Orleans County Historical Association

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Arthur H. Phillips, father / Jessie Benedict Phillips, mother
Marcus, William and Harold = children of A. & J. Phillips
Doris Jessie Rodwell, wife
Marcus H. Phillips, III (son)
Ann P. Drechsel (daughter)

plus others.....

1899-1989

Orleans County Historical Association

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEW

Mr. Marcus H. Phillips , Jr.
Hulberton, New York

Marcus H. Phillips, Jr. was born September 6, 1899.

Interviewed by (first part) Mr. Arden McAllister and (second part) by Helen M. McAllister.

P Phillips

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.

Marcus H Phillips (Jr)
Signed

5-3-78 / 7-24-'79
Date

Understood and agreed to: Helen M. McAllister
Arden R. McAllister
INTERVIEWER

5-3-78 / 7-24-'79
Date

For the Orleans County Historical Association the following interviews were conducted on May 3, 1978 by Mr. Arden R. McAllister, and on July 24, 1979 by Helen M. McAllister of Medina, New York.

P I, Marcus H. Phillips Junior was born in Hulberton, N.Y., September 6, 1899, so my age went along with the year until my birthday in September.

To start back a ways, the Phillips family moved from Candor, Tioga County, to the Allis farm west of Braggs Corners and when my grandfather, after whom I was named, was one month old, the log cabin burned. They wrapped my grandfather in a blanket and put him out in the snow, but the Phillips family lost their family Bible and all of their records.

About 1853, the family moved to the Budd Farm in Hulberton because rails were getting scarce and there was plenty of stone for stone walls. Budd was the founder of Hulberton and had built the Medina sandstone house on the east side, the date of which was 1848 (ingraved in a white stone above the front door). My great-grandfather lived in the small house across the road which later became the manse for the Catholic church and is still standing. My grandparents lived in the stone house.

Marcus H. Phillips, Sr. married Julia E. Balcom from Brockville and they had four children: John M. Phillips, Clara Comstock, Jennie Smith, and my father Arthur H. Phillips. Marcus and Julia lived in the stone house all the rest of their lives.

My grandfather was County Clerk and very well known throughout the County. He was County Clerk for a number of years and also served in the New York State Assembly. Later, he ran for the New York State Senate. I well remember my Uncle Alan Comstock and Cousin James Balcom (both County Supervisors: Alan from Carlton, James from Murray) reminiscing about the fact that the night before election, there was a black carriage, its shades drawn, drawn by a team of black horses, the driver dressed in black, which came into this area and stopped at every bar. A small man dressed in black, wearing a black derby and carrying a little black satchel, got out and went into the bar and left a dollar for each patron of the bar. Needless to say, my grandfather lost the election. A Wadsworth from Geneseo became Senator. Thus a man who was widely known and had estab-

lished a reputation as being sincere, honest and very capable came to the end of his political career. Grandfather had many powerful connections in Albany and continued to go there often on business for himself and in the interest of others until he was in his 80s. When on one of his New York Central train trips he had what the family talked of as a slight stroke.

People used to come to him to draw up deeds, mortgages and other legal papers, which he never charged them for. Grandfather and Attorney Herbert T. Reed (later of Signor, Reed, and Signor of Albion), who was born and grew up across the road from this house, whom Grandfather had placed in an Albion law office to study law, used to appear before the Public Service Commission many times in order to get the best possible trolley service for Hulberton and other towns along the Buffalo-Lockport-Rochester trolley.

When the principals were waiting in the hall for the hearing to begin and the arguments would get too heated, Grandfather would break in, get them quieted, tell a story which would have them all laughing. Grandfather looked pretty sharp with his whiskers and small goatee, and on three different occasions was mistaken for Ulysses S. Grant!

Another story about my Grandfather that I very well remember was told to me by Jennie Moore who lived next door and who was 93 years old when she died last fall (1977). She said that in Rochester they were going to build a new Post Office. One faction wanted it on the west side of the river, and the other wanted it on the east side. The West faction employed my Grandfather to lobby for, as she said, West side of the river. He was successful, and the first Post Office was built where he had worked to get it. In return for this, the Rochester people gave him $2,000. She says that when he received the $2,000., he built the horse barn with the gambrel roof, which is one of the earliest gambrel-roof barns in this part of the country and very well proportioned with a large cupola, two windows each direction, hollow copper driving wind vane on its peak. Having grown up here, I did not appreciate this barn until about 1967 when three men who had visited all the big horse farms in the country came in to make inquiry of me. They started looking the barn over and telling me about it. It has a cobblestone floor

all the way through it, a six foot cobblestone porch out in front of the big front doors, the siding is vertical boards with battons having O gee edges. Three windows in the peak of the barn are four leaf clovers, and the horse stalls all have four leaf clover windows. It has a cupola about eight by ten feet with two windows opening on each side, and a hollow copper driving horse for a wind vane on its peak. From this cupola, Lake Ontario can be seen and when weather conditions are right, the Canadian shore across the 40 mile lake.

Both my aunts and my father (Arthur Phillips) attended Brockport Normal School; also my Uncle John Phillips. It was there that my father met Jessie Benedict. They married and built the home on the west side of the street in Hulberton where we lived.

The farm operations were carried on from the stone house where my grandparents lived. The horses, equipment, and all of those things were kept there. The farm comprised nearly 200 acres with the addition of several smaller neighboring farms which were purchased at various times.

I have two brothers. I am the eldest, William next, and Harold next. Harold died several years ago.

I have two children: Marcus H. Phillips III, and Ann Phillips Drechsel. My son "Marc" has two children: Linda and Bruce. Karen, the eldest one, died at about five years of age of leukemia. My daughter married J. Andrew Drechsel and they live in Tenafly, New Jersey. They have three sons: Richard, Andrew, Duncan

My brother, William Phillips, has two children: Hanford Phillips, who lives in the cobblestone house north of Hulberton, and Sally who lives in East Liverpool, Ohio.

I attended the three-room school in Hulberton until the last half of the 8th grade when I went to Holley where I graduated from High School in 1916. The next year I attended R.B.I. (Rochester Business Institute) taking commercial, or bookkeeping course. Then for two years when help was very scarce during the later part of World War I, I was home on the farm. In 1919 I started in Cornell Agricultural College, and graduated in 1923. Following that, I started inspecting fruit on the New York Central railroad lines until the first of the year.

January 2, 1924 I started in the Orleans County Trust Company in Albion, New York. The year before it had been the Orleans County National Bank, owned by the Hart family and used mainly for their own investments. A group of Albion men had bought the National Bank and changed it to a Trust Company about a year before. At that time the Bank was located on the south-west corner of Main and Bank Streets. They had already purchased the block on the north-west corner and were remodeling it. The vault was completed and the nine ton door installed, I think about June, when we started taking our money over to the new vault nights and bringing it back mornings, across Bank Street. (NOTE: See M.H.Phillips other transc't on BANKING) .

In 1925 I married Doris Jessie Rodwell and we lived in Albion from that time on: 17 1/2 years at 138 South Main Street in the red brick house just below the hill on the west side, the house having a porte co-chere. Then in 1950, we moved to the Wheeler Homestead just south-west of Kanona in Steuben County where we lived for 15 years until 1965 when we moved back to Hulberton to the Phillips stone house which I had inherited from my father about six and a half years before. Doris and I have lived here since that time.

The Medina sandstone quarries, of which Hulberton was in the center, were coming into their biggest operation about the time when I was a young boy. They were operated at first by the English, then the Irish; the English and the Irish giving way to the Italians. When I was a small boy in the first room in the school, I have a picture that shows me beside 18 and 19 year old Italian boys, practically full grown, standing several times as tall as I. My Aunt, Jennie Phillips Smith, taught this room. The Italians had just moved to this country from Italy and could talk practically no English. They were very poor, they were hard workers. The quarry operations took them from spring through summer and fall but left them unemployed during the winter when they would congregate in Moore's Grocery Store (now a home) on the north side of the canal, east of the highway, and talk in Italian.

Most of the Italians were Catholic and there was no way for them to get to Holley (four miles) or to Albion (seven Miles) to attend church. In order to give them a place of

worship, the Catholic Dicocease built the Hulberton Saint Rocco's Catholic Church. It was built of the native brown Medina sandstone, the cornerstone of which says it was laid in 1906. The stone was furnished by the quarry operators. The cutting was done by the Italian block-breakers and stone cutters who cut the curbstone. Those days they worked a ten hour day in the quarry. They had Saturday afternoons and Sundays off. The quarrymen, blockbreakers and stone cutters all helped in building the church, beside cutting the stone. They would work on holidays and on Saturday afternoons. They hired an expert who knew how to mix the mortar and he would direct the operation. They had scaffolds. I can remember them wheeling the stone and the mortar up the ramps onto the scaffolds, up for the height of that building. The stones are laid in Ashler style and it is a very fine building. The first priest, a very capable man, came here from Batavia and later went way up in the Catholic Church in Buffalo. This church operated for quite a number of years.

