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# Orleans County Historical Association

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# Orleans County Historical Association

## ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to collect information about the historical development of Orleans County by means of tape-recorded conversations with people whose experiences reflect the county's growth.

These tapes and transcriptions will be preserved as educational resources and possible publication (all or in part).

I hereby release this tape and transcription to the Orleans County Historical Association.

Ray H. Lett

Signed

Oct. 27, 1978.

Date

Understood and agreed to:

Helen M. McAllister

INTERVIEWER

10-27-'78

Date



# Orleans County Historical Association

## INTERVIEW

Mr. Cary Lattin  
Gaines Basin Road  
Albion, New York



Interviewed by  
Helen M. McAllister  
October 27, 1978

*Cary J. and Chas. Palmer*

L Cary Lattin (born 1898.)  
Mc Helen M. McAllister



- L I was born the 11th of June 1898 on the Gaines Basin Road in the little old house on the north farm. My father was born in the same house and it's been in the Lattin family since the 1860s. Prior to that it was in the Anderson family who was my ancestors back as far as 1819. Bill Lattin lives in the little old house at the present time. (Bill Lattin, son). My father's name was Nahum Anderson Lattin, born in 1865. My mother's name was Sophia Elizabeth Harling, born in 1872. I was the only child.
- Mc So you really grew up right here?
- L On these two farms! My father and mother went to housekeeping in the little old house, where Bill lives, in 1894. They were married in January and my mother told me that when they clap-boarded that house in January, it was warm and balmy and the flies was crawling out of the grass! It was so warm and balmy in 1894. They lived there from 1894 until 1901. After my grandfather died, they came up here and took over the stone house. So all my life I've lived on this farm, in this cobblestone house we're in today.
- Mc Do you remember when you first went to school?
- L I went to Gaines Basin school, up the road. It's about half a mile up to the old cobblestone schoolhouse. The first teacher I had was May Morrissey. I went there probably 2-3 weeks; the tail-end of 1904. I stuck my tongue out at her one day in school, and she sent a boy out to get a switch and he come in with a switch as big as a broom handle! I was scared when I saw that god-damned club! (laughs).
- Mc Did she whip you with it?
- L No, she didn't. She set it up in the window, but I learned my lesson fast!
- Mc Was that a one-room schoolhouse up to grade eight?
- L Yes and only one teacher. I went there for five grades. After I got into the 6th grade I went to Albion Central School. I walked to school.
- Mc You walked to school from here?!
- L Walked from here to school. In the winter time, if somebody else was going to school, I'd ride with them. But in the summer time I walked or rode a bicycle. Lots of times I'd walk cross-lots 'cause it was a lot shorter.
- Mc Did you always take your own lunch?
- L Oh sure! In the winter time I carried my lunch to school. In the

summer time I'd jog home at noon to get my lunch to home. I was one of the first ones that took milk to school. I like milk! I drank more milk than anybody alive in Orleans County!

Mc How did you keep it cold?

L My mother put it in a mayonnaise jar. I carried this pint of milk to Gaines Basin school. I like milk! The other kids ridiculed me; laughed, called me "calf" and all that kind of stuff. I liked the milk and I enjoyed it! They would have too, but they didn't want to be kidded about it, you know. That was over 70 years ago. It was a little mayonnaise jar called Gauntlet. It had a screw top and wouldn't leak out and get away from you. A screw-top bottle was unheard of in those days.

Mc You still have your own teeth, so I guess the milk must have done you some good. (laughs). Then you went to the Albion school?

L In the sixth grade in 1910, and I finished high school. The boys and girls that was in the 6th grade continued right on thru 6,7,8 and into high school and graduated together. There was 4-5 of us that was in the 6th grade and graduated in 1917.

Mc What did you do directly after high school? Did you go on to school?

L I intended to go to Mechanic's Institute. I wanted to be a draftsman. I went down there to see about getting registered; that was in Rochester and was the fore-runner of R.I.T. When I came back, the hired man had gone and Dad wasn't too healthy and my Ma said, "Why don't you stay and help Dad on the farm here and go to school next year?" So, I've been here ever since.

Mc What kind of farming did your father do?

L Diversified farming.

Mc Mostly fruits.

L Not too much fruit. We had some fruit but not too much. There was fruit to the north farm. We raised cattle and bulls and bucks and boars and heifers and diversified farming. We had chickens and geese and ducks and we had a hen house and sold eggs to trade in Albion. We was almost self-sufficient. When the Depression was on we were neither cold nor hungry because we produced the things on the farm to eat.

Mc Your chicken farm would be some different today, yes?!

L Oh gracious! We'd raise 250 chickens every year and put in about a hundred pullets.

Mc How did you get your pullets?

L We bought the baby chicks when they were day old for 15 or 20 cents apiece. They varied in price. We'd buy these day-old chicks and raise them in the brooder house. We used to use the coal stove brooder 'til we got to electric motors. We'd get 90 or 100 good pullets and put those in the hen house. My father and mother and Avis and I would get our groceries out of that flock of hens! The hens produced our groceries and we produced the grain on the farm to feed the chickens. We had to get suppliment at the mill, like bone meal and cod-liver-oil and meat scraps in mash for the chickens.

Mc Tell me about the mill.

L The grist mill, where they would grind your grain. I used to go to Blodgetts in Albion. Then after Blodgetts got out of the business I went to GLF in Knowlesville; then I went to the GLF in Albion. Those farmer's mills are all gone. I guess they still grind at the GLF in Knowlesville. You can take grist there and get it ground. Years ago everybody had a flock of hens and now the farmers have no hens! All the eggs that are raised in Orleans County are either Bowman's or Robert's. Bowmans got a big chicken ranch over here west of us, on the other road, and there's 40,000 layers in one building! Justin Roberts, I guess, has got 30-40,000 layers in a building up in Shelby!

Mc When did you meet your wife (Avis Wilson)?

L Well, the first time that I saw her, she was three years old and I guess I was a lot older. I was a big boy. That was the first that I remember. (laughs). We were married the 17th of October 1932 and we had an old Chevrolet automobile; a coupe. We were married at nine o'clock in the morning at Christ Church rectory in Albion. They didn't anybody know that we were going to get married. We didn't make any whoop-de-do about it. We didn't have a wedding or anything fancy. We went and bought our license at the town clerk's office and in ten minutes we were down at the rectory. We were married and out of town about 20 minutes later! That morning the announcements went into the Post Office, just as soon as we were married, and they were delivered in the morning mail. People called my mother and father; "Is it a joke?"

Mc Did your folks know about it?

L Oh they knew it, and Avis' folks knew but they didn't anybody else! And people called, that got these notices. They called up and

wanted to know if it was a joke! Marcus Phillips was one of them! (laughs). I'd been to too many weddings and I didn't think I wanted to have all that gang at my wedding! We went to New England. We had a ball! We went as far east as Portland, Maine; out to Cape Cod and we stopped and saw some friends in Poughkeepsie on our way home. When we got back, we tried to find a place to live. We lived in an apartment in Albion that winter of 1932 and '33. About two weeks after we got home, we decided that we'd build a house. I had cut the lumber eight years previous. That was in the hemlock woods north-west of Kuckville.

Mc Was this land that you owned?

L No, my father made a deal with Lou Kenyon who owned the woods. We bought the trees on the stump, and we had to cut these trees and draw them from Kuckville to the Ridge Road where there was a portable sawmill; where Fay Hollenbeck's barn is. They sawed the lumber there. There was 54 logs that we cut out of the woods and it made over 7,000 feet of lumber. It was piled up here, west of the barn, from 1925 until 1932. It was well seasoned. It was the nicest lot of hemlock lumber you ever saw. That made the house. The house is 22 by 28 and it's cozy, compact, a little cape-cod cottage.

Mc That is what you call "the little house?"

L That is the little house.

Mc You told me (earlier) that you didn't think it cost very much?

L Well it cost plenty then with blood, sweat and tears because I dug the cellar, with the help of one man, in a week and a day. Dug it with a pick and shovel and a slip-scraper, and a team of horses.

Mc A slip-scraper?

L A slip-scraper: two horses draw this scraper that gouges in the dirt, pulls the dirt out at you; loosens up with the plow. It took us a week and a day to dig the cellar. Then we built the forms and poured the cement. It cost \$12.50 to pour the cement wall for that house. That's how hard times were! There was 28 load of gravel in that basement and I drew it all from Pickett's gravel pit, on a Model-T truck and pitched every bit of it on with a shovel. I shoveled it off by hand. It was a lot of hard work! We had 12 or 14 load of stone off of the farm to go on the aggregate in the basement wall. That was stone to help fill up the wall. Carpenters were 50¢ an hour and I had three carpenters 'til we got the frame up and the windows in and the roof on and I had no funds. I had

no funds. I had paid them a little over \$100.00 and I had paid them in barter and trade, a lot of it. Paid for the sand with beef. Then one of Avis' uncles who was pretty good as a carpenter, said he would help me finish it up on the inside. So he helped me get the lath and the plaster and the floors laid. It's all home-grown. All the wood in there is all local grown wood! We moved in there the 19th of April 1933. See, it was the day of Paul Revere's ride.. the 19th of April, and we had the house plastered just downstairs. We didn't have the money to buy the lath and plaster for upstairs. All the time we was building that house I never owed anybody over \$100.00 at any one time. We got that much credit, then we quit and paid them back as fast as we could. All the latches in there are old antique hand-made latches, made by a blacksmith. Some nice ones there too!

Mc Did you have them made?

L No, they were old ones that I found here and there. Old Ben Howes, Doctor Howes, he gave me the latch on the kitchen door; probably a foot high. A great big wrought iron latch.

Mc When you were married, was Avis working?

L She was working in the office of the Newell Shirt Company in Medina. Then she got a job with the Home Bureau; now they call it the Extension. She worked for six or seven years after we were married. (At this point Avis was making silent gestures attempting to correct a mis-statement by Cary). Okay, she worked ten years and ten months! (laughter).

Mc When was your son born?

L Bill was born the 10th of October 1944. We were married 12 years before Bill got here. Working on a farm and working in an office is a poor time to try to raise kids. Why bring kids into the world if you can't clothe them and feed them? I was 47 years old when Bill was born. His name is Cary Wilson Lattin but he is known as Bill. Bill is married to Heather Sinclair Boyd and they have two daughters.

Mc Cary, will you tell a bit about the Lattin bridge and homestead?

L When the canal went across the state of N.Y. and they cut a farmer's land in two, he didn't want his farm divided. The state said, "We will build you a bridge so you can get across to your land". Which they did. They was a lot of little farm bridges all across the state. The farmer could buy land on the side where his home was



and maybe sell the land to some other farmer; so they got rid of their bridge. The bridges gradually got eliminated. Before the Lattins bought the farm, it was owned by the Baileys and they had a farm bridge. When Lattins bought the territory they still had the bridge to get across the canal. When the Barge Canal had taken over the Erie Canal and was in the process in 1910-11-12 and 13, making the canal wider and deeper, they was getting rid of all these farm bridges if they could possibly do it. The state would buy the rights from the bridge and eliminate the bridge and then you could go up and down the tow path or another road. West of Eagle Harbor the Starkweathers had a similiar situation. They sold their rights bawk to the state and so they lost their bridge. The state said they could go down the south bank of the canal to the Eagle Harbor Road or the Allen Bridge Road. Well, nobody took care of the road so you was selling your birthright for a mess of pot-tage. When Jack Robinson owned the farm and had 35 or 40 horses there and wanted to get food to them in the spring of the year when the roads was bad, he appropriated some gravel off the town dump. He got combed over pretty good for appropriating gravel. Of course he made it good; but he was in a jam! The Lattins would not relinquish their right to the Lattin's bridge and they still have it. It is the only bridge in the state of N.Y. on the Barge Canal system that serves just one family farm. It used to serve the pumping station. The pumping station was the first water works in Albion and that took place in the 1880s. There are a lot of springs on the Lattin farm running north-west up thru the Lone Star Inn and then off south by Charlie Howards. It's all springy up thru there. They had these beautiful springs for the water works in Albion and when Uncle Holm sold their rights to these friends, he reserved the right that he should have all the domestic water forever from the Albion waterworks. So they had all the water they wanted there on that farm tacked right into their house and for the cows and anything they wanted to use it for. When the new pumping station that went to the lake and they abandoned this station over here, the Lattins could still get free water from the village of Albion because that's the way it was written up pretty near 100 years ago. When my great-grandfather (Joseph A. Lattin) lived on that farm, he was a very progressive farmer. He was quite a "wheel" around Albion. He had fences arranged. They was 2-3 spring brooks on his farm, so he had running water in all his fields

for all of his cattle. He had a brook in each field. Maybe his lots weren't perfectly square or oblong or rectangle but he had them arranged so that he had running water in each field. He also planted all the Maple trees on East Avenue in Albion, from the stop-light clear down to the High School. Of course many trees have been taken down. My cousin, old Harry Lattin told me that when I went to Cora Lattin's funeral in 1932.

Mc When did you move into this beautiful cobblestone house that you and Avis call "home" ?

L Well I've been here ever since I was two years old. My father died in '47 and my mother died in '50. After she died I turned the key and walked out. It was vacant all that summer. She died in May. Some friends were out here from Long Island and they got to Avis, or she got to them before I got to see them. I was back on the farm the day they arrived and so they started putting the pressure on me to come over here and overhaul this house. One was Alan Burrett, a landscape architect. He was a connoisseur extraordinary of antiques. He was raised in the cobblestone house where Tom Hurd now lives. He was one of my best friends. He persuaded us to come over here and overhaul this cobblestone house. You see, it hadn't been wired or been plumb. There was a hot-air furnace heating plant in here so we had a lot to do. It cost probably three times as much to overhaul this house in 1950 and '51 as it did the "little house" in 1932 because prices of things had gone up so. It would cost a bit more today! It is a nice little home and I'm pretty proud of it because Avis is a damned good house-keeper and home-maker. It's care that does things. Housekeeping is a full time job. You don't realize it as much 'til you get older. I work down in the shop, downstairs, and I'm working down there and 2-3 days out of the week you can hear the vacuum cleaner going up here. A lot of folks think if they clean with a vacuum cleaner once a week they've done a pretty good job, or every two weeks!. But you can hear the vacuum cleaner going up here a lot of the time when I didn't think it was that dirty.

Mc When you say that you are working downstairs in the shop, what do you mean?

L I've got a little carpenter's bench and a power saw down there and a few hand tools. I like to whittle and make things, like little tables and chests of drawers like that one over there (points).

It's fun to do and it also makes your fingers shorter. You can't pick up so many nails! (laughs as he holds up two fingers that have been "shortened").

Mc You had your accident during the blizzard didn't you?

L The morning of the blizzard! Had a hell of a time getting to the hospital. (laughs).

Mc Carpentry has been one of your hobbies, right?

L That's right. I can saw a board off square.

Mc When you made the "little house", did you saw the wood?

