

by Scott G. Boyce, who moved it a mile or two west and south, where it still stands. The Wayne Lumber Co. of New York city bought it a few months ago, and is now operating it, getting out lumber for use in building aeroplanes. Gilman Goodwin, who had made a fortune in New York city as a mover of buildings, came into the town in the sixties, and built and for several years operated a comparatively small mill on Little Trout river, about a mile east of the town house, where at a considerably earlier day Samuel, and then Benoni, Webb had had a mill. Mr. Goodwin rebuilt at a cost said to have amounted to sixty thousand dollars, but the enterprise did not pay, and he returned to New York city. The machinery in the mill sold for five thousand dollars in 1882, and was removed to Gouverneur. John B. Hart built a mill at about the same time with Goodwin for John B. Roscoe of New York, for whom he operated it for several years. Later the property went into the hands of Judge Henry A. Paddock of Malone and Mr. Hart, but it never paid. An older mill, known as the Lewis Tucker mill, had been run at about the point where Mr. Hart located. The Goodwin and Hart establishments were both steam mills, and each proprietor ran a store in connection with his lumbering operations. Charles D. Rood also had a mill forty years ago or more on Little Trout river, near the Burke line, which was unprofitable. John boy of Brainardsville built a sawmill north of the town house, and was fatally injured by the bursting of a flywheel while operating it in 1887.

The frequency with which failure was written across early lumbering enterprises is striking and pitiful. The operators had an abundance of the best timber of this region almost at the doors of their mills, they were unsparing of themselves in respect to hours and arduousness of labor, and the wages that they had to pay were low. Nevertheless it was only the exceptions who made money. Lumber commanded but a low price, the hauls to shipping points were long and over poor roads, and in many cases the equipments of mills gave only a small product. Thus the forests were wasted, and disappointment and hardship were the principal return that the owners realized.

The following have been merchants in a small way at Bellmont Center or vicinity: John Ryan, Edward Graves, Harvey Harrington, Earl Howe, Ben. Webb, Frank W. Winkley, Abe Reynolds, Thomas Rounds, Edward White and Thomas Reynolds.

Except for possibly two or three farmers, the first settlers in the extreme western part of the town were Charles Ring and John Monk, who came from Tompkins county about 1852 to engage in lumbering. They erected two mills on the Ingraham stream, and operated them for a number of years. A dozen years later both were wrecks. For twenty or thirty years Ringvifle (now known as Owls Head) had little growth, but has since become a busy and thriving hamlet, with a railway station, shops, stores and a Methodist Episcopal church. Until within a year or two Scott G. Boyce had a large sawmill and planing mill here for several years. The latter was burned, and the former

dismantled and removed. Mr. Boyce formerly had a sawmill east of Owls Head also, in the vicinity of Ingraham Pond, which mill was built by Cornelius and Cass Wilson. Forty years ago, in order to vote, the residents of the section had to drive by way of Malone to Bellmont Center, nearly eighteen miles; and it was almost impossible even in a stirring campaign to induce more than a dozen or fifteen to undertake the trip when free transportation was furnished and payment made for their so-called day's work." This part of the town has since been made into a separate election district, and polls from a hundred to a hundred and forty votes.

Standish lies on the Clinton county border, and mostly in Clinton county. There are a furnace and coal kilns there, some parts of which are in Bellmont To the west of Standish are the Middle Kilns, and still farther west, near Wolf Pond (about seven miles south of Mountain View), are other kilns. Twenty-odd years ago there were at these three points a fluctuating scattered population of perhaps two or three hundred, but, with the decrease of industrial activity there, it has diminished considerably.

A sawmill was built a number of years ago a mile and a half south of Mountain View by Edwin B. Bryant, of Syracuse. Its principal product seems to have been lawsuits and judgments. The mill was burned, and rebuilt by Felix Cardinal. It was continued in operation under different ownerships until 1915, when it was dismantled and removed farther south.

