stand and there was 'Lon' Walters and there was one or two others.
- M This was at the Clarendon Sesquicentennial ?
- K I believe it was. Yes. And these fellows were arrested and brought in to this - - what kind of a court did they call that - -
- M Kangaroo Court.
- K Kangaroo Court. Yep. And we had to ~~pronounce~~ pronounce judgement on them.
- M That was a lot of fun.
- K It was. ~~XXXX~~ Strictly all fun.
- M Getting back to some of these other questions now. On the Buffalo, Lockport, and Rochester. Did anybody from Clarendon ever take the Excursions to different places ?
- K Not that I ever knew of..
- M In the city, of course, they had Sunday outings where they had a picnic lunch and all that.
- K No, I don't ever remember anything like that.
- M Well you've seen radio and television born, what do you think of them ?
- K Well I think they is two great things that has certainly brought a lot of interest into many, many homes. I can think of the first time that we had a radio in Clarendon was down here at Herb Allis. I well remember that because I got up on his barn roof to fasten the aerial. And I remember it being a cold day, and at that time I also remember that I had Hemorrhoids. And for about 2 or 3 days afterwards all I did was lay in bed with my feet up.
- M Would that have been a ~~XXXX~~ Crystal Set, Herb ?
- K Yeah.
- M And do you remember about when that might have been ?

K '14 or '15. Somewheres in there. I was trying to think, we came here in 1915. It was while we were living here. It must have been around 1915 or '16.

M And now you change from then when you thought you were doing well to get something like Pittsburgh on the Crystal Set, and now you have a Monitor here that tells you what's going on 24 hours a day all over.

K That's right.

M That's quite a change.

K Yep.

M ~~XXXX~~ Were you involved with the formation of the ~~XXXXXX~~ Clarendon Fire Company ?

K No. No, I remember - - a - I'm an Honorary Member, of it. In fact the other night they went down to Brockport to the Country Club and they took me along as a member. To ~~xxx~~ swear in the ~~candidates~~ candidates. Some 12 or 14, I swore them in.

- I guess you haven't got to worry about fires in Clarendon now ? Do you remember any great fires, years ago in Clarendon ?

K Ah - - - no I don't think that I do. Anyone that's outstanding, any place that was outstanding along that line. Of course we had several house fires. Had one up here at Manning one time, but other than that I don't think of any, John.

M The ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Universalist Church over here. Now when we came here 20 years ago there wasn't too much of a membership. Was it ever really an active church in your time here ?

K Yes, it was, way back in 1914 or '15. Elder Robinson from Albion was the Preacher over here. There was some people from ~~XXXXXX~~ Byron and ~~many~~ many Universalists that lived here in Clarendon. Bill Stockton, the Smiths, Saliburys and others that I don't think of.

m Another thing that's changed is schooling. We've gone from the District

School, the one room school-house, to Central Schools. Do you have any comments on that ?

Well, of course when we first moved here, they only had them in the Primary Grades. I believe as soon as they got into High School they went to Holley and then there was ² a couple of us that used to change off in taking the children to Holley and going to getting them. There was Herb Allis and his wife, and my wife and I.

M That was by car then ?

K By car.

M No school buses ?

K No School Bus. I was on the School Board the time we bought a School Bus.

M Well is there any other comments in general ~~you~~ you'd like to have us know about ? General changes, farming or anything like that ?

V I was thinking about the time we had our Sesquicentennial, John. 1960 that was, wasn't it.

M I think that was the year. I remember that.

K Nobody in - - - well we got a bunch together here at the house and nobody would take the ~~Presidency~~ ^{Presidency} of the Sesquicentennial Society. And I felt it should be somebody who maybe was born here, in the town, because actually I was an alien. I was born down in the Southern-teer. As it was that it was wished upon me and I took it. Vi Hamel, Mrs. Violet Hamel, (Mrs. Charles Hamel) was Secretary and then we had different ones there as officers: Tracy Smith, Syl Fess, there was quite a few more on that. And anyway we had the Sesquicentennial in 1960. Full of headaches, full of headaches; and we went in it with no money involved and I think Bill Stockham sold something for some gimic that we had for the Sesquicentennial to get a few cents together to start the thing rolling. Well it turned out to be quite a success. We had a Mid-way