When they came, the Italian people were very poor and Moore's Store carried many of them thru the winter on credit, recorded in the old McCasky Register. It was years before only one or two of them had a horse and buggy. The Italians were thrifty, hardworking people and not at all prone to go on relief. Each family tended to its garden. The smell of garlic was usually quite pronounced on their breath. Spaghetti was a main food, and to make the paste they grew tomatoes. These were mashed and put on flat pans, boards, or anything flat and clean that would hold them, and then put out in the sun to dry; anyplace where the dogs could not reach, even on the roof of the three-holer! Stirred occasionally, this would dry slowly and when moisture had evaporated out, the paste would be canned for use until the next season's crop. The first chee-chee beans I remember seeing were in the garden of the DeLill family who lived in the house on the Phillips-acquired "Littlefield Place" farm which had made the south boundary of the Phillips farms on the west side of the Hulberton Road. This house my Dad later rebuilt into a packing house for peaches and apples.

The front portion, with its roof rebuilt, is a shed and is painted red and still in use.

The Rochester, Lockport and Buffalo Trolley went through and started operation in 1908. On the first car, which went west, my father took me to Albion and we returned on a later car. I was eight years old. This new transportation east and west was a great advantage to the whole area. The trolleys ran each way about every hour and there were "LIMITED" cars which only stopped at the main stations, and Grandfather made sure all stopped at Hulberton. In fact, I went to Holley High School on the trolley. It was always a battle to make sure that the express cars stopped in Hulberton, one in which Grandfather always figured... going before the Public Service Commission. As I remember, the "LIMITED"s always stopped in Hulberton!

To get back to the quarries, the quarry with which I was most familiar was the Klondike which is straight down back east of the Phillip's barn at the end of the lane, a little bit to the north. The Klondike Quarry was one of the earliest quarries and operated 24 hours a day with carbide lights. It got its name from the Klondike gold rush.

Later my grandfather, Marcus Phillips, started a quarry on the Phillips farm a little ways south-east of the farm buildings. This was operated by John and William Henry Balmforth, two Englishmen. The only access to this quarry was through the farm yard. The road that served the barns went around the shop and down back to the quarry. The workmen, when they came in the morning, and all the loads of stone were drawn out through the yard. How my grandmother ever lived with the two and a half inches of dust that used to accumulate in the summertime, I'll never know!

Another thing that I remember about the quarry was that the quarrymen wore wool shirts that were, without any exaggeration, one quarter inch thick! They had an oval yoke on the front, probably all came from Moore's Store. The reason they wore these heavy wool shirts was that the perspiration would evaporate from the outside and keep them cool. Later on, when the

boys got to operating in the quarries, they'd be working in their B.V.D.'s. (underwear). By the "boys", I mean the grandchildren. By this time, they had realized that tuberculosis had become a common disease with the stone cutters from breathing so much stone dust. So, the desirability of working in the quarries greatly diminished about that time.

The quarry as I remember it, had about seven or eight feet of dirt which had to be removed from on top. That was called "stripping" and was done with teams of horses. Men would shovel the dirt onto the wagons, which had dump boards, about three inch square boards with the ends rounded for handles. They would take them up on the dump, lift one board at a time and dump the dirt. Later they had quite sophisticated dump wagons which would self-dump when they pulled a lever. Then they could crank the bottoms back up in place. Beneath the dirt there would be one layer of layer stone which was used for curbing and other purposes, and some for sidewalks. Some of the very smooth sidewalks in this town came from those quarries. Below that were either two or three layers for eight to ten feet deep, of solid stone. Originally the drilling had to be done by hand. The hand drills were about five foot long and had a tapered handle in the center which got to be about two and a half inches in diameter and beveled both ways to give it weight. This, as you can realize, was rather a slow process. They would drill the holes and then blast with black powder. Later, they got to using steam drills, and after that, air drills.

One of the problems of the quarry was to pump the water out. During the winter the quarries would fill with water and then it had to be pumped out in the spring. The Balmforth Quarry had a large stationary International engine, the flywheels of which were about nine feet in diameter. It was a single cylinder with "make and break" ignition. The way they started it was to prime it with gasoline, walk the spokes of the wheel backward to get the engine against compression, snap the breaker, and it would fire. What seemed like an eternity later, it would get around to the position of firing again and then take off. That used to run a compresser from which the air ran the various drills around the quarry. In the spring, it was

**(NOTE: See Stanley Judwick transcript: re: QUARRIES).

used to pump the water out of the quarry. Later after that had worn out, they had a big International, single cylinder tractor which performed the same operation. To make larger blocks of stone smaller, they would drill a series of holes about 3/4 to one inch in diameter and then put in what were called swedges on each side, with a steel wedge between. They would put these in all the holes and then drive them, one after the other, until the stone finally broke, which it usually did with the grain. The stone had to be cut to sizes that could be handled where it stood in the quarry. The big problem was getting it out to the surface of the ground where the blockbreakers and the stone cutters could cut it into the proper dimensions. In the early days this was all done by horse power and wagons. The wagons which drew the stone out of the quarry were known as "swing wagons" which were very heavy bedded, hung beneath the back axle and pivoted beneath the front axel with two large bolts like interlocking screweyes. This made a low wagon which could be easily loaded and unloaded.

My memory of the quarry operation was when it was a large quarry and they would break the blocks on the edge of the quarry, throwing the chips over into the quarry to fill it up so that there would not be the large area that would require pumping out. The curb was drawn up the lane and cut in the shade of a row of black walnut trees which my Dad had planted when he was 22 years old. The cut and finished curbs were drawn on these swing wagons, either to Fancher and loaded on Falls Branch of the New York Central trains (which was a very difficult operation), or loaded onto boats at the docks along the canal. The paving blocks were cut and loaded into dump wagons and taken to Fancher and loaded onto gondola cars, or loaded onto canal boats at the docks.

There were two other quarries near the Klondike: one north of it toward the canal, and one north-east. When I was real young, they brought in what was called a "channeler" which, as the name implies, cut a straight channel through the stone instead of drilling every little ways and blasting. This channeler ran on railroad rails which, as I remember it, were about eight feet apart. To move it forward required ten horses. The horses for this purpose were stabled in the carriage house

part in the front of our gambrel roof horse barn for quite a period of time. They put wagon dump-boards between them to keep them separated, and had mangers along both sides where they fed them.

During the First World War, I remember that this machine was setting just south of the canal on its rails. It was dismantled and shipped out for scrap iron, which was very badly needed.

I believe that it was about 1901 when the Syndicate was formed. The syndicate brought in outside capital from New York and other places and purchased a number of quarries with the idea of having a central quarry operation. When I was very young, the land in back of the Phillip's Quarry belonged to the Syndicate. The Klondike and the other two quarries were located on thi property. The land around the three quarries which were not operating was rented by my father and used for a cow pasture. The land south of it, he farmed. Also what was known as the "poplar tree lot" to the west of it, was farmed. I can remember riding on a bean-puller, sitting in a tool box on the divided tongue when my Dad was pulling beans there when I was a very small boy.

The Syndicate was run, in my recollection, by Ed Fancher who had a great deal to do with my grandfather during those times. They were always conferring about something or other. Ed ran the Syndicate for quite a number of years and then later it was taken over by Schuyler Hazard, also of Albion. The details of the Syndicate operation are in the office of the Orleans County Historian and is filed under QUARRIES; information which Lucy Fancher has given.

The Clark Moore Quarry in recent years became the Medina Sandstone Quarry Incorporated. (Clark Moore lived next door to th stone house, was a principal in the grocery store, and later opened the quarry). Back when I was a small boy they dug the Barge Canal and this required considerable amount of dirt to be drawn in. So they opened a barrowing pit where Clark Moore's Quarry later was started. The dirt was loaded by steam shovel onto little dump cars which were drawn by a donkey engine over into the canal and to the west to fill in the north canal bank is all I remember about it. But this removed the dirt above the stone. This depression filled with water and my brothers and I

used to go over there and swim in the pond. A number of years later, Clark Moore opened the quarry as an operation and quarried it for quite a number of years. After the death of Clark Moore it was closed.