The largest sawmills ever operated in Bellmont were those of Gilman Goodwin, John P. Hart, Gilbert L. Havens and Scott G. Boyce, none of which is now running or in existence.

Pope, Williams & Company began operations at the hamlet of Chateaugay Lake in 1874, to erect the largest and best catalan forge in the world. Its supply of ore was to be obtained from the Lyon Mountain mine in Clinton county, about eleven miles distant, and its charcoal from the adjacent forests. Gardiner Pope was the resident manager for the first few years, and was succeeded by John H. Moffitt, now of Plattsburgh, who while in Congress gave place to Lansing Donaldson, now of Malone. Senator N. Monroe Marshall was also connected with the enterprise, in the store, until he was elected county clerk. In 1877 the works and property were transferred to the Chateaugay Ore and Iron Company, in which LeGrand B. Cannon, of New York, and Hon. Andrew Williams and Hon. Smith M. Weed, of Plattsburgh, were heavily interested. The Bellmont department of the company had a sawmill at the forge, the old Roswell Weed property rebuilt, in which the lumber for its forge buildings, shops, houses for its operatives, etc., and for planking six miles of highway to the railroad at Chateaugay, was sawed. The company maintained a steamboat on the lake for towing its barges laden with ore, charcoal and wood to the forge and kilns; its store did a business of a hundred

thousand dollars or more per year; it built scores of dwellings for its employees; thirty thousand solid cords of four-foot wood were burned annually in the kilns at the forge and at Standish; a million bushels of charcoal were used in a year; and it had on its payrolls continuously two or three hundred men in this county, besides the choppers and teamsters who worked under contract. In times of greatest activity it turned, out annually five thousand tons of blooms and billets, than which there was none of higher grade in the world. Except in periods of business depression, and until other methods were discovered and utilized by which iron suitable for conversion into steel could be produced at a lower cost, the orders for its output outran the capacity of the forge. At one time this iron commanded ninety dollars per ton, while now I think that not a pound is produced anywhere by the catalan process, and the iron that answers as a substitute for it has sold as low as about thirteen dollars a ton. The cost of production varied of course as wages were high or low and as improvements were instituted from time to time, but could never be brought under thirty-eight dollars per ton. The cost of operating was over a hundred thousand dollars a year. Two tons of ore made one ton of iron, and the former cost six dollars a ton. The business was abandoned in 1893.

At first thought it seems strange that this vast industry apparently added little to Bellmont's population, but it is to be remembered that as it developed the mills of Goodwin, Hart and Havens were about closing, and thus what was gained in one direction was in part offset by losses in others.

The Adirondack and St. Lawrence Railway enters Bellmont from Malone at Chasm Falls, near the northwest corner of the town, and, bearing southeasterly for about twelve miles, passes into Franklin near Plumadore Pond. The Chateaugay Railway enters at Standish, on the eastern border, and runs southwestwardly seven or eight miles to Wolf Pond, where the two lines are almost in contact. The former has stations in Bellmont at Owls Head and Mountain View, and the latter at Middle Kilns and Wolf Pond. The Chateaugay Railway was built through Bellmont in 1886, and the Adirondack and St. Lawrence in 1892.

Two murders have been committed in Bellmont. In November, 1852, Ira Sherwin, of Malone, shot and killed Justin Bell, a well-to-do farmer of Brasher, in the latter's hunting or trapping camp near Owls Head. Sherwin himself reported the death of Bell, admitting that he shot him, but claiming that it was an accident. He was known to have been under the influence of liquor the night of the murder, and inconsistencies in his story and contradiction of it in some particulars by established facts cast suspicion upon him. The evidence on the trial was almost wholly circumstantial, but so convincing that a verdict of guilty was found. One bit of testimony was especially interesting, and told strongly for the prosecution. A bank in Montreal

formerly indicated the denominations of its bills by Roman numerals, and it was sought to show that a two-dollar note found in Sherwin's possession had been Bell's. An illiterate witness who had seen Bell's money testified that one note that he had seen Bell have was "an eleven dollar bill." No cross-questioning could shake him on that point, and when the two (II) dollar bill taken from Sherwin was produced he unhesitatingly identified it as at least exactly like the one that Bell had had. Sherwin was sentenced to be hung, but the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.