L I cut it in the woods. I had a boy help me. His name was Dick Birdsmen and he and I cut those 54 logs in two days. We just sawed the logs off. We didn't clean up the tops or the brush or anything else. My father went down to the lake with a team of horses and a draw-boy and drew the logs out of the woods to the side of the road where Dave Coon's house and barn stands, on the side of the Lakeshore Road. It took him almost a week to draw those logs out of the woods, a log or two at a time. Then in March we drew those logs from Kuckville to the Ridge where Fay Hollenbeck's house and barn stands. There was a saw-mill going to be in there that spring. The roads were all dirt at the time. They was a pretty good road from Kuckville to Waterport, but from Waterport to the Ridge was a mud road and it was quite hard pulling for the horses to draw those logs. We usually put three logs on the wagon. We drew with two teams and two rigs. We'd leave here at 8 o'clock in the morning and get to Kuckville and get our logs loaded and have a lunch, some tea and a sandwich, and start ofr the Ridge Road a little after one. It'd be 4-5 o'clock afore we got home at night. That was quite a jaunt to get all that lumber. There was 7,000 feet of lumber when we got it home. We had to draw it home from the saw-mill, but that was in June and the roads wasn't so bad then.

Mc You've always been a farmer? What did you have: crops, animals or?

L We had beef cattle and we raised cabbage for a cash crop and we raised tomatoes. When we started raising tomatoes here in 1924-35 (we hadn't got into tomatoes much before '24-'25) they was four or five canning factories in Orleans County. There was a canning factory in Medina. Heinz had a big plant there. They was three canning factories in Albion, one in Holley, one at Morton and One in Barre Center. You could drive around the country 25-30 years ago and in the summer there'd be more tomatoes than anything else. Now there isn't a canning factory within 80-90 miles of here. Farmer would

raise tomatoes and they'd draw them clear over to west of Buffalo at Irving, or someplace west of Buffalo.

Mc Why did the canning factories move?

L I don't know. Whether the Unions didn't do the canning industry any good, in Albion when the Union went on strike at Birds-eye-Snyder in Albion in 1947 or '48. The canning factory told them, "Boys you'd better not strike!" But they was going to strike, and they did and that was, I think, one of the reasons that Birdseye got out of Albion. I really do! (transcript of Ed Devlin: see).

Mc Wouldn't the Unions have followed them thru the states?

L Well probably they would. They've got more sunlight in California. The tomato business has gone that way.

Mc You had help in picking the tomatoes?

L Yes. I usually hired boys in the neighborhood that wanted to work and we used to get women from Albion. The Polish women in Albion was good tomato pickers. Mary Judwick has picked tomatoes here, and her mother and Stanley (Judwick) mother. They was darn nice!

Mc Did you go to Albion to get the pickers?

L I had to go and get them and they'd work all day for about \$4.00 a day. My mother fed them real well at noon. Always. Then after that generation died off, then we had to depend on other pickers. There was a girl in Buffalo that worked in the Trico~~x~~ (factory) and she liked to get out on the farm in the fall and she'd come down and pick tomatoes for 2-3 weeks.

Mc After they picked tomatoes, did they put them in baskets?

L They picked them in hampers that held about 50 pounds, about 35 lbs. a hamper, Helen. You paid them so much a hamper. When we first started picking they paid about 2½ or 3 cents a hamper and the price kept going up and going up. It got so it was 25¢ or 30¢ to pick a hamper of tomatoes! A good picker could pick 100 hampers in a day and some could pick more than that. I heard one the other day: some fellows had been picking apples for some of the Poelma's and he was making \$100.00 a day picking apples and he broke his finger. He went to the "powers that be" and he wanted food stamps! Making \$100.00 a day! That is just how the times have changed from what they used to be.

Mc Did you ever grow fruit on this farm?

L We had some fruit but I never enjoyed raising it. I don't know why. I like cattle, and we raised cash on crops such as cabbage and tom-

atoes. When wheat got to a dollar a bushel, we fed it up on the farm. We fed it to our cattle instead of selling it for a dollar a bushel. That's pretty cheap for wheat! One summer in '32 or '33, oats was 33¢ a bushel. That's pretty cheap too!

Mc Cary, we were talking about the Soil Bank Program that President Eisenhower began. Would you tell me how and why you got into that?

L Well, I heard about the Soil Bank and Horace Bird was the conservation man here in the county at the time. That was in '58 or '59 I think. Our barn burned up in 1957, the 6th of September.

Mc What happened to your barn?

L It was struck by lightning! I had put the last load of oats in the barn that morning. They'd been combined the day before and Bill had helped me shovel them into the granary. It was the last grain we'd raised that summer. That was in September, when the oats was combined. I said, "I'm going to the mill to get some chicken feed. Do you want to go with me?" He says, "No, I'm going to go back in the orchard and play in the tree-house." He and Jack Miles had a tree-house back in the orchard. So I went to the mill and while I was down to the mill, we had an awful lightning storm. It was really sharp! The girl in the mill come out where the men were and stood right up close to us. She was scared! I said, "There's no use being afraid of it. You never know where it's going to hit. In fact my father was knocked down three times when he was a young man!" When I started for home, everybody was going by me and when I got to the canal bridge, I see why. My barn was all on fire!! Lightning had struck the barn and when it struck it was just like an atomic bomb. It just exploded and the barn was on fire almost instantaneous! Jack Miles' brother was looking out the window and he saw it and says that the fire was coming out of the barn windows just like that! You know, with all that dry hay and straw in there. We lost all the grain and practically all the hay and straw that we'd raised that summer that was in the barn. Well, I had about 20 head of young cattle and there was no place to put them and my other cattle. My father had an empty barn, so I took my cattle up there that winter. I had lost two calves in the barn but the cattle were all out in the field. So, I was getting tired. I was getting to be pretty near sixty years old; 58, I guess I was at the time, and I was commencing to get tired. I heard about the Soil Bank Program and I went to see about it. They said that they (the government)

would pay so much an acre. That's a national program. I went to see Horace Bird and he said, "They'll pay so much an acre for so many acres and if you put the whole thing in, they'll give you ten percent more." So we came home and had a conference with Avis, whether to get in for five years or ten. I said, "Let's try it for five." I saw Manley Morrison who was a Supervisor and had gone into the Soil Bank Program. He was a good friend of mine. He says, "You are crazy if you don't get in for ten." He says, "You won't ever want to go back into farming at your age!" Bill (our son) says, "I don't want any part of farming!" He was then about 12 years old. So, we signed up for ten years. The government paid \$18. or \$19. an acre for the land that was arable. They didn't pay anything for the orchard or the woods or all the other land. Where you could crop, they'd pay so much an acre. They paid us not to grow crops. We had to mow it so the land didn't get foul, didn't grow up to brush. If you stop mowing the land, or stop working it, nature takes over pretty fast. Here's this little acre out here (points); there's trees out there that big (demonstrates) that hasn't been mowed. Walnut trees grew up there, and I thought, "Well, that's nice to have walnut trees. Let 'em grow." But I should have cut them down. Nature takes over pretty fast. It grows back to jungle.

Mc Did the government send people around to check the land?

L They'd come and check it over and see if you were doing your part of the agreement. The first two years you had to mow it all. Then they decided to mow half of it, in strips: mow a strip, an acre that long then skip a strip. Then they got to mowing it on thirds. Well, if you didn't mark where you'd mowed the year before, you'd get fouled up. ... In two or three years some of our stuff got so I was cutting Elm trees off as big as my thumb. That was about all the mowing machine would take, and it was hard to do. Then they went out of the Soil Bank. (See Soil Bank, conservation reserve).

Mc Were there quite a few farmers around here that went into the Soil Bank Program?

L They was quite a few that went into it. When I went into the Soil Bank, I put the whole farm in. We sold all of our cattle, sold all of our livestock, sold our sheep, sold our horses and we took down all the fences. The north farm and this farm are two great big fields. I rented it to one of the neighbors for a couple of years and then he didn't want it any more. So for the last four years I rented it to the Bowman Farms. They are good farmers. We own the land.

The Bowmans run the works and they pay me in the fall of the year, and that's the way I like it. They're good farmers and they've plowed up land that I've never seen because they plow so much deeper with these big tractors. They plow 8 or 10 furrows across the field!

Mc When you began farming you probably used all "animal power" ?

L We had two horses and a plow. Sometimes we'd put three horses on a plow if it was hard plowing. I walked behind the plow.

Mc Did you go into mechanized farming?

L The first tractor I got was a second-hand Fordson tractor, and a disc and a drag for \$300.00 I used that probably 3-4 years. The Fordson tractor wasn't too much of a power plant. We lost a couple of horses, and we had to have a team of horses, so father and I got another big team and we used horses all we could to save burning up gasoline or kerosene. I didn't get my first International rubber-tired tractor until 1944. I bought a Farm-all, a Macormick-Derring International. It was a little tractor and it would draw one plow and an eight foot disc and an 8 foot cultipacker; not all at once but at separate times. There was an awful lot of work in that tractor. It cost about \$800.00 when I got it in '44. I used it 12 years and I traded it in for more than I paid for it. That's how it had depreciated! Then we got a bigger one. I didn't farm it only two more years after I got the bigger tractor because then I went into the Soil Bank Program. I was always glad I did because I was getting tired. Bill wasn't interested in farming, and the way help is, what the heck would you do? The book-keeping and the restrictions that you gotta go thru now! I should think that the first thing a farmer wants to do to get into the farming business, is to get a good book-keeper the first thing. How is a young guy going to get into farming today? You got \$100,000.00 worth of equipment afore you got any land. The price of this land business! Orleans County has always been low, around the state. Down in Yates County, the land down there \$1,200. to \$1,400. an acre. And then go out west and what is it? Why it's \$2,000,-\$3,000, an acre for some of the land in Kansas! It hasn't been that high around here. I hate to see it go up because if it goes up, you're going to pay more taxes. I was always a small farmer. They say, "Why don't you raise 25 or 30 acres of tomatoes and get the blacks to pick 'em, and do all this?" We kept within our bounds. Avis picked tomatoes and we operated small. I'm still living here and a lot of these other guys aren't. I know

when I started building the "little house" and I was talking to my mother about building. "I don't know whether I ought to build it any bigger or not." She said, "You know, I'd rather be living on the inside of a little house than on the outside of a big house." I sometimes wish we had built the "little house" over there, two feet wider and two feet longer because that two feet would have made quite a bit of difference. On the other hand, if I'd gone two feet longer I'd had to have more windows on the front or it would have looked cock-eyed! The same the other way. So, it's a cozy snug little house. I think Avis would like to go back there today.

Mc Cary, you became the Orleans County Historian in February of 1958. Would you tell a bit about that, how you got the job and a bit about your experiences?

L Well, Joe Achilles (former County Historian) died in December of 1957. Milton Cass and Scott Clark were two good friends of mine and they got to talking about Joe dying and they said, "Why gees, Cary's a natural at that. Let's see what we can do." So, when I come out of church one day, there was a note on my steering wheel. "Come down to the house. I want to see you." So I went down and Scotty says, "You know Joe died. Why don't you get that job?" "Why", I said, "I haven't got a Chinaman's chance to get it." "Well", he says, "let's try. We'll talk to the Supervisors!". So they started prodding me and prodding me and I went to see Les Canham, who had just been elected Supervisor and also the Chairman of the Board. He was the fellow from Kendall, and a couple of other friends on the Board. I started pulling all the wires I could pull. They advertised and they had interviews. It was noised around that Joe Achilles' job was going to be filled. They was about ten that applied for the job. I was shaking in my boots. I went to see the Supervisors and they talked alright. Canham was "in my corner", and so was Mike Paduchak. I know I went to see Bill Knights. I had never talked with him before and he said, "I got nothing against you but I'm not going to promise I'm going to vote for you." He says, "Maybe next week some of my relatives might want to get the job. I'd be in bad shape!" I kinda admired him for saying it that way. See, he made no commitments. When they voted as to who they was going to hire, we had to go to have an interview. I got it by a vote of 6 to 4; then they made it unanimous. That was the agreement.



Mc Where was your office as County Historian, Cary?

L Down in the basement of the Court House, where the Election Office is; where Helen Zelanmy and Helen Piazza are, only it was on the north part of that office.

Mc You held that job for how many years?

L I resigned the 31st of December in '75 and I said I would stay on until they got somebody else. (17 years in office). I stayed there 'til the 1st of April until Mac (Arden McAllister) took over. When I was appointed County Historian there was a person come down in there one day; flounced around and said, "I don't know how you got this job of County Historian. There's others that are a lot better qualified than you are to have it!" I didn't get mad or say any four-letter words, but I was so damned mad when I come home. I got home and Avis wasn't here. I had taken her somewhere and I'd forgot where the hell I'd left her! (laughter). I was so god-damned mad! We always laughed about that!

Mc You did a wonderful job as the County Historian and you've become renowned for being a wonderful speaker. You can tell the best stories, and with a twinkle in your eye, and lots of favorable spices thrown in!

L It was quite a rewarding experience because I met a lot of fine people all the way from Rouses Point (Lake Champlain) all the way to Montauk Point (Long Island), from the Niagara frontier to the southerntier. I have said many times that I would rather have a million friends than I would a million bucks. Some folks would say "I'll take the million dollars", but if you look at it from a mercenary standpoint, each one's worth a two-dollar touch.

Mc Before we leave the area of the Court House, I'd like to ask you to say something about the beautiful weather vane, the fleur-de-lis. You were really the force behind having that made and put up there.

L Originally there was a big arrow-weather-vane on the Court House. Part of that is up in the Court House dome. It was up there during the Centennial; it was pretty well broken apart. When they put the lightening rods on the Court House, Wally Forder come in there one day and he said, "You know they're putting lightening rods on the Court House next week. You always talked about a weather vane. ~~up~~ Let's put it up!" I says, "Wally, you can't put a weather vane up in a minute, it takes time. What are we going to do, what design are we going to have, what are we going to make it out of, where

are ypu going to get it made?" So it was dropped and a month or two after that I said, "Well, I've been working on that weather-vane." He says, "Why, who's going to look up there and see it? I don't think anybody." I said, "It's a beautiful thing, a weather-vane on a building. All over the eastern part of the United States they are on all the nice old buildings." "Ah", he says, "I don't think so". He was cool so I didn't say anything about it. After Jerim Clapper came to Albion, he was in here one day and I said, "Gees, I'd like to see a weather vane go up on the Court House some time and I think I could get enough of my friends that we could buy the metal and make it and put it up so it's no cost to the county. We will make it. The only thing they've got to do is install it." So Clapper, he went right up to the Board of Supervisors and he says, "Lattin wants a weather vane. Let's get this thing a-going." And by gees, they passed this weather vane resolution! It's in the Supervisory book; you'll see it: that I be allowed to build a suitable and appropriate weather vane for the county. No expense to the county except to install it.

Mc The Supervisors hadn't even seen the design for the weather vane?