Then when I came back from Steuben County in 1965 I met Gregory ("Greg") Monacelli whom I had always known, on the street in Albion and asked him how things were going. Gregory said,"You probably know that the stone ran out of my Dad's quarry (which was the old Eagle Harbor Quarry) and I went down to operate the Moore Quarry." And this is a quotation: "The stone in the Moore Quarry was so hard that it busted me and I had to put a mortgage on my house". Two or three years after that the man who owned the Greater Buffalo Press came down and bought the Moore Quarry and operated it for a number of years.

In stripping to the south, toward my north line, they put the stone over to the north and filled the original Moore Quarry. Later they built a large building back beyond the quarry where they installed foundations for two saws. They installed one large German built saw which operated for a number of years. The two saw foundations were built resting on the solid stone. They drove piles down to the stone, cut them off at the proper height, and welded a large plate on the top of each one. These plates were incorporated in the concrete foundation for the saw. The saw itself was an immense electrically driven saw: the blades about six inches deep and about twelve feet long. The difficulty was that as the saw fed down, the stone was so hard that the bottom of the saw would heat up and expand and the saw would wander. They had great difficulty in overcoming this.

About that same time, they installed a crusher way out behind what had been my property. This was just before the building of Route 18 and intended to supply the foundation for the highway. It is my recollection that they were a little bit late so that they didn't get the contract for the whole thing. Later when I asked Howard Michaels (the Quarry boss) about getting various size stone from this operation, he said that it was set up to give the mix which was proper for a highway foundation, to change it over so that they could get different sizes of stone in the process would cost $150,000. or better. So that was the reason they didn't do it.

Clark Moore's widow, Jennie Benson Moore who died last fall (1977) at the age of 93, lived in the house just south of the Phillip's stone house, was always talking about the Moore Quarry. So about two years ago I took her in the car one Sunday to show her the Moore Quarry. When I got over there to show it to her, I had to stop and figure what had happened. What had been the Moore Quarry had been completely filled in with stripping from the new quarry operation, and so there was nothing left of the Moore Quarry. About four years before, they had left that location and moved back and started a new quarry, the north-west corner of which was the corner of the old original Klondike Quarry. The man who started the quarry told me this himself! He had gone in there with a large bull-dozer to start the operation. Before opening this quarry they made a large stripping operation, stripping the dirt from practically the whole field where the (original) Klondike had been located, and piling it up to the east along the east line so that it was cleared of dirt down to the stone. They had opened a channel from this corner toward the east, quarrying the stone down the depth of the first layer of layered stone, and the two layers of solid stone. These varied in depth of 7-8-10 feet. They had also quarried to the south making a right angle, and in doing so they had crossed several "seams" which are vertical breaks, smooth as can be, the whole depth of the quarry. These ran from the east-north-east to the west-south-west. The original seam they had located from the Squire's Quarry across the canal, had come across through the Moore Quarry, across my horse barn, and the corner of Jennie Moore's house. These other seams were parallel to this original. Of course, in this day of operation, the following of a seam was not as important as it used to be back in the old days. In the Phillip's Quarry I don't remember that there was any seam.

During the first years of operation, before installation of the saw, they took immense blocks of stone on big semi-flat-bed trucks to Buffalo where they were cut for curbing and various operations. It seems that the stone cutters in Buffalo had some hold on the installation of curbing as long as they

could supply it. The quarry company was supplying the stone to the curb cutters and it was used in Buffalo during this time. After installation of the saw they gave up this quarrying of the stone and drawing it to Buffalo for cutting.

In 1976 the quarry was re-activated. There were two contracts: one contract for putting stone along both sides of the canal from Albion east. This required comparatively small stone. The other contract was for building a dam, a retaining wall at Lackawanna so that the material which was dredged from the bottom of the Buffalo harbor could be dumped behind it for a fill, as they could no longer dump it out in the lake. With these two contracts it was ideal because the top layer of layered stone was blasted and broken up and trucked to use along the canal. The two layers of solid stone were quarried for the job at Lackawanna. They would blast off about a six foot strip of rock and break it into large pieces which the smaller would be 5-10 tons, then 10-15 tons, and 15-20 tons; some going as large as 22 tons. These were quarried and drawn by pay-loaders up a road to the north and sorted into the various sizes and piled along the canal bank. As they were drawn out they were weighed and the weight marked on each stone. They did this with electronic scales which weighed one end of the pay-loader and then the other on each load, and then arrived at the weight. They started loading the stone on large steel scows which they loaded with an immense crane. The first crane was a hundred ton crane, and that would tip when they brought the stone out over the scow. So they brought in a new crane, and on the side of this new crane was "FMC" (Food Machinery Corporation) trade-mark. So you can see how diviserfied they had become. They had taken the smaller stone and put in the bottom and then as they got toward the top of the water they put in larger stone. The last stone being the very large ones.

Also during this process, the year before, they had built the two piers down at Point Breeze in the same manner, replacing the old original piers which, as a boy, I remember were out there: the west pier terminating in a light-house. These piers were built, and then a concrete walk with a post embedded in its center, all the way out. Just beyond the end of these piers

they built a header to give protection from the waves and the storm, and make it so that a boat could enter the harbor from either the east or the west.

(This is the end of the first interview with Mr. Marcus Phillips, with Mr. McAllister interviewing.

The following interview was conducted by Helen McAllister of Medina, and are vignettes of the early life of Mr. Marcus Phillips).

Back in the early days of the old Erie Canal, Hulberton had an overhead bridge with approaches on both sides. On the south side, west of the highway, right north of the present house, the "back street" went through to the west and, north of that, stood a two-story Medina Sandstone building, the upper floor of which was used for living quarters and the downstairs for years, during my memory, was used for a meat market by Jay Burns. Back before that time it had been used as a grocery store by the Curwins. Thus there were two grocery stores in Hulberton. When the Republicans were in power, the Post Office was in Moore's Store, east side, north of the canal. When the Democrats were in power the Post Office was moved over to the Curwin's stone building, north of the stone building. At the side of the bridge approach there were two or three one-story small wooden buildings of which one was a cobbler's shop. When the Barge Canal came through, they left the north bank approximately in the same location so as not to disturb Moore's Store or the Hotel on the west side of the highway, and widened the canal to the south. So this did away with all these buildings including the stone store.

On the Eric Canal the tow path went along beneath the north end of the overhead bridge; but when the Barge Canal with its lift-bridge was put through, it was put through with the idea that there would no longer be mules and horses towing boats. Everything would be mechanized. But for a number of years there were still horse-drawn boats; so a wooden road-way was built out into the canal to make room for the horses and mules to go along after the lift-bridge was raised. While the new lift-bridge was being installed, during the canal-closed season, they used the back street and put a temporary wooden bridge

across the canal with 2 by 4 inch wooden rails. When this wooden bridge was in use Fred Cole drove the team of grey horses up from the north farm to do something up here in Hulberton. When he came to the canal, when the horses were crossing this canal bridge, the horses suddenly reared up on their hind legs, crowded against each other and it's a wonder they did not go into the canal. It was a terrifying experience for Cole. When it came time for Cole to go back across the canal to get home, the horses started doing the same thing. Finally my Dad, who was now accompanying Cole, had the inspiration that they change sides with the horses. That worked perfectly! They walked across the bridge, and no problems. Clark Crawford and Newell Albee, the hired men from the Hulberton homestead were also accompanying Fred Cole and my Dad. This team of "CUB" who was born the day Marcus H. Phillips, Jr. was born, and"STAR" were lanky 1450 pound horses, both well "broken" by my Grandfather, M.H.Phillips, Senior, were ordinarily perfectly dependable. Apparently they were scared by the narrow board-rattling bridge with its flimsy railings.

THE STORY OF THE SAILING ICE-BOAT

When my father, Arthur Phillips, was a young man he built an ice-boat from instructions in Popular Mechanics magazine. It had three runners: the front runners were spread out, probably about eight feet wide, and then one runner in the back which had a tiller lever attached so it could be steered. Like a sailboat this had a mast with a jibe-sail in front and the big sail behind which would sail just exactly like a sailboat. This boat could be taken apart and wrapped and tied into a package. He would take it to the canal in Hulberton on a windy day and go to Rochester on the canal. Back in those days most of the bridges were overhead and he could sail under them. When he came to a swing-bridge (I don't believe there were any lift-bridges; I think there were only swing-bridges) they would be too low. So he would take the mast down to get underneath the bridge and replace it, so he could sail all the way to Rochester. When he got to his destination in Rochester, he would take down the mast, take his sailboat apart, wrap it in a big package, get

a dray which was a wagon drawn by two horses, to come and load it on and take it to the New York Central railroad station where he would have it shipped on the Falls branch of the New York Central back to Fancher, New York, a mile and three quarters from home. Then, from there, he would bring it home.