The other murder occurred in August, 1877, in the extreme northwestern part of the town, and was perpetrated by an Italian tramp who called himself Joe Woods, but whose real name is believed to have been Joseph Sullivan, and his criminal record bad. The victim was Steven Barber, a respectable farmer of small means, who lived alone with his wife. Woods had stopped at the house for dinner the day before, and had sold articles of clothing to Mr. Barber, who in counting out the money in payment showed about thirty dollars still remaining in his possession. Woods gained entrance to the house in the night, shot and killed Mr. Barber in bed, and also twice shot Mrs. Barber. He was apprehended a day or two later in Clinton county, and brought to Malone, where, upon his arrival, a crowd quickly gathered, and chased him to the jail, with cries of "Lynch him," though no real attempt was made to take him from the officers. Woods was tried and convicted in December of the same year, and was executed in the jail yard at Malone in February, 1878. Mrs. Barber's wounds were severe, one bullet having penetrated an eye, and yet she positively identified Woods as the murderer, claiming to have recognized him in the moonlight. Considering the character of her wounds, the identification was remarkable. Her evidence was certainly a marvel of clearness and certitude.

In 1855 the Legislature appropriated five thousand dollars for clearing and improving the rafting channel of Salmon river and its tributaries and for the construction of piers, booms and dams, and in 1857 voted a further equal amount for completing the work. Wm. King, Buel H. Man and Aaron Beman were named in the act to expend the first appropriation, and Ebenezer Man, Hiram Horton and B. S. W. Clark to expend the second. A part of the money was applied to the building of the dam at Mountain View, and in consequence the locality was long known as "State Dam." When I first visited it, in 1863, the place was desolate enough. The sole building was a tumble-down barn, and the stream above the dam showed mainly only standing trunks of trees, half-sunken logs and a waste of roots and limbs. The act appropriating the money carried permission to overflow State lands, and such flooding had killed the timber on the banks of the originally narrow channel. In 1893 a further appropriation of two thousand dollars was obtained for the removal of this refuse, and the locality is greatly improved in appearance. The first act of appropriation provided that the State lands adjacent to Salmon river should be sold

only in parcels of six hundred and forty acres at public auction, and for not less than thirty cents an acre! Try to buy a building or camp site there now, and note the advance in values.

The hamlet of Chateaugay Lake, once a hive of activity and of abounding prosperity, is now almost deserted. The great forge buildings and the sawmill have rotted down, many of the cottages built for the operatives have been demolished or removed, while others stand in a dilapidated condition, unoccupied, and the store that once was thronged with customers is at present the place of worship of the local organization of the Holiness Movement. There is no industrial establishment in operation, nor any business at all except one small grocery store. The early teachers of Chateaugay Lake's school included Mrs. Paul Merrill, D. D. P. Dewey, Samuel and Theodore Beman, Misses Martha Williamson, Harriet Hoit and Jane and Olive Miles, Darius Merrill and Myron T. Whitney.

The history of church organizations in Belmont may be briefly told. Religious services were held at Chateaugay Lake as early as 1824 by Rev. Ashbel Parmelee of Malone and Elder Ephraim Smith. Mr. Chase told in a paper contributed to the Historical Society a few years ago that the former once officiated in Mr. Drew's house to a congregation of only eight, but that these included every (adult?) inhabitant of the town.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Chateaugay Lake was incorporated June 5, 1889, at a meeting held "at the accustomed place of worship," with Nathan Thurber, J. W. Merrill and Henry N. Cootey as trustees. For fourteen years previously, however, Methodist services had been held regularly in the school house hall by the pastor of the church at Brainardsville, and occasional services from a more remote time. Chateaugay Lake never had a church building until 1916, when one was erected by the Methodist Episcopal denomination. The site, on the lake road about half way between the hamlet and the Banner House, was given by Dr. E. E. Thurber. What the purpose was I do not know, but notwithstanding the incorporation in 1889, a further incorporation under the same title was had October 17, 1914.