up here by the Town Barn and of course we had the Kangaroo Court for the fellows that didn't shave or cut their hair. And I think our proceeds on that when we came out, that we had I believe somewheres around ~~xx~~ \$5000.00 profit that we made on it which was quite unique because that same year there was ^a company down east of Rochester and they had to come back onto the Town to the Town to bail them out 'cause they didn't make enough money to pay expenses. However we did, and boy we had everything going on up there I guess that you could have. Rides and ~~what-have-you~~ and I worked there of course every night and I handled the money. And at night when we would chalk up, we had too much money so somebody would run down and we had it fixed so the bank could take it and make a night depository. And I remember at the time I kept my daughter's dog here, a watch dog, more for to let me know if somebody was trying to get in the house cause I had came home here a couple of three nights and I had 10 or 12 Thousand Dollars in the little suitcase.

M That's a lot of money to have.

K Back in those days, yes it was. But the beauty of it was we came out within actually 5 or 6¢ of being it right on the barrel. Thanks to Mrs. Hamel over here, she was a wonder; boy she used to ball me out! But she was good, she was a good book-keeper.

M Well you had a big Pageant too.

K Yes, yeah the first night. I think Archie Charles had that, the Pageant. I know that some of the Concessions up there weren't pleased with the idea because it seemed to them that we were taking up a lot of valuable time, people just sitting around watching this Pageant, while their merry-go-rounds and things that they sold were standing idle.

M Well as I remember that night wasn't a particularly good night the weather wasn't very nice.

K No. No we, it was like the night of the - - a - I think it was on a

Friday night, was going to have Chicken Barbecue. And I believe that Doris McCormick over here, Doris Parks, Doris McCormick, I think she had charge of that and she called me up in the morning and I don't think I was even out of bed yet, and she says "Herb, you going to call it off?" I says, "No, we're going ahead with it, Rain or Shine, we gotta" and we did. And while we had ordered I think 850 halves, we sold them all but about 35 halves. . . . Which was good, very good.

M Well the Parade you had, that was a 2 hour long affair, I believe.

K Yes that was, I didn't see it. I really don't know what was in there. Oh I guess they had somebody from up north there that imitated ~~Lincoln~~ ~~xxxxxxxx~~ "Abraham Lincoln" or somebody, I don't know his name.

M That'd be ^u Howard Pratt.

K Howard Pratt was the one and I know Howard helped us out quite a bit, in getting the thing started.

M Would you have any idea at this point who might have the Script for that Pageant ?

K Yep. It could be between two fellows. I don't know, let's see, trying to think of their names.

M Well you mentioned Archie Charles as being - - -

K Well Archie had just the, for this, what do you call it up there, but a down here, Oh what-the-devils his name, used to be in electronics, I can't even think of who it was.

They never had enough of these printed so what I did when I had this printing, I had something like 5 or 6 hundred of them printed extra and they're kept in the Town Hall today so if somebody wants to look at one they can. I'm not too sure but there's one or two in the Holley Library.

M Well under entertainment, they've got Rutherford Hart, Clarence Callard, Tracy Smith, and Sylvester Fess.

K Well they were the Directors.

M They were the Directors.

K Yep.

So any of those might have the Script for that Pageant.

K Ah - - the fellow that used to be Game Warden down here.

M Chuck Robishaw.

K I think Chuck has got that, pretty sure he has.

M That would be valuable to get hold of at this point.

K Yep.

M Well is there any other big events in the county or in Clarendon you want to comment on ?

K Ah - -

M Course there was the Blizzard last year.

K Maybe you wonder how they got lights in Town. Electric lights.

M Well, you told me that.

K Did I tell you that ?

m But, on that, when did they actually go through and hook up the individual farms to a ?

K Well let's see they got - -

M The place we had up in Manning there, I think somebody told me that was wired in 1935.

K That could be. Of course there was a lot of them wired right after 1919. That was the first time we'd ever had a Christmas tree downtown with lights on it. And a fellow from Holley he was the Village Electrician in Holley, he got the string of lights and we put them on the Tree down here. Bill McAllister was Supervisor and they got the Organ out of the school up here, pulled it down in there on a sled, with the Northways; that would be Mrs. Northway and her two daughters and they played Christmas songs and sang Christmas songs.