L We didn't have any design. Well, Orleans is fleur-de-lis. When they built the jail, they had a design over there. George Bachellor was chairman and he come down and he says, "What kind of a design are we going to have on this plaque on the jail?" I said, "By all means get a weather vane fleur-de-lis, Orleans." He went along. You notice there is a fleur-de-lis on the east side of the jail where the entrance is, and a sheaf of wheat, and other things, a plow maybe. This is a design for a county seal. I says "Get a weather vane! We got to have a weather vane!" So they gave me permission to build a weather vane and that was ten years ago. I started talking about this: what kind of metal, and how are you going to get anodized or gold leaf or what, and did a lot of thinking. I talked to some of these engineers. "What kind of thrust bearing are you going to have; what kind of race bearing are you going to have up around the top", and all those kind of things.

Mc What is a race bearing?

L A bearing up at the top where it swings around... the thrust bearing so that all the weight goes on one ball bearing. I talked to "Bing" about it and he was for it.

Mc Who is "Bing" ?

L Burnell Bingerman, and Dave Stevenson are the two janitors (for the Court House work). Bing was all for it. About 3-4 years ago he says, "You know they're going to start doing some work on the dome. We'd better start thinking about it." So we went to Rochester one day and bought some metal. It was there in Bing's office for quite awhile; then two years ago he said "This fall we're going to overhaul the top there and we'd better have it made." So we got right at it, and Heather (wife of Bill Lattin) designed the fleur-de-lis. Yes, she's my daughter-in-law. Heather designed it and Bing cut it out with a saber saw. It's all bolted together with stainless steel bolts. We took it to Buffalo and had it gold-anodized. That made it quite bright gold. When we brought it home I wasn't too happy with it. It wasn't too shiny. Johnson was needling me a little bit and he says, "Why the hell don't you get gold leaf on it? You got money enough to buy gold leaf for it." I says, "Well I don't know about that." So I asked Jerim Clapper. Clapper and I bought the metal and the gold leaf for the weather vane. We had other help: Don Ross furnished the pipe, Bob Brown furnished the bearings. I guess that was the only ones that put in money. It cost right around \$300.00. The gold leaf cost about \$116.00. Avis and I put that on, right on the dining room table. It looks pretty good. It was ten years in the making before we got it up there. I hear they are going to light it up at night! They are getting spotlights on it. If that shines on it at night it'll look nice up there. I'll tell you another story about the Court House. My father was on jury sixty years ago, in the fall of the year and it come on a Saturday night to adjourn court. The judge whamed his gavel down and he says, "Court adjourned 'til tomorrow morning, ten o'clock." Dad was in the jury box and he went right over to the judge and he says, "Judge, your Honor," he says; "I gotta be excused tomorrow morning." The Judge says, "What do you mean 'Be excused'?" He says, "What are you going to do, pull beans or cut corn?" The old man says, "No I'm not going to pull beans or cut curn, but it's the first day of pheasant season and Sanford Church (who was an attorney right there in the group) and I have always gone pheasant hunting the first morning of pheasant hunting and we're not going to be put off!" The Judge whamed his gavel down: 1-2-3!! He says, "Court's adjourned 'til Monday morning. I'm going with ya!" (laughs). See? Tell the truth!

Mc You were telling me earlier about your mother pulling mustard?

L It was the 11th of June and she was pulling mustard that morning, out west of the house. She decided she'd better come to the house because she was going to have a baby. She got up to the rail fence and could hardly get over the fence; she was so damned big! I weighed 12 pounds! Yeah, a big baby was a good thing to have. Pretty near done the old lady in. She didn't have any more.

Mc Well, you're not big now Cary. You've never been really large, have you?

L No; her family, the Walkers, most of them was small boned.

Mc You were instrumental in organizing the Cobblestone Society and you have been very active in the Masons, and you've been active in the Child Welfare.

L Well, not too active in Child Welfare. I think I was the President or Vice-President for 5-6 years. I used to go to the meetings. It was a good thing. You see, I've been a member of the Bogue Board for probably 25 or 30 years. I was the Associate Director for several years. When Judge Frances Sturges went off, they put me in to take his place. The trustees manage this estate of Virgil Bogue (Home for Dependent Children in Orleans County). We give the interest money to worthy children. Pearl Eddy in Medina, she does the ground work. Olga Hinkley used to do ground work for these school councelors, and recommend these children. They get about \$300.00. It's a gift, an out-right gift, and you know there's very few of them that write back and say, "I'm going back to school. Thank you very much for the donation." Albert Hubbard wrote a dictionary a long time ago. My mother had one of them and I don't know where the duce it went to. but I wished I had it! His definition for gratitude is "the sense of appreciation of a favor about to be received." You know how true that is!

Mc Well, sometimes it takes years before you can realise the gratitude.

L The other day they had the list of who they are: there's 4-5 from Kendall and 4-5 from Holley and Albion and Medina and Lyndonville, and no children that I know were on there. They get \$150.00 along in September and another \$150.00 in February. Well \$300.00 will buy you food for quite a few days, or a few books, or wash a few clothes, or help if you are crimped for money, I would think!

Mc You've been very active in the Masons.

L I was Master in 1938. I joined the Masons in 1924. I've been a

Mason for 54 years. I was District Deputy in 1958 and '59 and it was quite an experience. A lot of people have got religion or bias against fraternal organizations but the Masons do an awful lot of good in the state of New York. They have this Masonic Home in Utica and they are trying to raise this next two years, I think, seven million dollars to expand their Home and to bring it up to more modern. The state clamps down on all these nursing homes, you know, to come up to the state's standards. We're going to do it! We do a lot of good. People in this Masonic Home are very happy. I went down there when I got my warrent in 1958, and they had a concert in the gymnasium there. At the time there was only about 12 or 14 youngsters at this Masonic Home. Some of these kids was in college.

Mc Is the Masonic Home for young people?

L Young people and old people. They are mostly old people now, but they still take youngsters there. I think they are orphans. It was a nice concert. Two of these kids had come back from college to be in this concert, 'cause they could play. There was a girl in this concert that sang, and her name was Maureen or Josephine O'Hare. That's a long way from any Masonic name! That's pretty near Irish! A red-headed Irish gal! After the concert everybody was around Raymond G. Ellis (a Past Grand Master), there in the group. They was all milling around there and this girl come running out to him and threw her arms around him just like father and daughter. Well you know, here was an orphan running up to the Grand Master, like your own kids. Well you know, that kinda wound one on me and I've never forgotten it! They do an awful lot of good. And the damned Masons, they keep all their light under a bushel basket! All these things that they find out about geriatrics and gerontology and neurology and all this stuff, it's all funneled to Cornell and Syracuse and New York University. These other laboratories that are doing this, all this stuff is... they are giving it to 'em and they are doing a great job down there!

Mc You mean the Masons?

L The Masons are doing it. They are contributing money to this experimental laboratory that they've got in Utica. In June 1958, H. Lloyd Jones who was then the Grand Master of the state of New York, dedicated this laboratory. Governor Averill Harriman was there and took part in this ceremony; also Arthur Levitt who was

the State comptroller. It was the first time that I had the chance to meet a Governor and a Comptroller of the State first-handed. I had a nice talk with Gov. Averill Harriman and he wanted to be remembered to several of his Democrat friends in Albion. Especially Bernard Ryan, who was then Chief-Justice of the Court of Claims. When the Grand Master was here in May 1978 and laid the cornerstone under the Print Shop of the Cobblestone Complex (in Childs), I made a gavel for William R. Punt, that he used in the ceremony that day. I had a nice letter later, thanking me for that gavel. My father planted the tree (from which the gavel was made) 92 years ago. It was Black Walnut wood and that was from my own property. Dad planted that tree right north of the stone house in 1886. I had the tree cut down because we was afraid it was going to blow down, about 1968.

Mc You make quite a few things from wood, Cary.

L I make tables and cutting boards and anything out of nice wood; walnut or cherry.

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The above interview was taped, transcribed, edited and typed by Helen M. McAllister, Medina, New York.

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian



VOL I

No. 43

## VIRGIL BOGUE 1851-1922

Born and brought up in Elba, N.Y., Virgil Bogue was one seven children in a family with a Quaker background. He was educated in the Elba Schools, Cary Collegiate Seminary and LeRoy Academy. He and his five brothers all became nurserymen. In 1875 Virgil settled in Albion with his wife Alice McIntire Bogue. In 1917 he authored and published a book entitled "The Science of Fruit Growing Based on Nature's Laws". It was highly commended by Luther Burbank to whom he sent a copy. Many an Orleans County Orchard was propagated and grafted by him during his forty-seven years as a horticulturalist.

Alice his wife, died in 1911. He then made plans for the disposition of his estate. The Bogue's were childless but both had a deep interest in children. As a result, the Virgil Bogue Home for Dependent Children was incorporated with a governing board of trustees. It was to provide for Orleans County children between the ages of four and twelve who were orphans, or whose parents could not support them.

On November 1, 1923, a year after his death the orphanage opened in the Bogue residence located on East Avenue at Clarendon Street. Mrs. Mattie Howard was matron and Mrs. Ada Dawson, assistant. The number of children varied from ten to fourteen each year until 1946 when both matrons resigned. The home then closed for a short time but reopened until 1949 when the interest from endowment funds was not enough to meet rising costs. Also, changing laws regarding the placement of children affected and necessitated its closing. Eventually the Board of Trustees decided to sell the Bogue Home property and add the proceeds to the Trust Fund. In 1963 the corporate name was changed to the Virgil Bogue Fund for Dependent Children and the income was sent thereafter in quarterly payments to the Child Welfare Association. Thus to some extent Mr. Bogue's desire to help children is still being fulfilled.

Cary Lattin, recorded by Clifford Wise, Nov. 6, 1968 telling of the Lattin residence, home and items of interest found in his home.

This is a suppliment for the OCHA, Oral History papers.

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I am very happy Mr. Wise, that you wanted to come down here and talk to the "Squire" as I am known in Gaines Basin. I was appointed the County Historian a little over ten years ago and it has been a very rewarding experience.

This farm was taken up by Brigadier Bullard in 1812 from the Holland Land Co. The first house that was built on this farm was a log house that stood approximately where the stone house now stands. The next house that was built here was built for Brigadier's mother and it is that little red building out there and used by my father and grandfather for a shop. It stood about 20 feet east of where your car stands. I presume right after the canal went through in 1823 or '24 this land, being fertile, Mr. Bullard probably made considerable money from the sale of wheat and other farm produce and was probably a fairly prosperous man and in order to show his affluence and dignity, he decided to build a cobblestone house.

It was constructed by Cyrus Wetherell, a stone mason that lived at Gaines. It was built from 1844 to 1846 or 1847. When I was a boy, John Bullard who was the son of Brigadier, was down on his luck and was awarded a counting. He used to come back to this neighborhood summers and stay with the various families he knew when he was a boy. He used to stay with my father and mother; he used to stay at Cliff's and he stayed at Lewis's, and different friends around the village of Gaines. He used to tell me about helping to pick up the cobblestones along the Ridge and along the shore of Lake Ontario. My mother-in-law used to laugh about it because she thought he wasn't ambitious enough to help pick up cobblestones, but he evidently helped to pick up cobblestones and he was 14 or 15 years old when he helped his father pick up these stones. He died in 1929 when he was 85 years old. I didn't go to the funeral but my father did. We used a short pencil and arithmetic, and we think the house was built about 1844-5-6-7.

When Brigadier died in the stone house, my father was probably 12 or 14 years old. My grandmother who lived down the road a little bit, came up to stay with Brigadier the first night after he died. They didn't have morticians as they do now-a-days, and they used to wet clothes and put on the face and hands and chest so that the blood didn't settle there and didn't get dark a lot quicker. My father came up here to stay with my grandmother that night and in the middle of the night, when she was putting wet clothes on his forehead, my father who had been wakened out of a sound sleep by his mother, was lackadaisically holding the lamp, about half asleep. He carelessly tipped the lamp a little bit and the chimney went on the floor and smashed! That woke him up real quick, and he got a good bawling out for not being on his toes and helping with what he was supposed to do.

After my grandmother died, down the road at the north farm, my grandfather bought this farm about 1885, I think, and moved up here with his four daughters and one son. That was when this farm changed from the Bullard family to the Lattin family.



My grandfather operated the farm until he died in 1901, and sold the farm a year before he died to my father. He operated this farm and the north farm, and I started with my Dad on the farm in 1917. My father was not in too good health, and I operated the farm gradually and have operated the farm for 35 or 40 years. My father died in 1947. However, the last ten years on the farm he didn't do too much. Once in awhile he would drive the horses, but he was not too rugged. I farmed until 1959 when I put this land into the Soil Bank. It was President Eisenhower's idea and altho I don't know as I believe in it wholeheartedly, I have enjoyed it for the past ten years and it has built up the fertility of the soil because all this grass and weeds have gone back on the farm and built up the fertility, and when this land is plowed up, somebody is going to get some good crops from this land. It will be almost as good as virgin soil. In the Soil Bank, all this land has been mowed each year and this grass has gone back into the ground and made humus by rotting into the ground.

When Avis Wilson and I were married in 1932, that was just about the low part of the Depression. We went down to New England on our honeymoon, and when we came back the last part of October or November, we decided to build a little house. We built the little house that you see over there, on a shoe-string. It is 22 by 28 feet. In 1924 my father and I had cut a large quantity of hemlock lumber from the Coon woods, northwest of Kuckville; 54 logs it consisted of. They were drawn to a swamill on the Ridge Road in 1924 and there were 7,500 feet of hemlock lumber that were piled up west of the barn from 1924 to 1932. We started building that house on a shoe-string and lived in it for a couple years, downstairs, and no wall was plastered upstairs. It was gradually plastered upstairs, and it was plumbed and is a cozy, snug, compact, little house. Our boy was born over there; we were very happy there. When my father died in 1947, and when three years later my mother died in 1950, we were hounded by all kinds of people who wanted to rent the (cobble-) stone house.

A friend of ours, Allen Byrt, whom we thought a great deal of and loved very dearly and who had been a school companion of mine in high school and through the years was a very good friend and a connoisseur of antiques extraordinary, was out here. He really got after me and said, "Go ahead and fix up the stone house. It will be charming and it will be beautiful and you'll have a wonderful home." His influence, probably more than anything else, made us decide that we should come over here and overhaul this cobblestone house.

After my mother died, we locked the door. We kept the clocks wound all that summer. That fall we started to overhaul and get ready to have an auction. There were many things we hated to dispose of but we didn't have room to absorb all the things that were in this house and all the things that we had accumulated. We had an auction in June 1951, and got three carpenters in here and started to overhaul this house.

This room you are in was my mother's dining room. The room over to the south was her pantry. We removed the partition and made one large room. This is our family room. The fireplace that you see burning before you, appears to be an old one. There's an old crane in it and a cast iron kettle; it is a heatalator but it's from the back and are not visible; they come out from the back. The heatalator fireplace is much more efficient than the regular fireplace. The mantle is a very old mantle. It came from the County House Road, west of the Arnold Gregory home, and was given to us by Mrs. Arnold Root.

It is a very pretty fireplace and was probably built about the same time that this house was built. Where you see our garage, was my mother's summer kitchen. We added about seven feet more on the old kitchen, and that makes a good garage. The kitchen was all planned by Avis.

