

## HISTORY OF CLINTONDALE

by  
Marguerite Terhune  
April 8, 1918

### Location

In the extreme north and well to the east of the Town of Plattekill, Ulster County, New York, and lying partly within the south-west tongue of the Town of Lloyd, is the pretty little village of Clintondale.

Bowered in vineyards and in orchards of peach, cherry, apple and other fruits, and surrounded also by abundant fields of straw, black and raspberry and by acres of currants, the chief resource of the place is clearly seen to be horticultural. Its neat cottages, well kept lawns, busy stores and public buildings, tell a story of industry and sobriety, characteristic of the population as a whole, so plain that "he who runs may read".

In such a place it may well be credited that there has never been a place where intoxicating drinks were sold since 1835, and then only from a transient grocery, which came and went as Hamlet's ghost, a bearer of evil tidings and an inciter of future murder.

There are now approximately one hundred thirty-five houses occupied by one hundred fifty families, including about eight hundred souls.

There are now within the village, beside the residences above mentioned, three churches - a Methodist Episcopal, Pentecostal, and Friends, or as it is colloquially called, Quaker. There is a two room school-house, accomodating one hundred pupils which is directed by two competent teachers. There have been a berry box factory, two saw mills, three general merchandise stores, a cash grocery, a gents' furnishing store, a stove and tin store, a barber shop, an ice cream saloon, a fish market, two meat markets, a millinery, several dressmakers' establishments, three blacksmith shops, a wagon store and shop and a funeral director's rooms. There is a lawyer's office, a boot and shoe shop, a drug

store, a temperance hotel and a hoop factory, there are two public halls, a number of painters, carpenters, masons and other mechanics with adequate shops.

#### Limits

It is difficult to define the limits of an unincorporated village, but perhaps few will dispute the following suggested termini on the different streets taking the post office as a standard point.

On Main St., formerly the Highland and Modena Turnpike, Lincoln Dingee's is the last house east, and the Hasbrouck homestead, now the residence of Mr. Frank Terhune, the last one west.

From the post office southward stretches Hull Avenue, named in honor of a family that early settled in Clintondale, whose descendants still live on the old homestead and the various families of whom have, in a large degree, contributed to the growth and good reputation of the place; the last house on this street is one of the Heaton homesteads, now occupied by Pasburg's.

From Hull Avenue at a point near Wallace Thomas' residence, Heaton Avenue extends in a quarter circle to Main Street, near the residence of Lincoln Dingee. It is so named in honor of the Heaton family, who laid it out, built upon it, and have contributed, as have the Hull's, largely to the religious, intellectual and business enterprise of the village.

From Main Street at the bridge, northward, extends Brookside Avenue to Cascade Avenue, at the residence occupied by Willard Jenkins.

Cascade Avenue extends from Jacob Eltinge's pleasant homestead up, eastward, over Rockwood Heights to Aurora Avenue at the residence of John Ellis.

Aurora Avenue formerly enjoying the utilitarian cognomen of Basket Street from the fact that many years ago there lived upon it many makers of baskets, and now named Aurora from the fact that it extends farthest east of all the highways of the village, rises at the junction of Cliff Street and Crescent Avenue, and terminates at John Ellis'.

Vesper Avenue, formerly called "The Paltz Road", now named Vesper because the most westerly, rises in Brookside Avenue and extends west indefinitely, the last house being the residence of Mr. Graham Hurd.

Mountain Lane extends from Aurora Avenue southward to the residence of Mr. William Ellis.

Mill Street extends from Maple Avenue at Mr. Clayton Jenkin's residence, west to Brookside Avenue.

Maple Avenue extends from Main Street at the post office to Brookside Avenue, at the residence of Mrs. Alida Sutton.

Cliff Street extends from the junction of Aurora and Crescent avenues to Main Street, south of Lincoln Dingees' residence.

Crescent Ave. extends from the Friends Church east, to the junction of Cliff Street and Aurora Avenue, at the residence of Mr. J. Livingston.

Some might ask the question: "Where is Clintondale Station". We answer that correctly speaking, there is no such building. The nicely appointed station house on the Central New England Railroad, bearing the name Clintondale, can, by no stretch of geographical imagination, be said to be in the limits of the village.