St. Agnes Church of Chateaugay Lake (Roman Catholic) was incorporated in 1875, and for several years thereafter services were held more or less regularly in the school house hall by the priest in charge at Chateaugay. Before such incorporation mass had been said infrequently in private houses here, while latterly Catholic services have been at Brainardsville once a month, the priest at Chateaugay officiating. The society has no church building.

The first Congregational Society of Belmont, at Belmont Center, was incorporated in 1849 with John Richey, Joseph Williamson and Thomas McKenny as trustees, but no history of the life and activities of the organization is now traceable. Doubtless it was only a

missionary charge, served probably by clergymen from Malone and Burke, and possibly sometimes from Chateaugay, and after a time was suffered to die. In 1868 the Presbyterian-Congregational Society of Bellmont was incorporated, and enrolled with the presbytery of Champlain in 1871. It had completed a church edifice in 1870. Rev. Andrew M. Milar served as pastor from 1867 to 1896. In later years services between pastorates were conducted by the Malone clergymen and by students from Magill College, Montreal. Prior to the erection of the church building services had been held first in the school house and then at the town house.

The history of Methodism in Bellmont before 1853 is meagre. We have authentic information that the town was in the Chateaugay circuit, but nothing fixing the neighborhood or neighborhoods where the early meetings were held. Rev. James Erwin, stationed at Chateaugay, was certainly in Bellmont in 1835, and it is only a reasonable presumption that his predecessor in the circuit had been there before him, and that his successors visited the town every year afterward until the conference appointed a resident clergyman to the charge in 1854. This appointee apparently preached both at Brainardsville and at Bellmont Center, and perhaps occasionally at Chateaugay Lake also. At Brainardsville services were held in the school house until the erection of the church edifice in 1866, and for sixteen years prior to 1870 there were pastors resident either here or at Bellmont Center. But in 1870 Brainardsville was a part of the Chateaugay charge, and so remained until 1885. Since this latter date it has been united with Chateaugay Lake and Bellmont Center, the three comprising one independent charge with a single pastor. Considerable improvements in the church building were made in 1915.

At Bellmont Center a class was formed in 1853 or earlier, and until 1888 or 1889, when a church building was provided, services were held at first in private houses or in the school house, and then in the town hall. During the period of fifteen years when Brainardsville was joined with Chateaugay, the Bellmont Center organization was served ministerially by Benjamin F. Brown, a local preacher, who was commonly called "Priest" Brown, who died in 1868, and then by pastors located at Burke. Since 1885 it has been again united, with Brainardsville. For several years no services were held in the winter season, because the church lacked provision for heating it, but this defect has now been corrected, and the church is open throughout the year. The church building was erected in 1888 on a site donated by Sherman J. Heading.

A Methodist Episcopal church was built at Owls Head in 1898. The organization is a part of the Chasm Falls charge, the clergyman of which officiates at Owls Head. Prior to the establishment of this church occasional Methodist services had been held in homes in the vicinity.

St. Elizabeth's at Mountain View was organized and a church building erected in 1907 through the efforts of Rev. Father Valois of St. Helen's at Chasm Falls, of which charge it is a mission. It is attended usually by the rector of that church, though not infrequently supplied by priests who are guests at one of the hotels.

The first Union Protestant Church of Mountain View was incorporated May 29, 1915, with C. C. Morgan, J. W. Pond and S. R. Payne as trustees. The church building is an attractive structure. The organization does not contemplate employment of a regular pastor, the church being, as its title indicates, open to all Protestant denominations, and services will probably be held in it by clergymen from vicinity parishes and by such as may spend their vacations at Mountain View.

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