The old clock that you see on the mantle I acquired at Clure White's auction in 1924. I gave it to my mother and she used it as a bedroom clock from 1924 until she died in 1950. The clock was somewhat worn and I had two or three fellows tinker with it, but couldn't seem to make it run; so we had an electric movement put in this old clock. I discovered, written on the back of it said, "This clock was purchased from an agent March 2, 1836 and set running on the Mansion House bar"; and tells who wound the clock until 1914. The Mansion House was a very beautiful building three stories high, with Doric columns on the north-west corner at Gaines. It was destroyed by fire in 1844. The clock apparently was rescued. That is an historic piece of furniture to have in the home. The old gun that you see on the wall was one that my great grandfather got from somebody up around Gaines Basin. My Dad used to hunt with it. Those two tables are maple, cut out of a neighbor's woods 25 or 30 years ago. That desk, which I made, is from the same maple tree. When we moved over here we had to have a little desk for farm accounts. We didn't have anything appropriate, so I decided to make a little desk, and these two tables work very well.

The old drum was in Avis' family and it was owned by her great, great grandfather, and was probably used in the Civil War. The date in the drum is 1824. It was made in Connecticut. Do you know how to tell the date of a drum? Well, you look in a hole in the side of the drum. On the opposite side there will be a little label and sticker telling the date of manufacture and who did the manufacturing.

This picture of the rabbit that hangs up here, the dead rabbit or game, was painted by Peter B. West. He was a local artist, born in England; I think London, in the late 1830's. He studied art in London. He came to America when he was 25 or 30 years old. He lived east of Albion on the Claron Street Road. He raised Scotch Collie dogs, South-down-sheep, and Jersey cattle. He brought some of the first Jersey cattle to this area. He was an artist of considerable talent and for the past six or seven years, whenever I get the chance to get any of Mr. West's paintings, I am most happy to get hold of them! At one time he painted all the circus wagons for P. T. Barnum, and he was very good.

This kitchen was all planned and laid out by Avis. She worked many hours and many days before she decided exactly what she wanted in here. You notice that the sink is in an island. There are six or seven openings in this room, so there wasn't too much space for a kitchen sink and it works out very well. People can pass through the kitchen without getting in her way, and it works very well. The lumber you see in its natural color, came from the barn. My father and grandfather were always garnishing lumber and stashing it away for future use. These pine boards that you see, which are about an inch and an eighth thick, were given to my Dad when he was married in 1894, by my grandfather. They were given to my father for a wagon box. They were 16 feet long and about 18 inches wide, of clear pine. They came

from Michigan on a raft on the canal. He set them up in the horse barn and they were there for about 60 years when I decided it was time to use the pine boards for cupboard doors. George Dawn, who had a cabinet maker's shop south of Albion, did the mill work on these doors for us. He said they were the nicest pine that he ever ran through his planer. The rest of the lumber that you see here is native; the ash that holds up this island are two inch ash plank native in the Town of Gaines. The long doors are, believe it or not, are elm, are very pretty wood. You wouldn't believe it could be made into furniture but it makes a very pretty and makes a good door. The other boards are ones that we found around the house. The counter over here is made of cherry and maple and is from some of the wood that I had cut. I wasn't enough of a cabinet maker because I didn't have the tools, so George Dawn made the cutting block. It is two inches thick and about three and a half feet long, and probably 24 or 25 inches wide. It's a very good cutting block to do anything around the kitchen. The old rolling pin is cherry and pine and was made for some of Avis' great aunts. Her husband was the Superintendent of the County Home in Genesee County over 100 years ago. Some of the inmates made that old rolling pin (it looks like a stick of candy) for her great aunt. Avis' mother brought it down here when she saw the stripped cutting board. She thought we were kind of tricky in making the cutting board so that we would have a claim on the rolling pin. This little drop-leaf table is solid mahogany and was made from the old piano in the Phipps Union Seminary. I found the piano up on the Ridge about 40 years ago. Another boy found it, but all he wanted was the legs. The piano was in terrible shape and it couldn't be restored for playing purposes. It had been in a barn and the water had leaked down on it. So he had the legs and I had the top part of the piano. This board that you see is the two top boards in the piano and I made this drop-leaf table and it works out very well. Most of the things and gadgets that you see have been family pieces.

The silhouette has been in the family since it was cut in 1810. The two lower pictures are my great, great grandfather and great, great grandmother. The children above were aunts and uncles. Down through the family that went, through Dr. Frank Lattin's family at Gaines. I always admired it when I went down to see cousin Frank. About two years ago, Virginia Lattin Morrison brought it up here and gave it to our boy, Bill. It was a very gracious thing for her to do. I asked her in all sincerity why she wanted to give it out of her own family where they have two boys and a daughter. She said that they had no sentiment for it at all. Their name wasn't Lattin and they didn't care anything about it. It is quite unusual to have silhouettes of your great, great grandfather cut in 1810.

Many of these other gadgets hanging up in here were in the family. You seldom find burl bowls with a handle. You find burl bowls and they are getting to be a real rarity. One was sold down at the Cobblestone auction this fall for \$85.00 ! It was about 14 inches in diameter. My father collected burl bowls as a hobby or because he liked the things. We have the eleven that he collected. I think he collected nine or ten, and since I have been going around I have collected a couple. But burl bowls are very hard to come by at the present time. The mulberry dishes that you see on the shelf were in my grandfather's family. He bought them from Sinclair's on the canal bank. At one time, there were place settings for 22 people. When my grandfather died, he willed them to my aunt, Anna Cliff. About 50 years ago she divided the set up, with her three sisters and my father. My father put his away in the

cupboard so they didn't get too badly broken or chipped. The rest of the dishes are pretty well scattered to the four winds. In the last 20 years, whenever we would get a chance, have been collecting Mulberry dishes. Avis has now place settings for eight. We can always use sugar bowls, platters, vegetable dishes and tureens, and they are quite scarce. A lot of this was used on the canal trade. They were made in England; they are iron-stone and were shipped by Packet Boat. You find them along the canal towns in New York State. These Mulberry dishes are of black-blue color. They are not too pretty, but at the same time are very unique. They were made in England and the pattern we have is called Cypress, and they were made by Davenport. That other big platter was in the Lattin family down at Poughkeepsie and was given to us by Ellen Marshall about 15 years ago. That is also the iron-stone pattern but not the same one we like to collect.

The rooster that you see over there was done by our boy when he was in high school. He was a freshman or sophomore. He made that mosaic out of colored corn that we raised here in the garden. It was taken to the Rochester show about seven years ago. It didn't win a prize but there was considerable comment about it in Rochester. It was used on the Democrat and Chronicle Supplement newspaper one Sunday. I like it very much. I thought it was quite a rooster.

We are not exactly trivet collectors. I guess we do have 10 or 15 and whenever we find one in the rubbish or in junk shops if it is not too expensive, we try to make a deal for it. It is sort of pretty and there are thousands of patterns of trivets. Many people are collectors of trivets, but we like them. If you want to grab something to put under a hot dish, it is always ready.

I can throw in a couple of canal stories that come to my mind. About 90 years ago the canal broke just west of Gaines Basin, on the 6th of June about 6 o'clock in the morning, and the farm right north of us where David Bullard lives. He was out in his pig-pen feeding his pigs fairly early in the morning - he and his daughter - when the canal broke! A part of the bank went right out with a great big gush. It came in a little brook right back of the houses between here and our barn. As he was in the pig pen, the first thing he knew he was surrounded by water and in a matter of seconds, he was water-borne. Mr. Bullard and his daughter were going down the stream with the pig-pen! They went down across the Bullard farm, across our north farm, and across the Gaines Basin Road, over into the farm that is now occupied by Jimmie Navarro. There was a big, flat rock about five or six acres. The water had a chance to go around this and eddy around the lot in a big whirlpool. As the pig-pen came over near the house, there were several people there. They called to Bullard and his daughter to jump out as they coasted around the shore. The girl jumped out, up to her waist, and they pulled her ashore. He was a good sailor and stuck to his ship, going down another half mile, and lodged in a big tree where Tracey Sanford lives, where the brook crosses the Gaines Road the second time. He was rescued there.

Another canal story that was told to me and my mother by Mr. Amos Cliff who lived over on the Cliff farm. They came here when the Bullards did, about 1810 or 1812. When they were enlarging the canal about 1850 west of Gaines Basin (by the way, Gaines Basin is the point farthest point north on the Erie Canal). There were a lot of Irishmen living in shanties or shacks on the canal bank. One night Mr. Cliff, when he was a boy about 15 or 16 years old, when he went up in his pasture to find his cows to bring them home for milking, the cows were

out of the pasture. It was with considerable effort that he found his cows in the woods and brought them home and went back to the pasture to see how they got out. Up near the canal, several of the top rails were gone off the fence, so he had to go the next morning and split some more rails and repair the fence. In four or five days after that, the cows were out the second time. He didn't have to be too stupid to know that from the Irishmen's shanties someone was using the top rails for firewood. So that night, Mr. Cliff went up to the fence with an augur and some gunpowder. He bored in on the ends of several rails and daubed it over with mud. In about three mornings, the griddles of the stove went up through the roof; and he lost no more rails from the fence! Today the Supreme Court wouldn't condone anything like that, but taking the law into your own hands then gave you a little semblance of law and order.

We use this room for a dining room. We don't use it too often, but we use it somewhat. The two tables that you see before you - this before you at the right, was made by my great, great grandfather who was a cabinet-maker at Poughkeepsie. The other table that matches it in length, breadth and height came from the Mathers family. They were old timers in the village of Gaines. The sideboard on the other side of the room was bought by my great grandfather on William Street in New York City about 1800. Its Hepptheweite sideboard and in excellent condition. The handles and pulls on the drawers have the eagle and the 13 stars are signed "H.J." We have learned from antique magazines that during the Revolution there was a brass maker or metal maker by the name of Henry Johnson, was one who made these handles or pulls. This sideboard was brought up the canal by my great grandfather in 1833, and sat in the Lattin homestead. After he died, Uncle Holmes acquired the sideboard and my grandfather, who was a sentimentalist so to speak similar to the way I am, traded with his brother, and gave his brother a cow for the sideboard. My grandmother, who was an Anderson and a little more frugal moneywise than the Lattins, didn't enjoy the sideboard too much and it set in the woodshed for a number of years. In 1901 a cousin of ours who was an antique dealer in Poughkeepsie, offered my father a thousand dollars for it and any modern sideboard he wanted to pick out of his store! My father didn't see any reason why he should sell it, so he enjoyed it in his lifetime. I am enjoying it now and we hope that our son will enjoy it. My son will be the 6th generation of the Lattins to own it. There is a similar one at Williamsburg, and quite a similar one in Mount Vernon. There is a lot of work and a lot of inlay in that sideboard. There are a lot of people who don't see anything, and they don't realize what it is.

The portraits that you see above the sideboard are the Lattin girls, my grandfather's cousins. The small portraits were twins: one was Emma and one was Jane Lattin. The one in the larger one is Ellen. She married John L. Marshall. These pictures were given to me in 1920 and I liked them then. Now today they are antique collector's items. Two or three from Cooperstown have seen them and they suggest that we might have them down in Cooperstown. I like them here in the Lattin homestead. When the Mona Lisa was brought from France, John F. Kennedy spoke about the "Mona Liser". How do you like his accent? The Mona Lisa is painted on tulip wood. These portraits are painted on tulip wood, so instead of having one Mona Lisa, we have three! They are quite primitive.

The glass canes that you see hanging up here my father brought back from the World's Fair in 1894. It is amazing to me that it never has been broken. I don't know why for we used to have them in the dining room hanging over the mirror. If there is any youngster around here that looks kind of wild, I put it away because you wouldn't have to drop it only once, because it is a glass cane.

We also like some modern things that we really cannot afford to have. You notice this pair of Steuben candlesticks. I was fascinated when I saw them making candlesticks and goblets over there at Corning. We found out that we had some friends who had a daughter whose husband worked at Corning. I had a weather vane, an old horse weather vane, that we didn't use so we got together about candlesticks and weather vanes with this boy who worked there could get 33 per cent off, and the iron horse weather vane, we made a trade so that the candle sticks were not nearly as expensive as they would have been if we had bought them in a New York store, or in Corning.

Years ago this was the parlor in the house, and that end over there was the parlor bedroom. When my father and mother came here to live, they used this room as a bedroom. There was an alcove back there that my mother used as a dressing room, with a doorway into it about six feet wide. We took out the partition and we use this room as a living room as it is bright and cheerful, on the south side of the house. I know when my Aunt Vine Kirby, after we had overhauled the house, said, "I don't like red paper". There was quite a little red paper in the house. We said, "We don't care whether you like red paper or not! We didn't paper it for you." We papered it for ourselves, and she didn't get much satisfaction. We like red paper.

The clock you see at the west end of the room was in Avis' family. It was sold out of the family 35 or 40 years ago, and we got track of it. The woman who had it didn't use it. It didn't work and there was quite a bit of a scroll with it broken at the top. It is an Eli Taay Patent. It is not a terry clock but looks just like one of his clocks. I did a lot of work in repairing the clock and we had it overhauled and we enjoy it very much. The shelf that it sets on was in my mother's family. That is a mahogany shelf and a very pretty one. It was made with a jig-saw and makes a good shelf for the clock.

These other pieces in here: the davenport is really modern. If we want something comfortable to sit on, or we can sleep on if we have an overflow of house guests. The chair over there and this one here were Lattin pieces that belonged in my great grandfather's family. There were originally six of them, but they got scattered. We have two and are very fortunate.

You notice that there is no television that is visible. We never had a television and we didn't think we could afford a television. However, a friend of mine that was very wealthy, decided that we should have a television. He said, "If you don't go and buy one, I'll bring one down and have it installed for you". So we didn't want a t.v., so we concealed it back of those cupboards. If we see something that we think we would enjoy, we open the cupboard doors and there is the t.v.

These paintings: that one of the boy is a family piece. He was a son of John L. Marshall and Ellen Lattin. He accidentally shot himself when he was 13 years old. He was the same generation as my father. The two children right back of you, we bought those in Lockport from some estate that was being settled up. They are of a boy and a girl. We

liked the colors and they are nice portraits of children. The portrait over there is of Rev. Francis Dunham. By the way, he was my godfather. That picture was painted of him when he went to DeVeaux Military School near Niagara Falls. He was in a uniform and was probably 15 or 16 years old. When Bill's friends come in here, the younger jet-set, they laugh about it because his hair was long, way down over his ears, as the boys wear their hair now, and almost down to his shoulders. That picture was tossed out of the parish house, down in the basement with a lot of rubbish. We discovered it and thought we would bring it home and put it in a more proper place to set. This portrait over here is a portrait of Asher Torrence. He was a postmaster in Lockport, one of the first and one of the first masters of the O.G.T. Lockport Lodge. Lockport Lodge was one of the few Lodges in western New York that survived the Morgan episode. I used to go up to Aunt Georgie Folgers and admire this picture. However, she decided to see fit that I shouldn't have it. She gave it to Lockport Lodge when she died. Nobody in Lockport Lodge now-a-days would give a "tinker's darn" for it, so I commenced to inquire around the Past-masters, and the two women in Lockport that are very much interested in the Eastern Star, and through Clarence Lewis' influence, they decided that the place for the picture was back in the family realm. So I was very happy to get the portrait of Asher Torrence back! He was my great, great step-grandfather and although I have none of his blood in my veins, I have always admired the picture and I have always thought a great deal of Aunt Georgie.