#### Early Settlement

No positive date can be set for the erection of the first white man's dwelling within the limits above outlined. The earliest annals are gone. Could we, by some real spiritual medium, converse with good old Aunt Polly Wardell, whose earthly eyes looked upon the events of every administration from Washington to Cleveland, what a fund of story she could tell of the trials and triumphs of early days. Could we rouse Philip Thomas, William Relyea, Dr. Adna Heaton, Joseph Ellis, and Zachariah Hasbrouck, what a fund of Indian legend and pioneer history could be gathered. But wishing is wasteful when work is to be done.

The fact is that the Gerows, Thomases, Dusingberres, Hasbroucks, Relyeas, and

Ostrandersons, were in the Town of Plattekill before and some of them quite long antecedent to the Revolutionary War.

Several of these families furnished soldiers in that war.

There are at least two well authenticated encounters between resident tory and patriot families during that birth struggle of our country, but as they do not appear within the limits of the Village of Clintondale, I will not record the particulars of them here.

Tory Hill, south of Hait Hill is named from an encounter between patriots and royalists.

Wilhelmus Ostrander was born in Plattekill April 29, 1743, and his wife Sarah Relyea, daughter of Denysius Relyea was born there February 15, 1751, and they were married Nov. 2, 1771.

Two sons of Wilhelmus Ostrander settled in Clintondale - David Ostrander who built a house on the site of that now owned and occupied by Mr. Jacob Eltinge, and Elias Ostrander built the earliest house on the site of the present enlarged residence of Mr. S.P. Thorn.

William Relyea was settled in Plattekill, was married in Plattekill, and had children born before the revolutionary war. He was a brave soldier in that war, and the story of his return is one of the affecting incidents of patriot combat. He lived in Clintondale and owned a house which disappeared seventy years ago nearly, a long, low structure of the Dutch style of architecture, and which was erected, by whom I cannot ascertain, between 1750 and 1760.

There is authentic record of at least eight log cabins within the limits given, which existed in the revolutionary era.

One was on the spot now in the rear of I. Livingston's lot near the junction of Aurora, Crescent, and Cliff streets.

A second stood near the house now owned by Mr. Ed. Jenkins.

A third stood a little to the west of the site of the barns of Mr. L.E. Covert.

A fourth was on the hillside, northeast of the present Graham Hurd place.

A fifth was near Wm. Dobert's present house.

A sixth near the present Hartshorn place.

A seventh stood near the old Berrian stone house.

And the eighth was nearly on the present side of the Heaton barn, now occupied by Pasburg's.

Two more log cabins - one on the edge of Bear Swamp near the Hildebrandt house, the other occupied last by a Vendemark, northwest of the south entrance to the Quaker Picnic Woods, or Terhune's Grove, were revolutionary relics, but they were just outside the village limits.

By all these evidences we see that Plattekill and even Clintondale, which was last settled and settled mainly from other sections of Plattekill, had a considerable population prior to the revolutionary war.

Which particular one of the houses mentioned has the honor of being the first of all cannot be determined but it is likely that it was the one on the Hurd place or the one on the Heaton, or original Jobez Close place.

Much of the land in Clintondale, east of the Mullindex Patent, cannot be traced to any Royal Patent by map, records, or in any way. A small portion is covered by State patents, but the larger part was obtained doubtless by direct purchase in small parcels from the Indians, and some by squatter sovereignty. Most of the Hill land was of little value, and a squatter would be undisturbed until long occupancy would vest the title safely in the occupant.

#### Grave Yards

The grave yards are three in number: A family burial ground stands on the Frank Terhune place, and another on the Jere. Thomas place. The largest is the general Friends Burial Grounds around the Quaker church. There is little material for the historian in these places of interment. The Friends, until recently disbelieved in erecting memorial stones, and early settlers erected no stones. Besides, removals to the larger cemeteries have considerably depopulated these

little hamlets of the dead. There is memory of a family graveyard within the limits of the present dooryard of H.W. Sutton.

#### Stores

The earliest store was probably kept in the house owned by Erastus Andrews as early as 1810. In 1820 John Underhill was keeping store there. Then followed a man by the name of Williams. Then Harvey Palmer kept, probably from 1836 to 1844; then the following year the store occupied by Thomas and Ackhart was built by Prince Gardiner for his son-in-law, Daniel Heaton.

Another very early store was kept by a man names James Stewart, who was a brother-in-law of David Sands of Marlborough. He sold groceries and whiskey; he kept store from 1832 to 1835; his store building was a shop that once stood near the Quaker Meeting House, was moved down near the present "lower store", was afterward a blacksmith shop and is now the south end of the barn on Henry Decker's place, now unoccupied. Stewart died of consumption, and is buried at Hait Hill Grave Yard.