Around the mast this boat had a flat section where a person could ride. On the back there was a raised seat over by the tiller where a person could pull on a hand brake, which was an iron spike that could be pulled, and go into the ice and slow the ice boat down some.

When I was a boy with my two brothers, my father and the three of us pulled the ice boat against the wind the mile and three fourth to Brockville where we turned around. The two brothers rode on the ice boat along with Dad. I had my big Flexible Flyer sled and towed it behind on a long rope. Dad said that just before he got to the Hulberton lift bridge, when he got around the bend to Hulberton he would stop and that I wanted to be sure that I was not fast to that Flexible Flyer sled because the boat would stop and I would keep right on going!! So we came down the canal. Everything worked fine. We travelled very rapidly. When we got around the last bend before the Hulberton lift bridge by the Ford house, Dad turned the ice-boat sharply in to the left bank, and as the mast came over he slid off the boat onto the ice and took the mast into his arms, which tipped the boat up on edge. My Flexible Flyer sled kept on going to the end of its rope and then stopped, but I kept right on sliding down the canal ice on my stomach!! (laughter That was really my only experience in ice-boating.

.....

At our annual New Year's Balcom family reunion where we would have from 45-50 people, I can remember the older members talking about the old canal which was four feet deep and 14 foot wide, and they would have their horses sharp shod which means that the toe-caulk of the horse shoes were sharp; and both heel caulks came to a point so that the horse could walk on the ice or travel on the ice without slipping. In those days they would go out onto the canal, this was before the deeper Erie Canal, and drive

to Albion on the ice rather than take the roads. Also some of the people who had fast horses used to race their horses on the canal!

SKATING ON THE ICE

My first skating was done with old curl-toed skates. They were made with a metal runner and a wooden top and the front of the metal runner curled up around and back. They screwed onto the heel, and the front part through a slot in the wood was strapped over the toe. That was my first experience.

Mc Marcus, when you screw a skate into your shoe, the heel of the shoe, wouldn't that ruin your shoes?

P No, it just made a hole in the center. As I got older, I had a pair of clamp skates which had a lever on the side and when properly adjusted and you pulled this lever back, it would pull clamps back against the back corners of the heel as well as against the sides of the sole and the ice skates would stay on very well. Then in later years I had skates with shoes attached to them.

But to go back to the days of my clamp skates, Holley was four miles by road: two miles south and two miles east. The canal went diagonally at about three 1/4 miles, probably on account of the many bends. When the ice was good and we wanted to go to school, instead of taking the trolley, we would go down to the canal and skate to Holley. There were places along where there were air holes where you had to be careful because the water wouldn't freeze. If you got into one of those, you went right down to the bottom of the canal, which wasn't very deep in most places (a few inches to one foot). Down by the Squires Quarry east of Hulberton, there was a place there where the rock was a little higher than the rest of the canal and when it was frozen real hard there would be a strip of ice about three to four inches wide so that you could skate between the rocks. Sometimes, if it had thawed a little bit, you had to walk over the rocks to get by this particular spot. Then when we got to Holley, we would take our skates off under the east bridge and go right past the trolley station and walk up to school.

Now, back in the skating days, the greatest skater in these parts was my grandmother's brother, Darwin Balcom, known to everybody as "Dar" Balcom. When he was over 75 years old, Uncle Dar used to skate with his hands behind his back. He wore curl-toed ice skates like I have described to you, had them excellently sharpened. He was an expert at that and he would skate into the wind, bent way forward, with his hands behind his back, faster than anybody else around this part of the country. Also, when you came to a skate stroke that went from one side of the canal to the other side and then back the full distance, there was just one person had made that stroke: and that was Uncle Dar Balcom!! Harry Prince who lived in Hulberton and was considerably younger than my Dad, used to skate very well and he would make long strokes. But he used to laugh that he couldn't even approach the length of Dar Balcom's strokes.

One time when people used to skate for pleasure up in Albion, the society people would get on the canal on a Sunday afternoon, all dressed up, and skate. Uncle Dar Balcom and his son Marc skated up to Albion. While they were there, he knew all the people, and some of the boys, young boys (Gerald Fluher who later became County Judge and some of the boys) got to kidding Marc about his curl-toed skates. Uncle Dar finally said to them," Well you know boys, he can skate to that next bridge faster than you can!" Oh they laughed at that; they just knew better. So Uncle Dar unwound the scarf that he had around his neck and criss-crossed under his arms, it was about 12 feet long, and handed one end of it to young Marc. He took the other end and towed Marc to the next bridge, way ahead of the other boys! So the laugh was on them!!

REUNIONS

Since I was about eight years old I remember the family reunions that we used to have. The various families would get together and there would be 45 - 50 of us. They would be members of the Balcom family, which was my Grandmother's family. Horace came in 1812 to Brockville. They would meet at the Balcom

homestead north of Fancher, the Jim Balcom homestead down by the mill dam on the west side, the Phillips homestead where I now live in Hulberton, or the Nelson homestead east of Hulberton Road north side of Telegraph Road where the Tinkous now live. Also we would meet over at my Aunt Clara and Uncle Allen Comstalk's on the Sawyer Road over north of the Ridge Road. These reunions always came on New Year's Day and regardless of the weather the families would all come, either in their buggy, their surry, or their Democrat Wagon pulled by horses, or in a sleigh, or if there were a number of them they would come in a bob-sleigh which would have two or three seats across the box. The food : the person that had the gathering, at whose house it was held, furnished the main dish. But the different families would all bring something. As I remember, chicken pie with the biscuit crust was one of the main things. Of course you have to remember that back in those days all butter was homemade, bread was homemade. Practically everything we had to eat was homemade. When we had ice cream, we had an ice cream freezer, chopped up the ice, put the ingredients in the can in the center, put the chopped ice around it, and turned the crank until it froze. And then we had ice cream. You didn't go out and buy ice cream in those days.

These family reunions lasted for a good many years until the family got so spread out that we no longer had them. One of the last family gatherings was held when our children were small, down at Judson Archer's at his farm near Clifton Springs and there were over 50 people there at that time!

.....

My wife, Doris, had a group of Cub Scouts. There were eight of them and every Sunday when the weather was good we used to take out the eight foot toboggan and go usually to Pine Hill where there was really good tobogganing. Those kids had the best time sliding down that hill! One day we had a new Flexible Flyer sled for Ann. It was the biggest Flexible Flyer that would go into the trunk of a 1939 Buick. Marc took it out on the hill and the first thing we knew, we missed Marc and were looking all over for him, when all of a sudden we saw Marc on the little sled going out into space from a ski jump, over the brow of the hill which we could not see!! (chuckles). Marc

stayed with the sled and all landed safely and continued down the hill. There were a few anxious moments.

Mc Mr. Phillips, would you please tell us about your tobogganing days while you were a student at Cornell?

P Okay. When I was at Cornell we had a toboggan slide that was iced. It was a double slide and always iced on the bottom and sides. We had a platform to put the toboggan at the top, with a pivot so when you got ready to go you lifted the back end and the toboggan took off and soon were on the ice of Beebe Lake. I always had the steersman place which was on the back end of the toboggan, on my knees, hanging onto the ropes while steering with my toes. If I do say so, I was pretty good at it because we never had any accidents. But you went over sixty miles an hour going down that slide and if you got to sliding sideways on the glare ice of Beebe Lake and should hit a frozen-in stone or pebble, it would throw the toboggan over and break arms and legs, which very often happened! Our fraternity, Alpha Gamma Rho, had the longest toboggan on the slide. One night when I was not along the boys went across Beebe Lake, started up the other side and it broke the toboggan right in two; right in the middle!! So that was the end of our nice long toboggan. A few years ago they took down the toboggan slide so that's no longer available to students.

.....

SCHOOLING

My schooling in the grades went through the three rooms in Hulberton, except that the last half of the 7th grade I took in Holley under Miss Maybe. To go to Holley School was really a very simple thing compared to the drives with horses that many people had. I had to walk about an eighth of a mile to the trolley station in Hulberton and when I got to Holley, got off at the station; it was about half to three-quarters of a mile up to the High School. The trolleys ran about every hour so that if you got kept after school for any length of time, why you could always get the next trolley home and it worked out very satisfactorily.

School Principal Prof. VanZile who taught first year Latin and Caesar (four years of Latin was prerequisite to a college

degree in those days) decided that I was not doing very well in my declensions in the first year Latin. He had me stay over and spend a half an hour in his office studying declensions for several months. Probably that was the only reason I ever got through Latin because I had pretty good marks from then on. But that meant that I had to get the next trolley home, which was not too bad to do.

