

LOOKING BACK

by Hague Historical Society Board Members
Shelly Gautreau and Nancy Young

EXCERPTS FROM *THE HAGUE CHRONICLE* FROM APRIL 1975 (50 YEARS AGO):

HAGUE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr. West was in charge of the program. It was built around the first minute books of the Town of Hague and covered official acts of the town from April 6, 1807 when the Town of Rochester was created by an act of the state legislature, until 1820. Previously the area had been a part of the Town of Bolton. On April 6, 1808 the name of the town was changed to Hague for reasons no one seems to know.

William Cook appears to be the first supervisor, with Uriah Balcom, Town Clerk, with Issac Balcom and Noah Woodward, assessors. Others who appear to have been leaders of the community were Samuel Patchin, John Holman and Elijah Bailey. Seventeen townsmen were listed as competent to serve as jurors. Some of the more interesting positions which the Board filled were "poormasters" who were assigned to look after the poor in the town; a "poundmaster" appointed to impound horses and other animals which may have strayed; and "fenceviewers" appointed to see that fences along roadways were adequate and built according to law.

The first act of the Town made it unlawful for hogs, horses and sheep, but not cattle, to run at large. In these early days it was the responsibility of persons whose property abutted on roadways to keep them in repair and the Board established "beats" and assigned them to specific persons to keep them in repair. At the town meeting in 1808 a motion to raise \$30 for town expenses for the year was carried.

In the 1808 minutes an agreement is reproduced wherein the Overseers of the Poor, Nathan Taylor and Caleb Balcom, by and with the consent of the justices of the peace, Reuben Smith and James Eare, have "put and placed Harvey Gray, a poor child of the age of one" as apprentice to John Holman until he "shall accomplish his full age of twenty-one years". During this time, Holman will "instruct the apprentice in the art and trade of agriculture" and shall "provide him with sufficient meat, drink, and apparel and lodging and shall also teach him to read and write". At the expiration of the term he was required to give him a Bible and was also "to

see that he did not become a charge on the town". (Harvey Gray seems to have done it all right. He is listed in the 1855 census as the owner of a 250 acre farm with 20 cows and 2 working oxen.)

In 1909 (1809, correction by S.G.) it was decided that \$20 was enough to raise for poor money. A bounty of \$5 was placed on wolves "until there are three wolves killed and no bounty on any more". One cent was required to be paid on each sheep and six cents on each swine that was found on the common or highway. Four years later these fines were raised to 6 cents for each sheep and 12 ½ cents for each swine.

The relationship between the town and the school is not entirely clear. However, in 1813 the sum of \$30 was voted for the support of common schools and John Holman, John Hayford and William Cook were elected school commissioners. In 1819 the amount raised for schools was \$60. At the annual meeting in 1820 it was agreed that the same sum be raised for support of common schools "as shall be received from the school fund the ensuing year". This looks like the beginning of revenue sharing or matching grants.

There is much more material on Hague's early days and from time to time we will relate parts of it to you.

50 YEARS LATER:

Within *The History of Warren County* (edited by H.P. Smith) is a section containing the "1885 History of the Town of Hague." Page 562 has this notation by H.P. Smith: "The town records of Hague up to 1822 have unhappily been lost".

However, the records were recovered on October 10, 2021 under a pile of stuff in an old shed/barn. They were turned in to the NYS Library and then transferred to the NYS Archives. After that, they were turned over to Town of Hague Clerk Debbie Manning and a receipt was signed by her. There are microfilmed pages of those minutes.

Mr. West had full knowledge of those minutes in 1975 when he gave his lengthy presentation. How did he possess that information? Were the records discovered in his barn?

This is a mystery that we, at the Hague Historical Society, would love to answer. Anyone who has information to share with us about this, please do so. Thank you! ▣

SPRING JOB AND CAREER FAIR

On **Wednesday, April 9, 2025, from 4 to 7 pm**, the Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC) and North Country Community College (NCCC) will sponsor the Spring Job and Career Fair at the NCCC Ticonderoga campus. It is open to the public and there will be door prizes as well as complimentary refreshments.

Attendees will be able to:

- Visit with Ticonderoga area employers.
- Schedule interviews (possibly onsite).

- Learn about area job and career opportunities.
- Check out the virtual reality learning and career exploration headsets provided by the New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL).
- Participate in a speed interview session at 5 pm. (Pre-registration is *required* (email [HERE](#) or call Megan at 518-585-6619).
- Take advantage of local and regional resources.
- Explore degree program options at NCCC. ▣