These rugs were made by Avis and her aunt, Hattie Kilner, and made entirely of wool. They are good for wear and they will wear for years. Avis is not too happy with this floor. It was laid about 30 years ago. My mother had it put down in her bedroom. The old floor was wide basswood boards and there were cracks in them. You will notice when we go upstairs that there are cracks in the basswood floors, but we wish that we had the basswood floors back. It would be much more appropriate than this hard oak floor. Sometime we'll get it carpeted or put an old floor over this floor.

These two pieces of scrimshaw were in the Harland family; that was my mother's name. When my grandmother Harland died, my aunt Sath Hyde inherited these scrimshaw pieces in the division. They are whales' teeth, carved by sailors. Jacob and Naomi (or Ruth) they are biblical characters, and if they were historical characters that do with the sea, they would be worth a lot more. Scrimshaw is hard to come by now, and you seldom find it as far away from the ocean as we are. I don't know how the Harlands came by them. These were given back to us by Mary Hyde Single about six or seven years ago. I thought that was very nice, that she wanted us to have these pieces of scrimshaw. The other day there was a catalogue of Christmas gifts came here from somewhere along the coast, and I noticed that there was a scrimshaw in this catalogue. There was one piece around three or four, maybe five inches high that cost about \$80.00. So you see it is quite expensive, but I suppose it took quite a lot of time to cut them. I suppose the sailors had quite a lot of time to cut them, and I imagine whale's teeth were a lot more plentiful 125 years ago than they are at the present time.

The little tilt-top table at the left of the sofa was made by my great, great grandfather who was a cabinet maker. That was given to us by our cousin Alice Dale about 30 years ago when she moved into a smaller apartment. It was in storage a few years ago when she wrote to us to come to Rochester as she had a table for us. It is a very nice drop-leaf table. It is solid mahogany. This tilt-top table is maple stained to look like mahogany and that is unusual because it has a crow's nest

on the top of a pedestal. That tilts and also swings (tilt-top and swing-top).

This mercury barometer that you see here is a modern barometer. Years ago I used to sell chickens and eggs to Miss Lola Burrell. She had a nice old mercury barometer that was on her porch for years. I always admired it. One day when I went in with my eggs and chickens, I said, "What has happened to your old barometer?" "Oh", she said, "I gave that to the Taylor Instrument Company in Rochester. They were making a collection, and they gave me this new barometer." I always used to look at it when I went in there. It had never been set and I told her one day that I would come in with a pair of pliers and set it for her, and adjust the mercury. I never got around to do it. Anyhow, Miss Burrell died and I still took eggs and chickens to the house there because Charlotte Stevenson was there keeping the house. She was working for Mrs. Burrell's estate. I said to her one day, "What is going to happen to the new barometer?" "I don't know", she said. "None of Miss Burrell's things can be sold. Would you like it?" I said, "I'd like it very much!" "Well", she said, "I will see Mr. MacGregor". Mr. and Mrs. MacGregor were executor's of the estate. One Sunday morning in church Charlotte said to me, "You're going to get the barometer. Mr. MacGregor wants you to have it." I didn't waste any time. I went up to Mr. MacGregors. On the back of it was written whose it was and how I come by it. You see, I'm a sentimentalist and I like these things. It is a good barometer. I check it almost any night. One time it got down as far as that, in 1947. I thought the top was going to pull off. One time it got up as high as that, about thirty and a half!

Now we are up at the head of the stairs. You will notice this old grandfather clock. That was in Avis's family and was once owned by Oliver Wyman. All of the Wyman's were very clever workmen. They were good craftsmen and we think that he brought this from Connecticut or Massachusetts when he came to this country about 1812 or 1813. Maybe he brought just the works, and the case could have been made later. We don't know. It was given to Bill about 16 years ago. The works needed overhauling. Bert Chapman, who was the trouble-shooter for IBM, took the works and bored out the old bearings, put in ivory bearings and it keeps perfect time. It strikes on the hour and runs about 25 hours. If you go to bed real early and wind it, and do not wind it the next night until two or three o'clock, it will run down. We enjoy it. We do not have anyplace downstairs for it and we put it up here. It is screwed to the wall so if youngsters come here, they can't grab hold of it and knock it down.

These are pictures of some of my ancestors: the Anderson coat of arms (the pictures in the hall upstairs); my grandmother Lattin was an Anderson. (By the way, she went to Phipps Union Seminary in Albion. My grandmother Harland went to Phipps Union Seminary. Avis's grandmother went to Phipps Union Seminary). This is the old guy in the family who was a cabinet maker. He was born in 1776 and died in 1858. This is Sarah Allen, his wife, and they were Revolutionary people. This Joseph Lattin and his wife, Mary Wright. This is the Lattin coat of arms.

This is Bill's room. He has been a glass collector for the last 15 or 16 years and has collected a lot of good glass. It is mostly out of here now because he has an apartment in Medina.



This bed is cherry and was made on the Lattin farm before 1858 by Nathaniel Lattin when he was up in this county working. ... The posts are of solid cherry. The head boards are white wood.

The end (of the room) we partitioned off so that is a clothes closet out of Bill's room because there are very few clothes closets up here.

Here is a guest room. This bed is buckhorn maple. There you will notice another painting by Peter B. West. That I got in the junk yard a few years ago for \$5.00! I was very happy when I got a picture like that for \$5.00 in a junk yard. If it had stayed there very much longer, it would probably have been tossed out or burned up.

The sampler that you see at the head of the bed was painted by one of these great, great grandmothers: not painted, it was needle-point, or sampler. The alphabet and models girls used to make in those days. The date is marked 1824.

These floors are basswood. They were probably cut off the farm and are about 12 inches wide, - the boards. We scraped them down with a power sander and then we put Fabulon on.

This picture that you see here, Bill found in a house on Clinton Street. We were told we could go in and help ourselves to anything that was left. We found this old picture. It didn't look very good to me. "No", he said; "I think it's good!" So he brought it home. He was looking at a magazine one time, called Hobbies, or Spinning Wheel. In Spinning Wheel was this same picture and it was called "White House Orchids" and was painted by Caroline S. Harrison, the wife of Benjamin Harrison when he was president and she was the first lady. This is a reproduction.

This Winsor chair that you see here, was given to me by my aunt, Georgia Folger of Lockport whom I spoke of previously. That was her great grandmother's. That chair is probably a little over 200 years old and, as I said, was owned by her great grandmother, Cynthis Cowens.

A bedroom, quite a large room, probably 20 by 18, maybe bigger than that. It takes an awful lot of wallpaper to cover the sides when you get going in there. It is almost half the upstairs in the house. These boards, you notice, are basswood, probably cut off the woods.

The chest is another of the Nathaniel Lattin pieces, and that was shipped up by packet boat to Joseph Lattin, I don't know when, sometime after 1833. It is painted on the back: "to J. A. Lattin, Packet Boat via Howard and Thurston, Albion, Orleans County". I prize that very highly. It is a very nice cherry chest, dove-tailed and as tight as it was the day he made it.

That painting there is Avis's great grandmother, Harriet Nichols, who was married to Andrew Wilson. It is pastel and looks like a photograph.

The highboy is a piece we picked up some years ago. That chair was in my mother's family. It was her grandmother's and is quite a small chair. She must have been quite a small woman to have used such a small chair. Anyone with a big butt fills it up pretty quick. This is one that I got about 40 years ago over at an auction at Scottsville.

Here is a chest made by my great, great grandfather and is the only thing he signed. This was made in 1819 in Poughkeepsie. His initial is on the bottom of it, also the names of his children. The 1834 date I don't know. This J. A. Lattin was my great grandfather, this was Deborah, this was William, and this was Jane Maria who died when she was 21 years old. She married somebody by the name of Culver. This aunt Georgie of Lockport gave that to me about four years ago. Here is a sample nut here of this big chest; the same kind of mouldings and about the same- this drawer here. That's a nice little chest. That little square table, I made about 40 years ago, out of walnut. The top board came from Dye and Fox's Clothing Store. Millard Simpson gave me this piece of walnut. The legs came from a tree that Fay Hollenbeck had cut down on the Ridge.

That is a Currier and Ives of the presidents up to the time of Abraham Lincoln. I presume someone who collected Currier and Ives prints would like that. It goes from George Washington to 1865. There's one that was in the family, some of the Lattins down at Poughkeepsie.

This bed, Aunt Deborah had that, and it is about 135 to 140 years old. That is a ring. It was given back to us last year.

This was a clothes closet here. We took about 20 inches off to make a clothes closet for our guest room, then we cut through this partition so that we would have a bathroom. So there was a clothes closet 20 feet long. We didn't need that much clothes closet, and with no place to put a bathroom, so we cut through here and when we cut through here, we ran into a beam. I didn't know whether to cut it off or not. I talked to carpenters. They said it would probably be alright to cut it off. So we put another header to the beam up there, and another header down here, and drove that to the blacksmith at Childs to get a heavy angle iron a half inch thick. We used some bit long lag bolts, and so we lagged them all in so that the house wouldn't fall apart. (Back in the kitchen or family room).

I thought I was all through, but I started "yacking" again! You don't realize if you had a pocket full of money and a big fat checkbook, how long it would take two people to acquire the amount of things that are in this house because I know where everyone of them came from, practically. The cupboards are full, and what do they amount to if they are stashed away. But if the time ever comes that we have to sell them, we will sell them. But they should be preserved because there are a lot of things here that if they are gone, they are gone forever; and I hope that my son, and he is commencing to realize that they are something in antiques. He was always interested in art and modern, and now he is commencing to realize that there is something that the old things mean something after all.

Now I want to show you some of these burl bowls. This one was my great, great grandmother's and probably one of the first sewing machines that came into Orleans County. It's not a toy. It sewed in chain stitch and you can pull it all out and it all unravels.

This burl bowl is one that Dr. Mark Hedges gave my dad probably 45 years ago. It's made out of solid black ash knot and somebody had drawn the crank case oil out of a Model T Ford and set it under a car with all this crank case oil in it until it penetrated into the bowl. Dr. Mark Hedges worked on it to get this oil out, and my father worked on it. It set out in the shop, under the bedroom, for ten

years. Finally I went at it, after I was married, and I scraped all with a pen knife and got all the oil out of the wood. We use it for a salad bowl. One just a little bigger than that sold at the Cobblestone auction for \$85.00! This one, was in the house here. I gave it to Will DeGarmo, down at Poughkeepsie. When he died, Ella gave it back to us and I was awful glad that she did. There is one made by my great, great grandfather, the cabinet maker. That I know, because when Aunt Lime settled up and sold her house, I found it with the contents in the cellar and she gave it to me. It's not perfect but it's made the way the knot grew evidently. It's sort of bean shaped.

This one was my bath tub when I was a baby. It will hold a couple bushels. That is a burl bowl; the biggest one that I have ever seen! This is another. These were in the family. Here's one that Avis gave me for a Christmas present about ten years ago. That's a nice little chopping bowl. Those are really rare and valuable.

I don't know what this was made for, probably a cookie. It is a wooden jog, but look at the turning. Isn't that a nice piece of woodwork? It was probably made 50 years ago, or more. Look at the turning. How would you get into there to turn that out? Here is the lid that goes with it. They are getting rare.

#### THE END

The above is a copy made from the transcript located in the Orleans County Historian's office, in the Court House, Albion, New York.

Mr. Clifford Wise made the original tape recording of Mr. Cary Lattin.

Mrs. Helen M. McAllister, Medina, New York typed this additional material to accompany her interview with Mr. Lattin for the Orleans County Historical Association, Oral History Project.



# Orleans County Historical Association

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backhouses and privies

the Cobblestone Gift Shop

the Cobblestone Museum

moving buildings

Masonic corner-stone service

Curator: C. Wilson Lattin (Bill)

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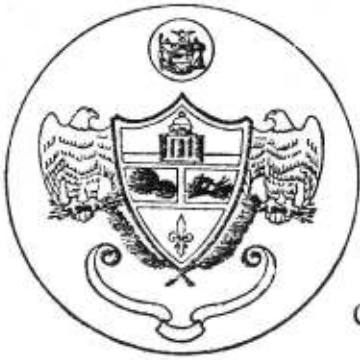
pumpkin festival/patriotic/lamplight

weddings, etc.

Book: Cobblestone Landmarks of New York State

two stories as told by Cary Lattin

1898-1988



# Orleans County Historical Association

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW: Mr. Cary Lattin

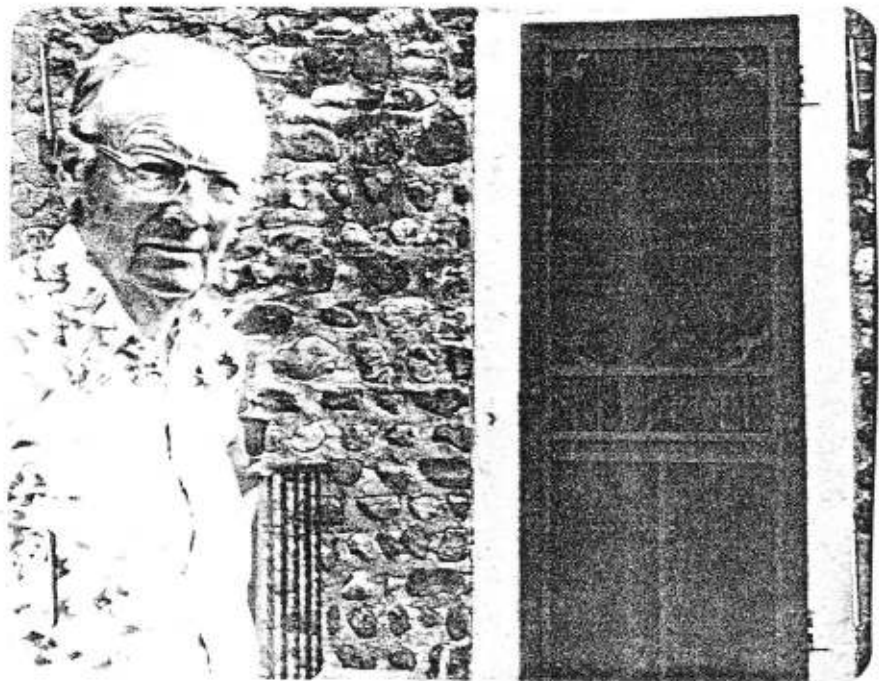
Mr. Cary Lattin  
Gaines-Basin Road  
Albion, New York

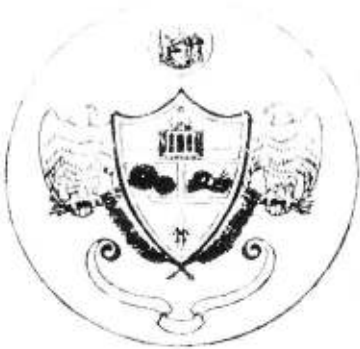
Cary Lattin was born June 11, 1898.