M Now what is this school you're talking about ?

K It's right over here.

Next to the Church.

K Yeah. Fire-Hall right now. Yep.

M Well more than one school has been turned into a Fire-Hall.

K Oh yeah.

M Now, we're talking about the Park down here in Clarendon and the history involved in it.

K At the beginning of the Park this chunk of land was held by the county for taxes. And a fellow in Rochester who was on the School Board, by the name of John Tracy, bought up that for taxes. He didn't want it so he deeded it to the American Legion in Holley and it's being located in Clarendon, Holley wasn't necessarily interested in it. However Morris Brackett, who ~~was~~ had been a Game Commisisoner, with offices in Albany, whose Mother was born down here many years ago, in a little log cabin, which was situated on that Park property, bought that up to the Town Board and gave it to the Town. And all he wanted was a right-of-way to get back to his little shack back there on the hill, And of course that was granted. And then we had this property on our hands. So somebody says "What are we going to do with it ?" I was Over-seer in the Grange at that time and I got up and made a suggestion that we develop it in to a Town Park. And the motion was readily seconded, carried and Charlie Wolfe, Homer Maxon, Tracy Smith, and myself were on that Park Committee. There may have been others that I do not remember but we started right in down there and changed the water course. ~~and~~ Whoever was Supervisor at that time got the ~~county~~ county to send down their, not a Steam-Shovel but a, like a Dredge and dredged it out to influence the flow of water so that we wouldn't have the algae on top. It kept the water aflowing. And of course as time went by people began to use that Park, ~~and~~ The money we got from the prizes, I think we had some from the

Sears and Roebuck Foundation. And the money that we got from the state or county on that we built the pavilion and also built the rest-rooms down there and drilled a well. Well, that was the beginning of the Park.

M Well now tell me about Carl ~~AKLEY~~ Akeley ? You knew him of course.

K Carl ~~was born here~~ lived over on the Hinds Road and, as I say, he was a Taxidermist. But there's another fellow that fits into the picture here and his name is John Tracy. And a few people do know it maybe, John Tracy was instrumental in raising some money for the Panama Canal. John Tracy lived up here by the Robinson School House.

M The Robinson School House is where ?

K On 237, about a mile and a half South.

M Well now tie John Tracy and Carl Akeley together for me.

K Well - - a - - of course Carl was born here. Born over east, I think. John Tracy was from, I don't know, the nearest I can figure John was from Rochester. But I think that's where I first met him down there in the School Board. At that time ~~my~~ brother was on the School Board in the Municipal Building.

M Well he helped raise money for the Panama Canal.

- Munger Well Herb now let's hear more about Carl Akeley, the Taxidermist.
- Keople Well there isn't so much more to say about that, John, than what you've already got.
- M He had a museum here?
- K Humm ?
- M He had a museum here in Clarendon ?
- K No, it was in New York City.
- M In New York City ?
- K Yep. You've got it, haven't you how the Town was founded ?
- M No.
- K Well - - a man by the name of Farwell lived down, I believe, around Sandy Creek, somewheres, And his horse strayed away. ~~And~~ Back in 1818 more or less of this country was all woods, down here. In fact the Indians hadn't been gone too long. Down here, down in Kemps Hill is what they call Indian Hill.
- M That is where ?
- K Kemp. Pat Kemp, Albert Kemp's home.
- M Oh.
- K First big farm north going towards Holley. Ah - - - Farwell started out to look for his horse and it brought him here to Clarendon. And at that time the Falls must have been a lot more water going over them than what there is now. Much more. And so he took the name back in 1810 of Farwells Mills. And - - now how and why and when that was changed from Farwells Mills to the name Clarendon; it may be in that little book I gave you, I don't know.
- M It probably is. *(phone rings)*
- K It could be. And - - - I asked them what they wanted for it and I think they said Six Dollars.