Professor VanZile was a strict disciplinarian and in Caesar class one day while one of the boys was cutting up in the back of the room, the first thing I knew a Caesar book sailed over my head! The boy moved just in time or he would have had it right in his face!! VanZile was an old football player and coached football team at Holley School.

Mc Do you mean that he actually threw the book at the student? Did he ever hit a student?

P I don't know if he ever hit 'em with a book. I've seen him "mop the floor" with them. He'd come up the stair outside the big Study Hall, he'd look up over the stairs as he came, and you didn't want to be "cutting up" when he appeared! (laughs) I think that's what made the school amount to something back in those days.

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(END OF TAPED INTERVIEW)

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The foregoing interviews were conducted by
1. Mr. Arden McAllister of Medina, New York
2. Helen M. McAllister of Medina, New York

After some additions and some deletions by Mr. Phillips, Final typing and some editing was completed by Helen McAllister (Mrs. Arden McA.) of Medina, New York.

Orleans County Historical Association

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SUBJECTS

1899 - 1989

Orleans County Historical Association

INTERVIEW

Mr. Marcus H. Phillips
Hulberton, New York

Marcus H. Phillips was born September 6, 1899.

Interviewed by Helen McAllister of Medina, N.Y.

P Phillips

Mc McAllister

Mr. & Mrs. Marcus Phillips

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.

Marcus H Phillips
Signed

7-14-1978
Date

Understood and agreed to: Helen M. McAllister
INTERVIEWER

7-14-1978
Date

July 14, 1978. Helen McAllister of Medina, N.Y. is interviewing Marcus H. Phillips of Hulberton, N.Y. The second half of this tape tells of Mr. Phillips banking experience.

P I, Marcus Phillips, am 78 years old. I was born September 6, 1899 in Hulberton, New York. My father was Arthur H. Phillips and my mother was Jessie Benedict from Brockport. My grandfather, after whom I was named, Marcus Hanford Phillips, was a well-known politician at one time, School Commissioner, then County Clerk of Orleans County, and later Assemblyman from Orleans County. He was well known throughout these parts, and very influential. My grandfather was a farmer, and my father carried on the farming tradition operating about 200 acres on the home farm in Hulberton, and later acquiring my Uncle John Phillips' 200 acre farm north of Hulberton where the Cobblestone house is.

The Hulberton farm was primarily a fruit farm. Back when my brother and I were boys, we grew up on two horse, two wheel cultivators, cultivating pea beans. Dad raised anywhere from 50 to 75 acres of pea beans every year. He took an old farm house, right south of where the trolley track was and moved it back and made it into a bean cleaning and picking building.

Mc How many workers would he have hired?

P There were about six or eight women employed during the winter months. The process was that the beans would be run through a long enclosed tub with rotating blades, mixed with sawdust and sand. As the beans progressed down-grade through the machine, it would polish them and make them a clean white color. The next thing would be they would be fed onto an inclined belt eight feet wide and eight feet high, carried between two rollers. The inclination of this belt could be changed and the flat beans and the stones would carry over the top, where the good beans would roll to the bottom and be ready for further processing. Then the house had several counters, several rooms had counters around them; they would be about 40 inches high, covered with white canvas, the height of the new bean bags, with holes every so far. Men would dump the beans on the counter and the women would push the good beans through a hole near the edge into the bean bag, and throw any poor beans

out. The men would weigh each bag to a certain fixed weight by adding or removing beans, then sew the bag up. ... These were pea beans, small white beans.

Mc Did your father hire the same women year after year, primarily?

P Yes.

Mc How did he get in touch with them?

P When I was a boy, the Italians came to Hulberton to work in the stone quarries, and the Italian women would be the ones who would come and work bean picking.

Mc Have you any idea what the wages might have been?

P I really don't remember what it would be back at that time... It was a winter time job.

Mc Who harvested in the summertime?

P Well, you are getting into the farming operation now.

Dad would have two hired men on the South Farm where the six cow dairy supplied the Village of Hulberton with milk; and one hired man living in the Cobblestone house on the North Farm where he kept 200 ewes bred to Shropshire Rams with big curling horns. He raised "hot-house" lambs very early during the winter, which were butchered and shipped to the New York City Market. Will West, who lived on the Creek Road north-east of Sandy Creek (now Murray), was "day man" all the good part of the year, driving his horse and buggy to and fro.

There were two three-horse teams on the South Farm, and two three-horse teams on the North Farm so during the summer they would be busy with the planting, cultivating, cutting hay, harvesting, and storing it in the barns in bulk in those days. In the newer big barns with tracks and hay cars, we used "slings" to unload the wagons; but in the smaller barns, which were original on the smaller farms which Grandfather merged into the two larger ones, it was different. It had to be pushed off the wagon into the barn. I well remember mowing it away in the back with a short handled, two or three-tined hay fork, with my eyes so full of sweat that I could hardly see.

During the winter, the bean processing would take up part of the hired men's time.

Mc Let's go back to the time when you were a little youngster. Would you tell us when and where you first went to school...?

P My Aunt, Jennie Phillips Smith, taught the first room of the new three-room school and was my first teacher, when I was four. The old one-room stone schoolhouse stood, still in good condition, just in front of and to the north of the new school. Of course, we had the girl's outhouse and the boy's, behind and beyond the opposite ends of the new building. My Aunt was the widow of Dr. Willard Smith of Ann Arbor, Michigan. He was a noted surgeon. My Aunt lived with my Grandparents after her husband died. He was a noted surgeon and at the time she married him, was the Mayor of Ann Arbor, and for several terms before and after. He left a sick bed to doctor an aged patient, had pneumonia and died. She then returned to Hulberton to live with her parents, in the Stone House.

There were three rooms in the Hulberton School and she taught in the first room. When I started, I think I must have started at four years old. I have a school picture showing me standing in front of the blackboard, at the back of the room with young Italian boys, practically matured, 18-19 years old, who had just come to this country. How she ever taught them, when she couldn't understand a word they said, or they couldn't understand a word she said, I never have been able to figure out. This is a fact!

Mc Your Aunt, Jennie Phillips Smith, taught what grades?

P They went Primary through, I think it was second grade. ... Primary was a lot more like Kindergarten; then first and second. I think that probably was it.

Mc How long did you stay in that particular school?

P Well, at mid-years when I was in the 8th grade, I left Hulberton School and transferred to Miss Maybee's 8th grade in Holley High School. So, I went there for the last half of my 8th grade and continued through the four years of high school in Holley, graduating in 1916 at the age of 16.

The next fall I started in Rochester Business Institute, taking a Commercial Course, which was book-keeping and writing-penmanship. You'd never know it after I got through taking notes in college! Commercial Law, Business Arithmetic, a month of typing. The Journal, Ledger, and other books of my final

Business Practice were really a marvel of penmanship. Unfortunately, I got tired of having them around and burned them since coming to Hulberton.

I graduated from RBI in 1917. By then help had become very scarce, due to the war (WW I) and Dad persuaded me rather than going into the Army, to stay home and help him run the two 200 acre farms. The two years that I was home, I did the cow-barn chores. Jim Charles, an Italian boy, did the horse-barn chores along with other work.

We had six cows. The Phillips family supplied the milk to the Village of Hulberton. When I was a boy, the milk was brought in and put through a screen, through a cheesecloth filter, into milk pans. These were tin pans about ten inches in diameter and two and a half inches deep. The rest of the milk was put into a cream separator which was a tall tank about 15 inches in diameter, with two glass fronts showing in it. The same amount of water was put in, and the next morning the water and skim milk would be drawn off the bottom leaving the cream on top. The watered skim milk, drawn from the separator, would be fed to the pigs. The cream that Grandma didn't use, was saved and shipped in five gallon cans to a cream processing plant in Buffalo. During my second year at home, Dad bought an Anker-Holth Cream Separator so that the milk was put through the cream separator and the cream was very thick. My Grandmother always insisted on my having lots of this very heavy cream on my morning cereal.

Mc What kind of cereal did you have?

P Oatmeal, cooked overnight in a double boiler, on the back of the coal range.

The pans of milk were placed on shelves in the pantry and in the evening my Grandfather and Grandmother would sit in the dining room and people would come to the dining room door with their little pails. They would usually have tickets which they purchased for either a pint, saying on them, "pint", or a quart. Grandmother would take their pail and go out and take a pint cup, or a quart cup, and pour from the pan into the pint or quart cup and then pour it into the pail. If the cream had started to rise, she would first stir the cream up in the pan so that it would be evenly distributed. This went

on for many years. Later, of course, we came to bottles that had people's names on them. But that was quite a few years afterward.