The interview was conducted by Helen McAllister of Medina, N.Y.

L Lattin

Mc McAllister





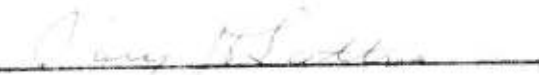
# Orleans County Historical Association

## ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

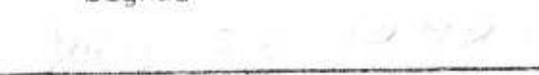
The purpose of this project is to collect information about the historical development of Orleans County by means of tape-recorded conversations with people whose experiences reflect the county's growth.

These tapes and transcriptions will be preserved as educational resources and possible publication (all or in part).

I hereby release this tape and transcription to the Orleans County Historical Association.



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 Signed  
  


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 Date

Understood and agreed to:


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 INTERVIEWER  


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 Date

For the Orleans County Historical Association, July 24, 1979, Helen McAllister of Medina, New York is interviewing Mr. Cary Lattin.

Mr. Lattin lives with his wife, Avis, in a beautiful cobblestone house on the Gaines Basin Road near Albion, New York.

This interview concerns the Cobblestone Society.

L I'll try and tell a little bit about the history of the Cobblestone Society, why it was formed and how it was formed.

During the year 1959, when Gaines had the Sesquicentennial celebration at Gaines, there was going to be a one day celebration or fair. It took about two months to get ready for this Sesquicentennial celebration. We wanted to visit the points of interest around the town and we wanted to visit the Cobblestone Church at Childs. We went to the Universalist Board in Albion and asked them if they would open the church for one day so we could see the interior of this beautiful old Cobblestone Church. Two or three of us went down to the church and word came 'round, and we went through the building. The plaster was bad in the ceiling and it was in kind of rough shape. There were many windows that were broken and the Universalist Board decided that it would be risky to have a bunch of children running around in the church. They might jar some plaster and break somebody's glasses ! So we didn't have the Church to visit. During the Centennial, and after the Centennial, people commenced to ask: "What's going to happen to the old church ?" When you tell a damn

Yankee that he can't have something, hell is out for dinner-time. Then they want it! They learned that in Prohibition. When they told the American people they couldn't have booze, they got booze, one way or another. So, people in the neighborhood were concerned. People in the district were concerned, and in the town. People out in the provinces were concerned. "What's going to happen to this old beautiful church?" And people would say: "What's going to happen to it?" We had no organization formed that could maintain the building; or had no society formed that could operate the thing like it is today.

During the winter of 1959 and '60, Bob Frasch taught school in Holley, history and English, and he formed a Yorker Club in the Holley High School. One of the projects was to find the cobblestone houses in the Town of Murray and get all the information on these 14 cobblestone houses in Murray. There wasn't too much information available. He came into the office when I was County Historian and asked me what I knew about a cobblestone house. I said: "I have lived in one about 60 years. And by way of talking about cobblestone buildings, there's a beautiful church building in Childs." He said: "Let's see it." So we proceeded to go down to Childs, stopping by Homer Brown's house to get the key to the church. When he saw the interior of this old Cobblestone Church, he really flipped! He said, "This building should be saved!" I said: "Yes, I know it should be saved but how are you going to save it? We have no organization whatsoever to do this. We have no money. We have no organization, and how are you going to form an organization as quick as that?"



Well, people commenced to get concerned. The Historian of the Town of Albion, Katharine Billings, whose ancestors had been attendants of this church and the Historian of the Town of Gaines, Howard Pratt, was interested. And that's the way it hung fire. The next fall, in 1960, Charlie Thompson called me one morning about six o'clock and said: "Say, they are going to sell the Cobblestone Schoolhouse. We better do something about it." I liked that - - - "We better do something about it." So I went down to see Charlie and he said all the district schools have been centralized in the five schools in Orleans County: Kendall, Holley, Albion, Medina, and Lyndonville. He says: "You know they are going to sell this building next week Tuesday at Albion Central School. They are going to dispose of it." "Well," I said, "Charlie, will you go up to the meeting? You can vote." He said: "Yes." "Well you go up to the meeting and vote against selling it; to hold us on the table for six months until we can do something?" And he said: "Sure." Charlie stuttered a little bit. So I took it upon myself to go and see about 12 or 14 people in the immediate district, Gaines # 5, to see if they would go to the Albion Central School meeting and see if we couldn't save this - - - stall this off; for four or five or six months until we could get an organization. Bob Frasch and I went to the meeting and asked if we couldn't be heard, and we both talked about holding this up until an organization could be formed. Our main purpose was to save the Church. This was the main building. The Cobblestone School and the Cobblestone Church. We gave them a pitch and they listened. walter Balcom was there. He had gone to school at this Cobblestone School. He had attended the Cobblestone Church when they had their meetings there, during the

summer, twice each summer. He had a very fine vocabulary of four-letter-words. He got up and said: "I make a blankety-blank motion that this blankety-blank schoolhouse be left on the table for six months, and if you blankety-blank guys can't get organized in that time, you don't deserve the damn school !" And, they voted unanimously to hold the sale up for six months. They tossed us a torch and then we had to do something. So we got an ad-hoc-committee, so to speak. We had no money. We had no funds. We had nothing ! And on this, we wrote a letter, Bob Frasch, it was in his writing. And we got Katharine Billings, the Albion Historian, and Howard Pratt, who was Gaines Town Historian, and Morris Wilson, who lived next door to the Church and one or two others. Bob Frasch and the committee and myself signed this letter. We sent this letter out to 100 people. We went through the telephone directory and looked in there and saw names of people we thought would be interested in saving their heritage. Well, the meeting was called at three o'clock on a cold Sunday afternoon in October 1960.

You know there were 65 people showed up at that meeting, and we had a slate of officers drawn up. We'd asked all these people if they'd either be a director or an officer, and we told them what we wanted to do at this meeting. There was about 60 people signed up to be members. Some of them paid a \$2.00 dues right then. So we had the thing started. We agreed to meet at the Village Inn, in about two weeks and get an organization meeting.

We had a dinner meeting over at the Village Inn and we had the west room pretty well filled up. There were probably 89 to 100 people there who were interested in saving this building. Carl Schmidt was there. He

was also at the first meeting. He had written a book about cobblestone buildings in 1944. The little books that he wrote in 1944 are collector's items today ! So we had a slate of officers drawn up. We had a cross section of our people: we had an attorney, we had two architects, we had school teachers, we had farmers, and we had business-men on this thing. We had a cross section of what was going on. With the help of the attorney and Bob Frasch, they came up with a set of by-laws and a constitution. We asked for a charter from the New York State Department of Education. And we were wise. That was our attorney's advice. "Get this charter from the State Department of Education if you possibly can." So we had the application for a charter and it was signed by, I think, the directors and the officers. By the end of the six months we had a temporary charter. So when the school-house came up for sale, the next April, that was in 1961, we had \$129.00 in our fat little hands to pay for the school-house ! That's what we had to pay for deeds and search and the necessary proper papers that has to be signed to transfer the property. So we owned the building.

We were in business. Carl Schmidt came up with the idea that we would have a tour that spring, 1961. And, we held a Cobblestone Tour and made money. It was held right around this vicinity. That fall we had an auction in the school-house to make money, but our main concern was to save the church. We had made some overtures to the Universalist Board in Albion, and they were in our corner, so to speak. We kept trying. John Brush, who was a director on our society, was in the hierarchy of the Universalist State Convention, and his influence didn't hurt a bit !

He was a trustee of St. Lawrence University. He had endowed St. Lawrence University very well. It took about two or three years before the final papers came through. After the papers were signed by the Universalist State Convention and the Universalists over here had relinquished what they had in the building, it seems that they sat for six months in Judge Serve's office. I saw him one day in the courthouse hall and I said: "You know, Judge, why can't you hurry that up a little bit? We want to get title to that building and we want to do things!" He says: "You know, Cary, don't try to coerce a Supreme Court Judge. I wouldn't want to put you in jail."

Mc He said, what?

L Don't coerce, influence, a Judge unduly.

So in about three years we got clear title to the Cobblestone Church in Childs. We were in business real good. The Cobblestone Society put a roof on that building that cost \$2200 before we owned it. That's how much we thought of the building. So we had two buildings.

Well, our angel, John Brush, is a good friend of mine. I've known him as long as I've known anybody around Albion High School, and he is a fairly wealthy man. I said: "You know one day that we should restore the tower." There was a tower on that church when it was first built. The tower was removed in 1918 because it was getting deteriorated. The timbers were rotten. So, they decided, the Universalist Society, to take the tower off. And he said: "I think so too, and I will pay for it." So John and I went to see Hobert Snell who was the only contractor close by; and John and Hobart made a deal, and the tower was restored. I can't tell you what year it was. Perhaps in '63

or '64. And John Brush paid for it himself. I remember when he was up there; the terrace in front of the church was in bad shape when we bought the church. They were all covered over with woodbine. Nobody knew there was a terrace there, just thought there were some steps going up there. So one day when there were some of the directors down there, we decided to pull up some of the woodbine, and discovered there was a terrace ! It looked pretty crummy. One day John says: "I think we better do some repair on the front of the church. I will repair the terrace and furnish some landscaping." So we went to see "Pat" (Pasquale) DiLaura, who was the last of the Orleans County Quarry-men. He was as fine a gentleman as I ever hoped to know.

"Pat" DiLaura was Mr. Stone Quarry, Medina Sandstone. He was 80 years old at the time, and he said he would take upon the job of restoring the terrace. He still had some influence at the quarries in Hulberton, and he went down there with some of his trucks and got a couple of loads of stone to relay this terrace. With his stonecutter helper, Sandy Malone, "Pat" DiLaura relaid the stone. Frankie Swierczynski let us have four or five of his colored boys over there to do the grub work. They had to dig out the trench and do some of the heavy lifting for "Pat". There was "Pat" DiLaura and Sandy Malone that made the terrace and that was laid in 1966. It looked pretty nice. These shrubs that were replanted, came from a nursery up in Newfane; and that first summer they were planted there. They guaranteed these shrubs to live. I said: "That awful nice, to guarantee these shrubs !" However, he says: You got to water them this summer." I watered them 27 times that summer. I got water for free from Hank Radzinski's spigot.

You know, neighbors are better than money sometimes. When Hank Radzinski was going to get his license for a Liquor Store, right next to the church, he was having problems. The Secretary of the Orleans County Liquor Authority came to me and said: "How many times are you going to have service in your church?" It wasn't my church and I wasn't having the service, but that's what he said. I said: "We don't know whether we would have any service." "You know" he said, "Hank is going to have problems getting a liquor store next to a church." I said: "If you talk to any Cobblestoner and they try to do any one thing to stop his liquor store, clobber them!" I told Howard Pratt, and I told a couple of others: "If they wanted to have a liquor store there, he is going to get it in spite of hell. Let's have his good will." So we had his good will. When we wanted water, we had thousands and thousands of gallons of water! I talked to Hank about it and he says: "I know it. I appreciate what you guys didn't do." So we were in business.

About that time or a little later, Nellie Vagg, who lived kitty-corner across the street, had a Blacksmith's Shop. It was her husband's Blacksmith Shop. The original shop, which was a brick shop, was built in 1830, and that burned up in the fall of 1921. The farmers needed a Blacksmith in 1921 to repair their tools and shoe their horses and do the necessary things around the farm that had to be done. So the farmers pitched in and helped Joe build a Blacksmith Shop, and he was off and running! He operated that shop until in the 1950s.

Joe Vagg and Nellie Vagg were solid citizens. Nellie Vagg worked in the shop with Joe. She would run the bellows and help build the fire when they were setting wagon tires. She was the only woman I ever knew that

always wore black stockings. Even when she got to be an old lady and was through with the Blacksmith's Shop. She always wore black stockings because black stockings in a Blacksmith Shop was more appropriate than colored stockings. They were solid citizens. And, I mean solid citizens ! He earned all his money with an anvil and a hammer. He sent two kids to college. The girl went to Elmira and graduated there and the boy went to the University of Rochester and graduated there. And he got to be the Night Editor of the Democrat and Chronicle (newspaper). So they didn't do too bad. Nellie Vagg decided to give the Blacksmith Shop to the Cobblestone Society. It was to be ours at the end of five years, or at her death, whichever came last, and she lived longer than five years so after she died, we got clear title to the shop. We put a roof on the Blacksmith Shop about the time that we acquired it. It may have been a little before; but about that time. So now we had three buildings. We had the church, the school and the Blacksmith Shop.

Bill Lattin was hired, or asked, to be curator, January 1, 1971.

Mc Bill Lattin. (C. Wilson Lattin, son of Cary and Avis Lattin)

L He has the sharpest pair of eyes of anybody that I have ever known. He says: "Everybody looks but very few people see." And it's true. He knows more about the cemeteries and headstones in Orleans County than all the undertakers and grave diggers put together. Or if there is anything unusual about a building, he knows where it is and what's it all about.

He was coming through East Center Street in Medina one day and he noticed this little building up at Maine's Lumber Company. It stood there and it was always boarded up. So wheels got to winding around in his mind, and he said: "You know, it would be a

nice building for a Print Shop." So he went down to see Erling Maine one day and Erling says: "What can I do for you, Bill?" He says: "Do you own that building in the lumber yard in Medina near your lumber yard?" He says: "I do. What about it?" Bill says: "I want it." He says: "you want it?" He says: "Yes, I want it for the Cobblestone Society for a Print Shop." Maine thought a minute or two and then said: "Okay, I'll go along with you." Bill had a building dropped in his lap. Well the next thing was, how are you going to move it? So he was talking with Dr. Houck who was the Superintendent of Schools in Albion, and about this time they was starting this CETA program. Bill wanted to talk to Houck about how we could get help: could we get CETA workers, and one thing and another, and how are you going to move the building? "Well," Bill says: "you know, Keeler could probably move that if he would." And he says: "You know Jim Keeler. Why don't you ask him?" So he called Jim Keeler right away to see if he'd move this building, 12 by 20 with a little shed on one end of it. Keeler took a look at it and he said he would move it. However, the roof would have to come off. So they went up to Medina with their tools and equipment and CETA workers, and we took off the roof. That way it would go under the telephone and utilities lines across the road. So Keeler moved the building from Medina to a site in there on the same property that Nellie Vagg had given us. A triangular piece of ground on the south side of the brook, with room enough for this Print Shop. The building was moved in there and was set on piers. That summer the CETA workers put the roof on, painted the building, built the chimney



and built the wall under it. Up to CETA workers. These kids never had a trowel in their hands before. They did a remarkable job. They had to get from the Blacksmith Shop over to the Print Shop and they had to build a bridge over the brook. CETA workers built this bridge over the brook by design and plans Bill (Lattin) made. That is the way to get over there. It is a nice bridge.