- M \$6.00 and the publication in here "Copeland's Clarendon" is 1888. Right now I don't know how much a copy of this is really worth. It's worth more than what it has in it.
- K I think I did sell one copy, it seems to me, for \$80.00. Ah - - this party wasn't interested in Clarendon that had the book. In fact her home was in New York, but her husband used to live here; and of course her husband's dead. And she let me have that book. In fact I guess that's the only one I got now, I think it is, I'm not sure.
- M Going a little astray; when you were in Rochester, living in Rochester, did you ever get into Rattlesnake Pete's ?
- K Oh yes.
- M Can you tell these people about Rattlesnake Pete's ? I don't think anybody in Orleans County except you and I have heard of it.
- K It was a restaurant where they sold drinks on Front Street. Or was it Water Street ? Front Street, I guess.
- It was Front or Corinthian.
- K On Corinthian Street; that's off from Front Street.
- M Right.
- K And he had a black stuffed horse in there and I think that the weight of that horse was around 2000 or what was it - - - it was a tremendous weight; gee John I don't know what to tell you what the weight of that horse was. But of course Rattlesnake Pete had, he had many things, Now he used to go down to - - - in and around some of these southern towns and take his Rattlesnake-Catcher and the box that he put 'em in. He'd pick up these Rattlesnakes down there and bring 'em up to his museum. And he had quite a few there on Front Street in his museum. He had ~~ev~~erything in there. You may have seen one of these; but there ~~was~~ a place where it says: "Test Your Lifting" - - and they'd get the women to go - - and what it was when they pulled up on this lever a little shot of water come right up and got

them in the butt.

M Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha, etc.

M Yep ! Ah - - Rattlesnake Pete's back in those days was one of the outstanding menageries in Monroe County.

M Well I think he actually had a world-wide reputation.

K I would say so, yes, because he picked up these snakes all over. He handled a great many rattlers.

M He had a lot of other things in there too, other reptiles and - - -

K Oh yes, he did have - - I can't begin to tell you what he had in there, it was - - a - - something like that one up there down on Main Street in Buffalo, and I think they used to call that Doc LEN's Museum up there. Do you remember anything about that ?

M No.

K Well of course that was entirely different. But up there it showed, it showed a man, I think it was with syphilis. And where part of his body was gone.

M Well that's the kind of thing that Pete had too. Did you ever see that car he drove ?

K Humm ?

M Did you the car that Rattlesnake Pete drove ?

K No.

M He had a couple of, I heard about it, he had a couple of big snakes, now what they were I don't know - - a - - going from the back of the car along the fenders and down the running board and they'd met right where the hood ornament was. It was one of these big open touring cars and he had a pair of real fancy pedigreed dogs that used to sit in the back seat. They tell me he used to drive around town, everybody knew when Rattlesnake Pete was coming. You know those big touring cars with the double wind shields and all that?

- K I can't tell you. I've been in his place many times. You could go in there and buy a glass of beer and down at the other end was all kinds of food - - baloney, cheese, things like that. In fact for 10¢ for a glass of beer you could make out a dinner.
- M Well, we're in that area away from Clarendon. Where you ever in the old Silver Dollar Cafe ?
- K On the corner there, at Exchange Street ?
- M Right.
- K I've been in there.
- M The Silver Dollars were right in the floor,
- K Yes or in the counter, I forget which. I don't recall which but I've been in there years ago. I lived in Rochester, the wife and I, when we was first married.
- M Can you describe what is was, back when you were living there, what Front Street was like ?
- What Front Street ?
- M Yeah.
- K Ah - - - not much different in a way, of course there was a on Front Street there was a Broskey's place of business, and there was a place where they made sausage, that was Broskeys I'm sure. The old Hay-Market on the east side of the street.
- M The Hay-Market; I hadn't heard about that down there.
- K Well there used to be the old Hay-Market on the east side and of course your second hands stores.
- M Second hand and pawn shops.
- K All kinds of pawn shops, yep. Ah - - Front Street was really quite a street.
- M Buy anything there any time of the day or night.
- Yep - - Yep.

M Of Course that's all gone now.

K Yep, yep. Down on Front Street, I can remember going down there, was taking cheese down, into this basement, and you could see the sewer rats running around there on that floor, like no-bodys business. And they weren't just a small rat, they were big, more like a, almost the size of a woodchuck. They called them sewer rats. And this fellow used to buy a lot of cheese from me and what he wanted was sort of the seconds you know.

M Well I can think it might be ~~some~~ Louis Jacobson.

K No.

M But that wouldn't be a name to - - -

K No.

M The Jacobsons are still in business. They were there for years.