Mc Do you mean that they had their own family name on the bottle?

P No; well, they'd put a -- one of them would have a button, one of them would have something else-- their identification on the bottle.

There was a doctor, whose name I can't remember, lived in the Pierce house just north of the Phillips Homestead. The name of his father-in-law, who came to live with him, and who used to come over to Grandmothers after the milk, was Hewitt. I always remember that he used to talk about their having suett pudding.

(As I have said earlier) the skim milk was fed to the pigs. The Phillips family moved to Hulberton from the Allis Road in Barre in 1853. The barn which had been built to replace the original log barn about 1835 to '38 by Joseph Budd who was the founder of Hulberton and who built the Stone House, stood on the ground. The barn had been built of hewn timbers on the ground. The Phillips's raised it and had an eight foot stone wall put under it.That's the way they always described it. This gave a basement for a cow barn along the front edge of the building. The back part was used for either sheep or sometimes pigs, and later for storing cabbage.

There was a pig pen out back of the barn yard where they always had a pig or two. The year that I was home, we had twenty-two shoats on the east side of the cow barn. I carried water from the well across the barn yard, over to the cow barn, to the tune of 22 screaming pigs, mixed it with ground barley and put it in the trough to feed them, which would quiet them down. (laughter).

Perhaps at this stage I should tell you about the pet pig. We had a Chester-White Sow which was very patient and very pleasant with her pigs. At this particular time, she had her 17 piglets up in the Peach orchard, which was about a quarter of a mile south of the barns. There was a big discussion as how to get the sow and the 17 little pigs down to the barn.

Clark Crawford who had formerly worked at an Albion coal yard and had been one of Dad's hired men for several years, - Clark said,"Well, now she is perfectly gentle, I will take and put the pigs in a bushel basket and carry them down the road". Most sows would eat the person who tried to remove her pigs, but this sow let Clark put the pigs in the basket. Clark, accompanied by Dad and the three of us boys, walked down the road and she contentedly followed him down to the barn yard and out into the pig pen. So that was no problem. The pig pen had a railing about six inches above the floor all the way around to prevent the sow from lying on her little pigs. But somehow one of them got layed on and it damaged his front legs. So, in order to doctor him and save his life, Grandmother had the pig brought into the house and put him in a big box where she fed him milk. We raised him on a bottle and he became a family pet. ... We used to call him "Wee-wee".

Mc I wonder why! Was he really tiny, or... (laughter).

P Well, he was as big as the other ones but he was by himself, you know. We let him run loose around the yard. I would come out of the cow-barn door and he would hear me and come running toward me, and we would race to the woodshed door, or vice-versa. It was kind of a toss-up. He ran stiff legged in front, (demonstrates), but he sure could travel!!

Mc How long did your pet pig live, do you remember?

P When it came time to sell the pigs in the fall, they delivered the pigs to a car load of pigs in Fancher. I understood that he didn't fare very well with the other pigs because they all picked on him. So that was kind of a sad ending in his leaving our midst, but he sure was a wonderful pet.

You may not realize this, but a pig is the cleanest animal there is if he is where he can keep himself clean. The reason that they're always wallowing in mud is because they haven't any other place to go. But if you leave them by themselves they will keep themselves just as clean as they can be.

In September 1919 I started Cornell Agricultural Course which kept me there four years. During my second year, I joined Alpha Gamma Rho, the Agricultural Fraternity. During

my Sophomore year I became an Assistant Instructor in the Rural Engineering Department. The next summer while I was up in the hay field, I received word of an urgent telephone call from Professor Riley who was Head of the Department. When I answered the 'phone, he told me that Professor Goodman (Extension Professor in Rural Engineering), known to everyone as "Goodie", and Burt Jennings, who was the chief instructor in the Rural Engineering Department, had started out to cover the state with a demonstration. They had had one demonstration near Binghamton when Burt came down with appendicitis and had to enter the hospital there. Professor Riley wanted to know if I would join "Goodie" at Dalton and continue on with the rest of the route around the State.

Mc Just what is a demonstration?

P In the first place, we had a brand new one ton Reo Speed Wagon which had the artillery wooden type wheels, about three feet to three and a half feet in diameter, with hard rubber tires. On this we carried and then set up a demonstration showing how to install a hot and cold running water system in a home.

First we set up a base, a floor on legs about one foot off the ground. On the back edge of that, a wall about six feet high. We would install a sink and a pitcher pump. We would pump water into the sink, and the discharge from the sink would go into a pail beneath. Then we would put a pipe on the bottom of the sink and run the water outdoors. Then we would remove the pitcher pump and replace it with a force pump and install a water storage tank on top of the wall. With this force pump, we would pump water up into the gravity storage tank overhead. Then we had water coming down through a pipe to the sink, with a faucet on the right, and this constituted the cold water system.

To get hot water, the water would run from this gravity tank through a heater, usually a kerosene water heater back in those days, and come to the left hand hot water faucet in the sink.

Then we would install a toilet on the demonstration "floor"

and tell about installing a sewage disposal system. We had a bulletin showing how to build a concrete septic tank, a 4 by 4 by 8 feet long septic tank, with baffles near each end. We would tell about the distribution from the far end into tile, which would carry the water out into several parallell lines of tile, to leach into the soil. After a few demonstrations, I would spell "Goodie" by giving the lecture. This would be the first time many of those people had ever heard about any such thing.

Actually with this demonstration we travelled all over the rural area of New York State. In the south-eastern part of the state, the Catskills, I have seen the pail sitting under the sink in a farm house, and they carried the water out.

Sometimes when distances would permit, we would have a demonstration in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening, so that we were on the move all the time. The demonstrations had been scheduled way ahead of time, scheduled through the Farm Bureau managers of the different counties. So the whole thing was set up and planned. One thing that I learned - that you were very careful to eat only the best of foods, and take no chances. We were fortunate in not missing one demonstration, although quite a few were given in the rain!

This was, to me, a very interesting experience because Professor Goodman knew all of the Farm Bureau men very well. He had a wide acquaintance throughout the state. I met very interesting people, even got introduced to trout fishing on the Delaware River. One of the places we were invited for lunch was at the Constable Homestead of Constableville. Years later this became the Constable Museum. This is located on route #26, about 25 miles north of Rome, New York.

One of the interesting things that happened to us was that we had a demonstration in the morning and that afternoon we had one on the opposite side of a range of mountains. It meant that we had to go about 25 miles around the "v" to get back to the other place, or else go directly over the mountain! "Goodie" knew that the good dirt road was there alright, and so we decided to take the short-cut. "Goodie" was driving. The grade became very steep. We got almost to the break over, near the

top of the hill when our speed wagon gave up and stopped! So I stayed at the top with a block of wood to put behind the wheel if we failed again. "Goodie" backed down and tried it over again - no luck. It had been a point of good natured contention that "Goodie" weighed 225 pounds, and I weighed 150 pounds. So I said to "Goodie","If you get out and take the block of wood and be ready to block the wheel if I stop, I'll back down and get this going at the bottom, I think I can slip the clutch and get over (the hill)". And that was just what I did. I just barely made it over the brow of the hill without having to go back down again, but it necessitated slipping the clutch to do it. I had had excellent training in trying to do the impossible with an almost-powerful-enough Fordson Tractor.

Mc While you were at college, you met the woman who became your wife?

P While I was a Freshman in college, I met Doris Rodwell who was visiting her older married student brother, Ward, who with his wife lived across the street. Doris later became my wife on June 27, 1925. We have two children: Marcus Hanford Phillips III, and our daughter Ann, who married J. Drechsel and lives in Tenafly, New Jersey.

Mc Are you a Great-grandfather?

P No, just a Grandfather. Ann has three sons.

Mc After graduation from College, did you return to farming?

P No. I started out inspecting fruit on the New York Central (railroad) Lines with the Merchant's Dispatch Transportation Company, under George Comlossy in charge of inspection. I had a pass on all the New York Central, Big Four Railroads.

I started inspecting in South Haven, Michigan; later inspecting grapes out of Westfield, New York. I ended up in the winter at Big Four Central Flats Terminal in Cleveland, Ohio where the big railroad station now stands.

Mc How long were you on the railroad, working as an Inspector?

P About six months. It was a wonderful experience.