Bill was talking to Dave Stevenson at one time. He had been Past Master of Renovation Lodge, and he was coming up as the District Deputy. He casually says to Dave: "You know, we ought to have a corner stone laying for the Print Shop." Dave says: "That's a great idea." In order to lay a corner stone by the Masonic Fraternity you have to have the Grand Master from New York to do it. So he contacted William R. Funt, who was Grand Master, and he was tickled to death to come up in this area and lay the corner stone ! There hadn't been a corner-stone-laying in Orleans County for probably 40 or 50 years. Well, I won't say that. A Masonic service. The corner stone over at the Infirmary was laid in 1960. So the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge came up here and laid the corner stone under the Print Shop. The stone they used had been taken out of the old Infirmary which was built in 1878, just 100 years prior. When they tore the building down I was up there and they were dismantling the building and I told Wally Forder, who was custodian at the Court House; I says: "For God's sake, don't let them bury that stone up in the rubbish. That should be saved." It said "1878" and on the other end of the stone was the Masonic square and compass. He said: "We don't want it around the Courthouse. If you got

room there we'll bring it over to the farm." So he brought it over here and we used it as a step to get in the corn house for about 18 years. So we had the stone that was just 100 years old when the stone was laid there. It was probably about the same age as the building. So the printing material that Harold Hill's father had given us was moved over there, and we had a nice little print shop. Sid Eddy from the Eddy Printing Company in Albion, New York, gave us some other type of things that was used in the printing business. They were old. People might say: "Why save a Print Shop?" Printer's ink will sell anything. And, if it wasn't for printing, where would the Holy Bible be today? It's the best selling book at the present time. The Bible has got more volumes sold than any other book that comes out. It always has been. In my lifetime there are two types of printing that have become obsolete: the hand set and the linotype. They don't do that any more in print shops. Linotyping is out. It's all electronics. And, there will be something faster than that in a few years. So there's two types of printing in my lifetime that have become obsolete. These old presses we have in the Print Shop is the old hand set type. So much for the Printing Office.

In the Town of Kendall, there was a church that was built down there in Kendall by the Universalists in 1855, and it was used by the Universalists from 1855 for about 25 or 30 years. The congregation was kind of falling apart. They just couldn't operate. So they sold it to the Lutherans. The Lutherans took over this old church, Greek Revival, and they used it until they outgrew the church and they built a new church. Then it was used for a Town Hall and a

school, when they was building the school down at Kendall. And in 1977 and '78, the building was just standing there and the people was wondering what they could do with it. Well, some of the people wanted to form a society, a social club. They wanted to do it but they couldn't get together. The girl who is Historian in the Town of Kendall, Delores Sedore, - - and I think she said something to Bill. "Have you got any idea what we can do with that building?" Well, Bill said, right off the top of his head. "Why don't you give it to the Cobblestone Society?" Well she didn't know whether they wanted to do that or not. That gave her something to think about! Bill went down to see the Town Board, or Mike Paduchak, who was Supervisor, and he said: "Well, we'll think about it." Well they thought about it and they said they'd give it to the Cobblestone Society but they had to have it moved off of there by the 1st of June. Here was a building, 30 by 44. The firemen was itching to set fire to it for a practice job. It was a damn shame to burn up a nice building like that! So Bill went back to Houck to see if he could get CETA workers. And, they were allowed three CETA workers. And, Bill thought he could get the building off of there. They had about, I don't know, about four weeks to take this building apart. They had to letter and number the boards and take it apart with these three green CETA workers. And Bill, who is not a carpenter; but he knew how to drive a nail and saw a board off pretty square. And they had - - - when they got the building taken down and got the - - - Pete Roth, who was our neighbor at Childs, with a big flat bed trailer, drew it up. And Bob Brown with another truck. They had, I think, two or three days leeway on their deadline, the 1st of June. So then we had a building but where

are we going to put it? So in the town, when we were having our Board Meeting, the early part of April and May that year and talking about this building; we had no place to put it. Somebody suggested that maybe Mrs. Neva Murray would give us a little ground, or we could buy a little piece of ground next to the Print Shop. So Mrs. Veeder Howard, who was on the Cobblestone Board, and Bill Lattin went to see Mrs. Murray and asked her if we could beg, buy, borrow or steal some land to put a church on. She thought about it for a few minutes and they had quite a discussion. I don't know whether they went to see her twice or not. But anyhow she said she would talk with her children, and if it was agreeable with them, she would give us this land. So she gave us the land adjacent to the Print Shop, out to the road, # 98, and up to where this brook runs. So we have a brook on two sides of our property, south of it and east of it.

Then we came up with the idea that sometime it's going to be named Cobblestone Brook. But that's got to go to the Federal Government to name a stream. It has no name at the present time. Assemblyman Steve Hawley told me: "I think you have to go to the Federal Government to get this." So maybe if we get Congressman John LaFalce and some of these others, we'll have a ribbon cutting down at the brook, naming the brook.

So the boys and Bill went to work on this church. It sat on 12 or 14 piers and they started putting this building back together. Well, the building wasn't in as good shape as we had anticipated. Many of the roof boards had to be replaced and some of the siding had to be replaced. So it cost us more than we had

anticipated, to put this building back together. The deadline on the CETA workers was the middle of November, that fall in 1978. They got the south part of the roof on in fairly warm weather in November. And, it started to turn cold. They had a little problem putting on the tar paper on the north hip of the roof. The sun didn't shine on that so good and it was hard to work it. But they had it on and had the building closed up by the middle of November. I think it was quite a job for three greenhorns and one kid put that building back together.

This year Bill has CETA workers to help. They are painting and finishing the floor and fixing up the inside of the building. It is a beautiful room. It's painted kind of yellow and it's all fixed up nice. It's going to be a beautiful room to use for a Farmer's Hall, to put our obsolete farm equipment in. It's going to be called Farmer's Hall. So now we have six large buildings.

Three years ago Bill discovered the old privy at the Bacon Homestead in Five Corners. It was attached to the house. It was a Victorian style of architecture. He finally found out who owned it and he went to see the owner who was Melva Ferris, and she wanted \$250. for the building. That's the backhouse from Five Corners.

Mc A privy and a backhouse are the same ?

L The same thing.

We didn't hesitate too much. It was a hell of a price to pay for a backhouse; but at the same time it was very unique ! We weren't certain, but we think that perhaps somebody like Caledonia Mumford had an idea, and she knew she could get this \$250.

So we had to pay her \$250.00. And in about two weeks time, one of our members, Nettie Ferris, Gave us a check for \$250.00. So maybe Nettie knew what she was spending the money for. Pete Roth picked it up on a fork lift and took it down back of the Ward House. It's an Eastlake design and it's a very elaborate privy. The paneling in the inside is all in the diagonals. It has a pretty little cupulo on it, a ventilator, and the windows slide back in the walls. So that's back of the Ward House.

The next year we had the chance to get the privy at Gaines from Mrs. Hockenberry. They were going to sell the place and they wanted to give the Cobblestone Society something. So they decided they would give them this privy. It was made to set back of the first bank in Orleans County, The Farmer's Bank of Orleans. It's a seven holer, a big backhouse ! It is federally designed; probably one of the oldest buildings in the County. (See NOTE: Page 16 1/2).

Then later that year, Elaine Wilson of Kuckville had just an ordinary privy down there, and she gave it to the Cobblestone Society. That was moved in there on a truck and set back of the Print Shop. In the case of an emergency, it is functional. That one they use.

This summer a lady came to Bill and said: "You know, I'm sorry you bought that privy from the Five Corners." She says: "I've got one that I would like to give to you. It was used in the home of Rufus Bullock in Albion; Bullock's Backhouse." When they put in plumbing there after the place was sold out of the Bullock family and the Fanchers bought it, they put in modern plumbing in Albion around 1910 or '12, they was putting in sewers then and everybody had to get

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**NOTE:**

Reference is made to a seven hole privy which was used for the first bank in Orleans County and was probably one of the first buildings in Orleans County. At the turn of the century, this old bank building was used as the parsonage of the Gaines Congregation Church. We moved there in 1904 and lived in that house until 1919. During that 15 years I have no recollection of other than the ordinary three holer: two large and one small. There was only room enough inside so that the "Sears and Roebuck" catalogue was in easy reach of any seat.

Luther Burroughs - - December 1979

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rid of backhouses in Albion. One of the sons took it up to his farm, and then later it was transported down west of Waterport. That's a very unique privy too, and that was given to us this year and moved up back of the church. That was the project of our buildings.

I have neglected to say when we acquired the Ward House. Mrs. Ward lived there and when we was organized she was very interested in the Cobblestone Society. And, if anybody forgot to turn the lights off at the church, or the scuttle house door was blowing open on the tower, she always would call up and say: "You better come down and shut it up." When people came along there before we had a regular curator there, she would let people in to the church. She had a key to show them what the church was like. We asked her at different times: "You know, Mrs. Ward, we ought to have that building some time." "Well," she said: "I know you should. I can't afford to give it to you, and you can't afford to buy it." Well, she was going to go to Texas and live with her son. She was about 91 years old. So we had a committee appointed to go and talk to Mrs. Ward: Howard Pratt, Nettie Ferris and myself. Finally she decided she would sell us the Little House, and we bought it in '74. We gave \$16,000.00 for it. And by paying all that money for the Little House, we had to scrape the bottom of the barrel of the Cobblestone treasury. That cleaned us up. Then she wanted to sell the contents of the house, and there was quite a lot of nice antiques in there. The son, Willis, had taken out the best things, which was natural. When we went down there that morning to see about the sale of the interior, I was surprised.



To me it looked better than I had thought it would, so we bought the contents for \$1,500.00. He said: "If you will give \$1,500.00 for them, I will give the Society \$500.00." It was some kind of write-off on his tax business, you know. So he paid \$500.00 then, and next year after we had an auction or two, we had the other \$500.00. George Wolfe, who was President at the time, was very insistant that we get this debt paid off. So we had to pay fairly dear for the house, but it would have been a shame if somebody else had acquired it and had a bad neighbor there. You see the house and church are in spitting distance, and it makes a nice office. There's a nice office in the basement of the house, and it's a nice little home.

It's two-tenths of a mile down to the schoolhouse. It's all walking distance. Anybody can walk. Yes sir, we got a nice thing. We got a nice setup.

I took Bill and Avis and Heather over to Mumford (Museum) two or three years ago. I didn't go in because I couldn't walk around in there. And when they come out I said: "Bill, how does it look?" He says: "It's nice." He says: "Our church is far superior to theirs." And, Cooperstown<sup>Museum</sup> has been up here to see it, the boys from Cooperstown, several of them. Pere Gulbet came up one day to give us advice: what to do and what not to do. All we have to do to the church is preserve it. We don't have to restore it. It's already just the way it is. It was used for cabbage storage for about 25 years. Balcolm Brothers stored cabbage in there. The floors have all been taken out of the basement and we put in 57 tons of

gravel to level it up, and put a cement floor in the basement. There was several of us helped push cement around and Howard Pratt and Curtis Murray ironed the cement level. They leveled it out. I wouldn't take on that job, but I helped push cement around.

Then we started the little Museum. The first exhibit we had in there was just Cobblestone pictures that had been taken by Gerda Peterich. That was the first year's exhibit in there.

Mc What year was it when the Museum was started in the basement of the church, Cary ?

L Well, maybe '67. I can't tell; '67 or '66. They had just these panels in there, and these Cobblestone pictures. Then we had a girl come up from Utica who was a museum designer. She had it designed in a sort of horseshoe. You came in the west door. That was the only access to the building. The other door had been nailed up. We operated that way for a couple or three years. The first year we had that set up, Eleanor Wilder was down there for a while. We hired her. But I don't know whether she didn't like it or she didn't have a way to get back and forth. So that kind of petered out.

Mc What did she do when she was there ?

L Sat there and be there for the people to come in. We had different exhibits in there. And then about 1969 or '70, we hired a fellow by the name of John Lovell, who was a student out of - - I don't know whether it was Brockport - - - he wanted a job there and he wanted about \$1700 for that summer. John Brush, our angel, was on the Board and he said: "I will underwrite it." He gave the money to hire John Lovell for that summer. He didn't do too much.

He sat there and he did some cataloguing. People would come and he would take the money, and that was it.

Mc Did you ask for donations, or had you arranged for a set fee when people came ?

L Well we got donations of a dollar. If you wanted to give more than that, we liked it. So the next year I think he wanted a better job and there was some hassling. Bill said that he would do it. And there was some hassling on the Board about Bill doing it. I disqualified myself to get out of the meeting. I said: "I am not going to be here. If you are coming to a tie, then I'm coming back." But Bill was hired, or he wasn't hired, because they didn't give him enough for peanuts. And he started there the first of January 1971, and he's done a damn good job! He's changed it every year. It's been changed quite a lot. You have got to have a lot of imagination and a lot of talent, and a lot of ability to do that.

Mc Do you mean that the museum has been changed ?

L It's been changed around. It's been changed and it's different; it looks different. People went by as if there was someone in there a couple of years ago. Jesus ! In ten years, it's different ! Bill had the office over there by the west door, and a couple of years ago he decided to have it over at the east door. Then you can see the Ward House. It's right together. He changed it again this year. Changed the new office space there.

Mc Now you have a gift shop there. Is that run by the Arts Council ?

L No. That's the Cobblestone. Donna Rodden, Mayor of Albion, takes care of that. She writes the checks and pays the folks off. There's nice things in there. Bill said: "When they started this gift shop, I say what goes in there. I'm not going to have a lot of

kid booties and crap." He said it's got to be something - - good stuff to go into the gift shop. But Donna Rodden takes care of that and does a darn good job at it. It's been changed around. When we get the big things out of the church basement, they will go over to Farmer's Hall. The farm equipment, we want to get the farm equipment over there.

Mc Your Print Shop is now printing stationery ?

L That's right. Kendall Orlip-Wilt is the printer. He has taken - - whatever you call it - - - a sabbatical leave from teaching school and he's taking a year off. He's the printer over there. He prints stationery and different cards and things. What he can make over there is his. What would we have to pay somebody to be in the Print Shop ? You see, he's happy, and we're happy to have him with us. He can make a buck on printing this paper. He buys the paper. It don't cost anything and he buys the ink and he's just using our pressing room. It's nice to see people printing these old things by hand. So we are lucky to have him. He's a good guy.

Anyone that wants to use the church is welcome to use the church. The church from Barre Center has been there. Gaines, West Barre and the Universalist Church in Albion were there this summer, and St. Paul's Church from Holley was there last Sunday. The Episcopal Church; they had a picnic out in the back yard. We are very glad for other organizations to use the church.

Mc You also have weddings in the Cobblestone Church.

L Yes, we have weddings. We had a wedding there last week. The 5 Masonic Lodges have used the church for nondenominational services. They have breakfast at the nearby Village Inn with their wives and families

and sweethearts. They have some very good speakers at those meetings. We had Henry P. Smith, who was our Congressman. We had Barber Conable and we had a Supreme Court Judge from Buffalo a couple of years ago.

Mc I like the fall program with the Pumpkin Festival.

L We have the Patriotic Service around July 4th, and we have the Lamplight Service in October. That church is beautiful when it's lighted by lamps. There are 120 lights in that building.