K There was a place right across from the, oh that manufacturing on a, as you go in on Lyell Avenue. Ah - - the fellow that run that was a Frenchman. I can remember there you could go in the front door, off from Lyell Avenue, go down past the bar-room and into a dining room and you could come out to the east onto the street. And - a I can remember he was a Frenchman, I can't think of his name, but I know he used to buy a lot of cheese from me. I carried 50 boxes of cheese, wooden boxes at that time, weighed about 35 pounds, down into his basement.

M That'd be in a pick-up truck ?

K I had a enclosed truck, it was called a Sedan Delivery, it was two doors in front and a big door in the rear. It was what I used to carry the cheese in, 'cause I used to peddle the cheese around to A, well there was Sibley, Lindsey, and Curr; the Powers Hotel, ah - - some of the booze joints down below Lake, and - - ah - - different booze joints around the town there. I can't remember their names now, but a - -

M Well one name you surely went to was Odenbach's.

Yes, I used to sell cheese to Odenbachs down at the lake.

M Well, they had a place downtown too, across...

K I think they were on... Louis Runds, on the corner of Ellys Street and South Avenue, made several fortunes. He'd make a fortune every two or three years and loose it the next year in cards. Odenbachs was on Clinton Avenue. It went through to Main Street.

K Rund had a place down in Irondequoit, I think, 'cause I used to take cheese down there.

M I can't think of the name of that. It may have eventually become the Breakers, at a later date.

* * * * *

This interview was transcribed by Mrs. Betsy Hoffman of Waterport.

* * * * *

George Keople was interviewed by John B. Munger of Barre Center, N.Y.

* * * * *

George Keople, Active Civic Leader Dead

George Herbert Keople, 85, of Clarendon, died Tuesday in Lakeside Memorial Hospital, following several months illness.

Mr. Keople was born in Cuba, N.Y., and had been a resident of Clarendon area since 1912.

He was self employed as the owner of the Clarendon Brand Cheese Factory, Clarendon.

He was a former Clarendon Town Clerk, Justice of the Peace and a Clarendon Town Supervisor.

He was active in county politics and community affairs, including the Boy Scouts and Friends of the Holley Library.

He was known as the "Father" of the Clarendon Town Park, and was responsible in 1916 for organizing the effort to bring electricity into the Town of Clarendon.

A charter member of the Rotary Club of Holley, he served as a past president of that organization, and was a recent recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow Award. He had 43 years of perfect attendance with Rotary.

He was a 50 year member and past master of Murray Lodge No. 380 F&AM, a member of the Clarendon Grange No. 1083, a member of the Clarendon Fire Department, the Disciples United Methodist Church, and the Holley Rod and Gun Club.

He also served as a trustee of the Holley Cemetery Association, was a life member of the Trojan Club of the Farmers and Traders Life Insurance Co. of Syracuse, and an honorary member of the Orleans County Judges Association.

Friends may call Thursday (2-5 and 7-9) at the Merrill-Grinnell Funeral Home, 39 Geddes St., Holley, where funeral service will be held Friday at 2 p.m. Interment will be in Hillside Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Clarendon Fire Department or the Disciples United Methodist Church.

George H. Keople

In the death of George H. Keople of Clarendon Eastern Orleans and its environs will be deprived of the services and devotion of one of its most illustrious citizens.

There was not an institution of service to mankind represented in the area of which he was not a part and once the association was established he remained active as long as his health would permit.

A striking example was his association with the Rotary Club of Holley. He was not only a charter member of the club, but during his 43 years of membership he had not been recorded as having missed attendance at one weekly meeting. Rotary claims as one of its basic influences regular attendance and surely the fact that he had been at a Rotary meeting for some 2,256 weeks without a skip certainly qualified him for the Paul Harris Award even without the fact that he occupied leadership in every post in his local club.

He has served his party as a Republican ably over half a century and while he held every elective office in his township, his greatest contribution was his service as justice of the peace during which time approximately 3,500 persons appeared in his local court.

Upon his retirement he proudly pointed to the fact that in no instance did he sentence a youth to confinement to a penal institution.

George Keople will be missed. But the results of his lifetime will remain in the local archives as long as written history exists.

J-R Medina

a.H. Nov. 17, 1978

11-15-1978