I can tell you an anecdote about that too. While working out of Westfield, I covered as far west as Harbor Creek, Pa. I reported one day that there had been some baskets of grapes stolen out of a car at Harbor Creek. The process was that I

would break the seal on a car, record its number, climb in and make out a report of the condition of the grapes, or the procedure. Then I would reseal it, recording the new seal number. The next night, I went up there again. First I stopped in at the railroad station to inquire whether the Station Agent had heard of any developments. The Station Agent, upon learning that I was going up to look at the cars on the switch, begged me not to go. He said,"The 'Dicks' are up there watching those cars and the 'Dicks' shoot first and ask questions afterwards."I could see that he was extremely disturbed and would do anything to prevent my going. But I went up and left the lights shining on the car from my Dodge Roadster, and I inspected the grapes just the same. There was no change from the previous night. But the Station Agent was so sincere in not wanting me to go up there because he was just scared to death that I would get shot. Probably I was foolish!

Mc Marcus, what are 'Dicks' ?

P 'Dicks' are railroad policemen, hired by the railroad. ...

On January 2, 1924 I came to Albion and started working for the Orleans County Trust Company . Harry D. Bartlett, the President of the Orleans County Trust Company, and my father had attended Brockport Normal (School) together. Harry had asked my father if I would like to come into the Bank. At that time the Orleans County Trust Company was located on the southwest corner of Main and Bank Streets in the old Bank Building. The year before it had been a National Bank, which was sort of a private investment institution for the Hart families. It had been purchased by a group of Albion people including my father-in-law, James Henry Rodwell, and Sanford Church, and Ramsdale, lawyers; and Louis E. Sands,"Bean King", and G. Ray Fuller, who lived on a good farm north of Waterport, and some others whose names I do not remember. It had been changed over to a Trust Company and the Trust Company was still operating in the old building with its dark, beautiful oak trim and plate glass windows, on the southwest corner. They had already purchased the northwest corner, the "Bailey Block" , The south half to be remodeled into a bank building and leaving the north half to "Hawks Drug Store".

During the first summer that I was there, the vault was finished and the new nine ton door was installed. In July or August, I believe, we started carrying our money from the new vault, back and forth to the old Bank Building, morning and night. ... We carried the partitioned cash drawers that we used at the tellers windows (to carry the money). But the vault was much safer. I always remembered the man who installed the bank door. He was a big mulatto; one of the biggest men I ever saw. It seems as though he was big enough to lift the door.

Mc When you went to work at the bank, did you have any banking experience?

P I had no banking experience.

Mc What was your job?

P Maybe I'd better tell about the personnel: Harry D. Bartlett, former County Clerk, was President, Henry Hiler, Secretary, his son Carl Hiler was Assistant Secretary, Fred Holt, Florence Sanford, and Marian Laskowski were already in the bank, and I started in at $175.00 a month. Finally getting to where I operated a Burrows Posting Machine, and really came all the way up through. Sometime during the fall we moved into the new bank building, which was really quite a change. A National or a State bank has a Cashier, A Trust Company has a Secretary and Assistant Secretary. Henry E. Hiler was Secretary, his son Carl was Assistant Secretary. Fred Holt and I were Tellers.

Mc Did most people have an account at the bank? Was this a common thing, or did people put their money under their mattress? Did the people have faith in the banks at that time?

P I think that people were gaining confidence in the banks and most people who had any amount of money kept it in a bank account. Of course there were always those who hid their money under the mattress, or someplace like that, where they very often lost it. The same as there are today.

Mc How long were you at this bank, Mr. Phillips ?

P I was at this bank about 20 and a half years, I believe.

P I really had some very remarkable experiences in the bank.

Mr. X turned out to be crooked. He was always doing something underhanded. I remember his coming in and cashing a check at the till - we had one cash and two teller windows - he came in and took over my window, and cashed this check on the Albion Furniture Company for John M. ———— Mr. X had a large interest in this company. I watched the money that he took out. I could count it just as well as though I'd been there doing it myself. He gave out some, I believe, twenty-three dollars more than the check called for, plus some odd cents. Eventually we caught up with Mr. X. It seems that Mr. X would take money that was paid in for mortgage interest and would pocket it rather than putting it through the books. Eventually this came to light. I remember one time when these things were going on, Dr. J. Walde Cramer, who was the dentist in Town, of Cramer and Dollinger, was Vice-President. He was the available one who I got to talk with, mainly about these things. Mr. X belonged to the Brockport Yacht Club, on Lake Ontario north of Brockport, and they were having their big annual party down there. I just had a feeling that Mr. X was going to take money out of the till to take down there with him. So, I called Dr. Cramer and told him of my suspicions. Mr. X put his money in the vault and left early. I locked the big vault without putting the Time-Lock on. Dr. Cramer came right down, and we went in and opened up the money chest that held Mr. X's money. It was just $500.00 short! One package of, I guess that would be twenty dollar bills. Now we knew that Mr. X was taking money. Fortunately, the next night it had been returned and his cash was okay.

Mr. X's Final Grab

(written by Marcus Phillips; not on tape)

The Board of Directors had notified Mr. X that he was to be terminated on a date that came on a Saturday, probably also at the end of a month.

Some time during the next Monday, it was discovered that Mr. X after the end of the day's business on Saturday, had issued a New York Draft payable to himself for $6,000. - taking

into the Bank the mortgage of John R. ——— covering a small farm on the west side of the Clarendon Byron Road several miles south of Clarendon, which Mr. X had sold to R. ——— The draft turned out to have been cashed by the New York Bank in which it was drawn the first thing Monday morning, so the Bank was hooked with the mortgage of a ner-do-well farmer on a farm probably worth less than half that much. To try to collect the interest, I made a number of trips to the farm over the years. It was a losing battle. I have forgotten the details of the final outcome, but I know the Bank took took quite a licking.

The saddest part was that Mr. X had an outstanding wife....."

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Eventually this led to the situation where Marine Midland came in. We were really the premature baby of the Marine Midland Banks. The Banking Department, under Chief Examiner Fred Holtzer, had been rather lax in following up on the condition of our bank and suddenly discovered that the situation was not too good; so they decreed that the bank should have a $75.00 assessment per share. Back in those days, the Par-Value of the stock was $100.00 a share, and the owner of the stock was liable for an assessment of an equal amount of $100.00. Some of the people did not want to put $75.00 more into each stock, so that stock was bought up by officers of the Marine Trust Company of Buffalo, which was then an individual bank. And it was, as I remember it, a year or a year and a half, maybe two years later when Marine Midland Group of Banks came into being. So I always figured that we were the premature baby of the Marine Midland Banks. When the Marine took the Orleans County Trust Company over, they sent Tom Heard, who had been a Marine Trust Bank Manager in Buffalo, down to run the Albion Bank. He , along with the help of Dr. Cramer the Vice-President, operated the bank as an individual bank. It was owned except for each Director's "Qualifying Shares" and contrdlled by Marine Midland, but still an individual bank back in those days; a member of the Marine Midland Group of Banks.

I had become the Assistant Secretary of the Bank, the second active officer, under Tom Heard as Secretary. We were a bank of one million deposits, where the Citizens National Bank was three million. Of course most of the people did their banking at the Citizens Bank here in Albion.

One of the things that brought about financial trouble in the Orleans County Trust Company was that the Officers and Directors had made loans to try to get business away from the Citizens Bank, and their loans had not turned out too well.

THE CLOSING OF THE CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK

Back in 1932 was the time the Citizens Bank closed. A man who worked in Medina at some plant, asked if he could leave early to come to Albion because he heard there was a run on the Citizens National Bank, and he wanted to get his money out. Actually this was the thing which started the run on the Bank. I shall never forget - Judson Curtis was the President, Harry Colburn was Cashier, and young son Bill Curtis had come home from college and had started in the Bank. Bill came over to our Bank in mid-afternoon. I'll never forget his coming in; he was not a goodlooking fellow but he -- the only way I could ever describe him was that he looked like a walking dead man. His face was so drawn! He told us that they were having a run on the Bank. We immediately gave him half of the currency that we had in our vault. By the next morning, the Brink's Bank Currency truck was bringing down currency from the Federal Reserve in Buffalo. My Father had always done business at the Citizens Bank all those years. He happened to come into our Bank that afternoon, and I told him what was going to happen tomorrow, and I asked him to go over to the Citizens Bank and find out the route from the four corners that would best get the Brinks truck to the back door of the Citizens Bank; which he did. So, the next morning Dad was out there in front of our bank ready to take the Brinks truck over to the Citizens Bank. Well, we had lots of money that day - currency that we piled up and displayed at our windows. The Citizens Bank did likewise. The problem was, having learned our lesson the hard way, we had become very strict with our loans. We tried to make very sure that they were repaid once every year. When a farmer came into the Citizens Bank to pay his $3,000. loan, an Officer

would say,"Now Frank, why don't you instead of paying this loan off, why don't you continue your loan and secure it -- buy some other stocks, and secure it with stocks". Well, that's what he did. A lot of them did this. Then when the "crash" came and stocks went down to practically nothing, the Bank had to call the loans which the farmers couldn't pay because they no longer had the cash, and the stocks that had pledged as collateral had suddenly lost their value due to the Stock Market "crash". And that was actually what closed the Citizens Bank; outside of the fact that the people persisted in keeping running on it.