Mc The organ in that church is quite beautiful.

L Well, we had the organ overhauled this last winter. Last summer there was a group of people from Rochester, and I was talking to the man and he said: "Do you know anyone that wants to buy an organ?" I said: "No." I said: "What are you, an organ man?" And he said: "Well, I repair organs." And I said: "You're just the man I want to talk to! We have an Estes Organ in the church that needs some work on it. Would you take a look at it? What would you charge us to do it?"

Mc That's a little foot pedal organ, isn't it?

L Yes, **it is**. Well, he took a look at it and he told me what it would need. And then he said: "I won't charge you too much." So we took the organ down to him last fall and we said we would like it by the first of May. He put a motor in it so Bernard Lynch, who is getting weak legs like all the rest of us old timers, can pump the organ.

Mc The Schoolhouse is of great interest to a great many young people.

L Howard Pratt used to hold school down there for youngsters coming in by bus loads: Warsaw, Tonawanda, and Lyndonville. (See J. Howard Pratt Interview)

*at Public library*

He decided about three years ago that he didn't want to do it any more. He was 86 or 87 and he didn't want to do it any more. So Janice Barnum Thaine is taking over and she is doing a damn good job. She was down there last year and had a group from West Seneca. There was about 50, and they were having lunch up to the Village Inn and I was invited to this luncheon. And there was another group there from Cheektowaga, I guess. And, they said they would be down in three weeks; but they wanted the same school "marm". That's how much they like her. She's very popular with any group whether they are kids or old folks. She's good !

Mc Cary, perhaps this would be a good time for you to tell us a little about the book of which you are a part, telling about the book autograph party that was held in the Schoolhouse. That was a fun thing ! Can you tell a little bit about that ?

L. We got a grant about eight or ten years ago, from the New York State Council on the Arts, to do some research on a Cobblestone book. The committee was Bill Sheldon, Bob Thrash, Gerda Peterich and Cary Lattin. It was given for the sole purpose of research, all about Cobblestone houses in New York State; and we went at it. It took a long time. I did a lot of leg work locating these houses all over Central and Western New York. I got all the information I could on these various houses, in Central and Western New York, and the ones that was too far away, like two or three houses in Albany. I contacted the County Historian in those different counties, to get further information. Finally it came to printing. It was printed by the Syracuse University Press.

Gerda Peterich, who had taken these pictures, died in 1974. It was too bad she didn't live long enough to see this book finished. It came off the presses last December and I'm kind of proud to be a damn small part of it. *(Cobblestone Landmarks of N.Y. State)*

Mc

Not a small part !

L

Well it was. I didn't do any of the writing. It's a pretty nice book and the photographs are excellent.

Mc

Cary, will you also tell us about the annual Cobblestone Tour ? I think your wife has played a big part in it.

L

Well, she's done a little. We had a tour. Carl Schmidt was the one who got us on to this tour.

We've had an annual tour and we've been as far east as Cayuga County and as far west as Niagara County. This year it was in Monroe County, around Clarkson. Last year it was in Warsaw (Wyoming County) and we had the finest houses we ever had on the tour. Not Cobblestones; but beautiful homes. And, it was the poorest attended. We had a very small crowd. We had a good crowd of about 500 people on the tour. So we made a little money this year. We made about \$1000. or \$1100.00. It takes money to make the mare go !

Mc

The Cobblestone Society has grown, hasn't it ?

L

About 300; not too many people. I don't know why it is; there are very few people in and around Medina that are members. I don't know what the rivalry is between Albion and Medina. Nobody can explain it. We have people in Connecticut that are members and people in California. Maybe they feel sorry for us and want to give us a few dollars.

Mc

Most of your members are from around this area ?

L

Yes, this area. When the church tower was restored

in 1963 or '64, we made provision to have one of the louvres that could be removed at the top of the tower, in case we could ever acquire a bell. John Brush, who was on the hierarchy of the Universalist Society of the State Convention, found a church that had been torn down in a town north of Syracuse, called Cicero. He located the bell that was in this church. I borrowed a pick-up truck from "Jinks" Johnson, who was the Supervisor of the Town of Yates, and we went to Syracuse one day to get the bell. But when we got down there, we found the farmer had this bell in some remote shed. It was agreeable that we have the bell. We had to find somebody that would pick it up and put it on the truck. It weighed 1590 pounds. We weren't about to pick up three quarter of a ton of bronze bell ! So we found somebody there that had a fork-lift and picked the bell up and put it on the pick-up truck. We brought it back, and Ray Severns unloaded it with his tow truck and set it beside the church. It was visible from the road. In about a week's time Don Smith, who was with the New York State Police, a BCI Investigator, came to me one day; and he says: "Cary, I see you got an old bell down there, or a new bell, for the church." He says: "I would advise you to move it. Where it sets it's too visible from the road." He said: "That bell is valuable. (Laughter) Somebody will be stealing it." So Frankie Swierczynski moved it around in back of the church where it was out of sight. The bell weighs 1590 pounds. At the time, the metal in that bell was worth pretty near a dollar a pound. We had probably \$1200.00 worth of metal in that bell and it set back of the church for two or three years. Finally one day we knew that Petronio was going by Childs with a portable crane



and Jerim Klapper, who knew Petronio, prevailed on him to stop and put the bell up in the tower. And he and Bill Woolston, who had worked around the tower some, put in some stairway and put in some more posts to support the bell. He and Klapper swung the bell in, on a chain hoist and put it in the cradle that had been taken up there to hold the bell. So we have a bell that rings. And it's pretty nice to have a bell there. When you ring it, you can really hear it.

Mc Yes you can. Yes.

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"ADDITIONS by CARY LATTIN" *—(on taped interview)*

I During the Blizzard of '76 or '77 it was pretty rough. All my life I have had a friend who is always pestering me, all my life. We was friends in District School and he always had a practical joke. Like putting a live bull frog in my dinner pail, or trying to get a date with my wife the day before we were going to be married. But during the Blizzard he was coming home one night real late. About five o'clock in the afternoon he couldn't go any further; he was bogged right down. And he could see a dim light in the shape of a farmhouse. So he went to this old farmhouse to see if he could get in and get warm. He knocked on the door and the door opened up like that and the lady stepped out and said: "What can I do for you?" He says: "Can I come in and get warm?" She says: "You can come in here but you can't get very warm because the power is off and the furnace has conked out." "Well" he says: "Ain't you got a stove?" "Yes, there's a Franklin

stove in the parlor." So he said: "Let's get it going." And he went out in the woodshed and all he could find was two or three old orange crates, some bushel baskets and some Playboy magazines. So they started a fire and they kept warm huddled around the stove. So about 11 o'clock the fuel was gone. He didn't want to break up Hitchcock chairs or nice old tables so he said: "The best thing for us to do is get in bed." She says: "My good boy, I have never been to bed with a man in my life." "Well" he said: "You better get with it." So about daylight, he heard the furnace kick in. They got up and she made a nice breakfast. They had a nice breakfast: orange juice, coffee, and bacon and eggs; a nice breakfast. And finally they heard the snow plow go by. He says: "I guess I better be on my way." And he lit a cigarette and started to go out the door, and she said: "My good boy, what is your name?" He says: "I am Cary Lattin." (Laughter) He was a loudmouth, and in a few days it got back to me. And I thought, well - - that will die down like all his other practical jokes. But in about a week's time after that, I was going through the obituaries, and the old gal had died! In about three weeks I got a very official envelope from the Surrogate's Office, from Judge Doherty. The next day I had the pleasure of writing the following letter to Joe: "Dear Joe, Thanks for using my name. She left me the farm!" (Laughter)

Mc

II

Is that true? You rascal.

Senior Citizens have it pretty damn good. I got a raise out here the first of July. Got enough raise now to buy my whiskey. Just like getting it free nowadays - This raise in getting Social Security. You know I've got some friends that have been Senior Citizens for quite a while. They don't need the money

but they take it, and they go to Florida. This last year they decided to go in one car; double up and go in one car. So they flipped whether to go in the Cadillac or to go in the Continental. So they went in the Continental. Well the first day they got along in Pennsylvania and they wanted to see Mamie Eisenhower's spread, where Ike was there. The next day they was down in Virginia and they went by a big fancy motel, and there was a big neon sign with a steer on it. On the other side of the drive-way was a big Red Lobster sign, and they knew they could get surf-and-turf there, so they stopped and went in this fancy motel. They went in and had a nice dinner. And one of the girls was having a birthday. They had champagne and when they went back to the motel nobody was "feeling any pain". They was laughing and having a good time and somebody said: "Why don't we switch partners tonight?" They laughed about that, you know. They thought that was great. And about three o'clock in the morning, one old guy said to the other old guy: "I wonder how the girls are getting along?" (Laughter)

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 Mc

Well, Cary, thank you very much for this.

L

Better not show that to Mac!

Mc

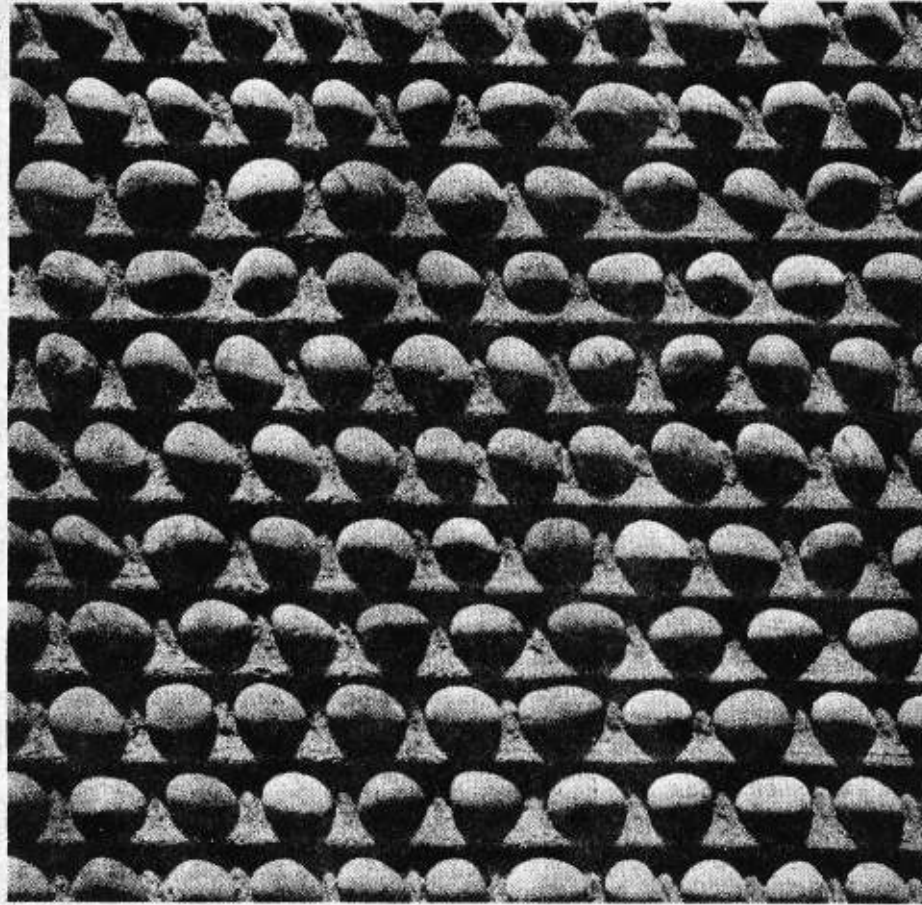
Thank you very much for this fascinating history of the Cobblestone Society, and two of your stories told as only you can tell them!

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Transcribed by Luther Burroughs of Albion, New York.  
 Several additions and deletions by Cary Lattin.  
 Final typing by Lysbeth Hoffman of Lakeside, New York.

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian



## VOL II

### MILESTONES

It was just twenty years ago when Robert Frasch a Social Studies teacher in Holley walked into the County Historian's office and inquired as to what might become of the old Cobblestone Universalist Church in Childs. From that simple inquiry the Cobblestone Society was born. On Oct. 19, 1960 an organizational meeting was held in the Cobblestone Church headed by Cary H. Lattin and Robert Frasch was elected the Society's first President along with other officers and directors.

From that time onward there has been an accumulation of artifacts and buildings coupled with events reminding us of our local history and cobblestone heritage.

The first event for making money to be applied toward preservation and restoration, was a tour of cobblestone houses which was held in June of 1961. For each successive year the Cobblestone Society has arranged an annual tour of homes making this year's tour the 20th. A milestone indeed, and it is perhaps anticipated with more enthusiasm than any of the society's annual events. You won't want to miss the chance this year to browse back through history in the area of North Greece on Saturday, June 7 from 1-5. Tickets will be on sale at McNall's Furniture Store, 4975 Ridge Road West beginning at 11 a.m. on the day of the tour.



**COBBLESTONE AUTHORS--**The three authors of "Cobblestone Landmarks of New York State," which completed its first printing of 2,500 paperbacks and 1,500 hardback editions, were busy signing books at the Swan Library yesterday. From left are Olaf William Shelgren Jr., of Buffalo, Cary Lattin of Albion, and Robert W. Frasch. The authors are all members of the Cobblestone Society. Lattin, one of its founders, is a retired Orleans County historian. Frasch was the society's first president and is director of the School of Science and manager at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. Shelgren is a past president of the society and an architect in Buffalo. The book was prepared through a grant from the New York State Arts Council. -(J-R Photo)

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# Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian

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VOL. II

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## COBBLESTONES AND PUMPKINS FOR GOOD OLD TIMES

On Sunday, October 19 the Cobblestone Society will celebrate its twentieth anniversary with two different events. Beginning at 2:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M., the third Annual Pumpkin Festival will take place on the museum grounds at Childs along with a pumpkin contest for students through Junior High age. At 7:30 P.M. the Eighth Annual Lamplight Program will take place with Affiliate Artist Barbara Hocker singing.

It was a cold rainy Sunday afternoon on October 23, 1960 when the Cobblestone Society was officially organized at the old Universalist Church in Childs. Many area residents were concerned as to the fate of the cobblestone church at the time, since the Universalists were desirous of selling the property. With around sixty people in attendance a slate of officers was approved who are shown in the photo above taken on that occasion. From left to right are: Maurice Wilson, Vice-Pres., Cary H. Lattin, director; Katharine Billings, Secretary; Robert Frasc, Pres.; J. Howard Pratt, Director; and Hannah Thompson, Treas. From that concern for preservation just two decades ago the Cobblestone Society has become widely recognized as an institution symbolizing Orleans County. Acquisition of the church did not stop there as six historic buildings and related architecture now make up the Cobblestone Museum Complex.

October is not only the anniversary month for the Cobblestone Society but also the month in which the Cobblestone Church was dedicated 146 years ago. The foundations were dug in April 1834 and the stones used in the masonry were collected from surrounding fields as pioneer farmers cleared their land. It was largely through the efforts of John Proctor and at his own expense, that the church was erected for the First Universalist Society of Gaines. Chiseled in the marble tablet above the entrance are the immortal words "God Is Love" which capsulized the reason why the church was conceived and built.