We lived on North Main Street, and at 7:30 the next morning we heard Pontiacs, which had a peculiar whine to them, coming in from the north country; and I said to Doris,"This is going to be a bad day!" In spite of all pleas, they kept running on the Bank, so in order to make it equitable that everyone would get his fair share, the National Bank authorities closed the Citizens National Bank.

The first liquidator sent here by the National Banking Authority, was a Mr. Peterson, a very well known, capable, likeable man way up in the organization. The Citizens Bank had put up all its Government Bonds, and its good securities, to borrow money from the Federal Reserve Bank. So they had nothing more to go on, and that was one of the features that caused the closing. Originally the Liquidator had no place to go to re-finance the mortgages, so just after this liquidation had started, the Federal Land Bank liberalized, putting on an additional Land Bank Commissioners' loan of 15%, which made it possible for the farmers to re-finance their farm mortgages and pay back part of their loans to the Citizens Bank.

The Home Owners Loan was inititated and set up in Washington to take the loans of home owners. Now, with the setting up of these two outlets, the liquidator was able to get in money rather rapidly.

TIGHT MONEY SITUATION RELIEVED by MARINE MIDLAND ACTION

Now the Marine Midland offered to take over some of the assets of the Citizens Bank and pay 50% dividends on the banking accountants of all Citizens Bank Depositors which the controller of the currency, of course, was glad to do.

The way this worked was that we went to the Citizens Bank and looked over their mortgages and loans. Walter Blodgett, who was the Produce Dealer operating under the name of Harrison Blodgett, Inc., knew the farm people of this whole area; Walter used to come with us (the Orleans County Trust Company officers) night after night , and we would work until 12:30 or 1 o'clock going over the loans and deciding which ones we could more safely take.These Citizens Bank assets were taken on a re-purchase agreement plan whereby as the Receiver of the Citizens Bank got money in and offered to trade, we could take back the assets which we decided we did not want to keep. When we refused to bring back any more assets, the ones that we had kept became ours. Out of this deal the Bank eventually paid some, I think it was over 96% to the depositors.

The story was all around that the Marine Midland had closed the Citizens Bank. There was nothing anymore untrue than that! But that reflects the way those sort of things can work out. In fact if it hadn't been for Marine making this dividend available to the Citizens' customers, this country would have been in greater financial trouble. It was a record in National Banking history of a dividend being paid within a month of the time a bank closed.

Now at the same time, the other banks in the county were all running into difficulty. The two Medina banks, the Union Bank and the Central Bank,both closed. The bank in Holley closed and I'm not positive about the bank in Lyndonville, but I'm pretty sure that they were closed for a short time. We were the only bank in Orleans County that was open, and people came to the Orleans County Trust Company from all over the county. I think at one time I probably knew nearly half of the people in Orleans County because they came here to bank and to cash their checks. This was the only place available to them. The Albion Citizens National Bank, and the Union Bank in Medina both remained closed. Marine Midland eventually took over the Central Bank in Medina.

It was generally known that Watson F. Barry, who was the President of the Central Bank, and his second wife, Pearl Timmerman, each of whom had large estates of their own, put

their money into the bank so that the depositors would get as much as possible. These two people really gave away their personal fortunes for the relief of the depositors of their own bank.

After my having been there twenty years, people walking right by Tom Heard and coming to me and having confidence in me, built up his enmity. He would take short-cuts to embarrass me. I would bring a loan before the officers committee. Tom would see that it got turned down and I would have to so inform the applicant. Then Tom would get the party in and make the loan himself without calling me in on it. So, finally I resigned.

The Directors gave me two months to look for another job and I never will forget Director F. A. Reed coming in and giving me the devil for still working there when I should be out looking for a job. I had a chance to be Assistant Office Manager to Eastman Kodak State Street, the turning down of which was the biggest mistake I ever made. I went instead as Office Manager of a War Plant of General Railway Signal, the Genesee-Lincoln Plant, which made turrets; a secret process making turrets for the B-29. There were 725 people in the office under my supervision. It was a wonderful experience and I was highly complimented by the management for my ability in teaching people who had no idea of book-keeping, how to keep their records straight. At the end of the war (WW II) they wanted me to continue and liquidate. I was there two and a half years.

In the meantime, I'd found out that Graflex was looking for a Credit Manager. Graflex made the newsman's favorite SPEED GRAPHIC CAMERA. I went to Graflex as Credit Manager. Kodak had always sold, billed, shipped, and collected for Graflex. Graflex wanted to set up direct contracts with dealers, and I opened up all of their new dealerships, okayed every shipment, and was there two and a half years. Then they put out a new model, Speed Graphic, the governor on which did not work properly, and the dealers returned them for replacement. This cost Graflex a million and a quarter, so the Vice-President Harper, under whom I worked, told me.

One day when Harper was on vacation, Mr. Whittatcker, the owner, called me in and said,"Marcus, the cloth doesn't cut quite broad enough". I was the third of the higher salaried employees to be let go: Quality Control Expert, then the Export Manager whom they had gotten from South America.

After leaving Graflex, I went back into banking, down in Stuben County where I lived from 1950 to 1965. Then we sold the "Wheeler Homestead" south-west of Kanona where we lived and we came back to Hulberton, to the old Phillips Stone Homestead where we now live.

Mc Marcus, is this old homestead the same place you had lived as a young boy?

P This is where my Grandparents lived when I was a boy. Dad had built a new house up on the west side of the Main Street in Hulberton where I was born and my family lived.

Mc Did part of your home farm become part of the stone quarry in Hulberton?

P The Phillips Quarry was on the east side of the road, back of the farmstead buildings, and it was on the Phillips land but operated by John and William Balmforth. William Henry was the quarry operator, and John the business manager.

After I retired in Stuben County, I became head of the Red Cross in Bath, New York for a year and a half. Then Doris, who had been teaching first grade in Haverling ~~High~~ School, Bath for about 13 years, had a chance to transfer to Albion. We moved in 1965 to the Phillips Stone Homestead in Hulberton where we live at the present time.

Mc You and Mrs. Phillips have celebrated quite a few years of marriage together.

P We have been married 53 years, and we have just attended my 55th Cornell Reunion.

Mc That's beautiful! What are you doing now to keep out of mischief?

P With an old farmstead, I have more things waiting for me to do than I'll ever be able to catch up on.

Mc You are active in other organizations throughout the county.

P Yes. I am a Director of Nutrifare Program, A Director of the Eastern Orleans Community Center in Holley, also of Home Services - which is the "Meals-on-Wheels Program". I guess that about makes it. I was President of the Albion Lions Club. I was the organizing President of a new Lions Club started in Avoca, New York.

I grew up a member of the Methodist Church in Hulberton until I was married when I transferred to the Baptist Church in Albion to join my wife's church. I was made Invested Funds Treasurer with $65,000. in Invested Funds for over twenty years, until I moved to Stuben County. There we joined the Presbyterian Church in Bath and I was Clerk of the Session there for six and a half years until the newly-established rotation forced my retirement.

For some time I have been a Director of the Cobblestone Society and we are Charter Members of the Orleans County Historical Association.

The other day I talked with a past-middle-age man who told me, very happily, that when he was 16 years old he came into the Bank and that I had opened up his first bank account for him. Apparently, people have always had confidence in me. They've told me their troubles and their joys. And their confidences never have been spread to anyone!

Mc That's beautiful, Marcus.

P While I was running a National Bank in Greenwood, New York, it became an Office of the Security Trust Company. The Security Trust Company was one of the first companies to bring all of their day's work into the main office in Rochester where it was posted. My friends in the other banks used to kid me about having to call up Rochester to find out a customer's balance. I used to say,"All right boys, we're getting the bugs out of our system. It won't be long before you will be doing it". And that's just exactly the way it worked out, because centralized book-keeping came into being shortly after that. The Security Trust Company had the bugs out of theirs before the others started!

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(End of taped interview). This tape was transcribed by Helen McAllister of Medina, N.Y. After Marcus Phillips had made some additions and some deletions, final typing was done by H. McAllister.