In a building which stood near where the Main Street bridge crosses the little brook, and which was first a grist mill built by Zachariah Hasbrouck, a store was kept by John Lowell, the father of Miss Lavina Lowell, who died in 1894 at the residence of S. P. Thorn. This was from 1830 to 1833. He also sold groceries and whisky. These are the only two instances of the open sale of intoxicants within the village limits.

Another store was kept in the east end of the Lewis Deyo house by Jeremiah Roberts, from 1840, for a good many years.

A store was kept in the house occupied by H.W. Sutton by Jeremiah Relyea, from the time the house was built in 1830, several years.

The store on the corner of Main and Maple avenues was built by Janes Hull, and first occupied by James Hull's Sons, then successively by George Hull & Wanzer, J.J. Hull & Wanzer, William D. Wanzer, William Ambrose and Charles

Garrison. It burned in 1914 when occupied by Charles Garrison.

J.J. Hull's store, corner of Hull and Main streets was built in 1886 and has been kept first by Hull & Wanzer, and then by J.J. Hull, until 1908, when it was destroyed by fire.

The W.D. Wanzer store was built in 1893. The upper part is occupied by a spacious hall. For some time the lower part was used as a drug store. Later it was bought by the Grange. It is now the Grange Hall. The lower part is occupied by Heaton and Terhune store of general merchandise and the post office.

The "blue store", later the stove, tin, and hardware store was built by W.D. Wanzer in 1889, sold to Maxinus Presler who made it a store house for berry crates, and was later used by Mr. Duryea as a plumber's establishment. It is now unoccupied. The dwelling connected with it is rented to Mr. Creque.

The gents' furnishing store and barber shop of Mr. Lais was built by Dr. J.C. Mann as a residence in 1884, and was purchased by Mr. Lais and the store addition built on in 1893. This is now occupied by Wm. Martin, the store part being used as an ice cream parlor.

The building occupied by Mr. William Decker as a cream saloon, S. Hendricks as a meat market, and the Widow Odell as a residence and millinery was built in 1878, and was run by a man by the name of Sutton. Mr. Decker bought the property in 1884. In the upper part barber shops were sustained first, by John Staton, then by Harvey Gerald; that part was secured in 1894 by Mrs. Odell and a millinery opened. This building is now used as a dwelling house.

The shoe shop was a peripatetic photograph gallery or car, which stranded in the place before 1880. It was for some time the property of Jere Thomas. It has stood in various places and served various purposes. John Stanton kept a barber shop therein, and later Mr. A. Dubois did shoe making there. A few years ago it was taken away, having served its time.

There has been a fish and vegetable market at the lower corner. The building is small and old, running back probably nearly as far as the store beside it.

It is now used as a dwelling house.

#### Industries

The main support of the people at present is horticultural labor and produce. There have been a good quota of mechanics of course, but manufacturing enterprises have been few and far between.

The first of these, the Zachariah Hasbrouck grist mill, the location of which has already been mentioned in connection with the Lowell store, was built soon after the revolutionary war. It had stopped business before 1830. The Turner grist mill built and run by James Turner in 1834, succeeded, and was run for many years. Later it came into the possession of H.W. Sutton and was used as a saw and planing mill. It is now owned by Burdette Minard and used as a store house.

A patent water proof overshoe factory was started in 1833 and continued for thirteen years by John Thorn. The factory was in part of the house now owned by George Ellis. These shoes were invented by Wm. Cornell. Hay presses were made in the Roberts, now called Hurd's mill. A fine grade of berry cups were made on Crescent Avenue by S.P. Thorn. This is no longer continued, and there is now a soda water factory on the place run by the grandson Clarence Thorn. In 1885 Roe's saw mill was purchased and the engine and machinery moved to Clintondale. A large building was erected near the H.W. Sutton shops, by a stock company, to manufacture berry cups and crates; the building burned within a year and was not rebuilt. A blacksmith shop was once in operation in the corner of H.W. Suttons dooryard, and also on the Ellis property on Maple Avenue by James T. Ellis. There are shops in operation by Lyman Terwilliger, east of the barber shop and Main Street, and Mr. Gunsalus, near the north end of Brookside Avenue.

Theodore Griffin's able workmanship, combined with James T. Ellis', has made the Sutton building famous for excellent wagon work for many a year. The funeral directory and undertaking work of H.W. Sutton has deserved and enjoyed a very wide popularity. This was later carried on with the John Sutton. Since

his death H.W. Sutton has carried it on alone until of late the grandson Harold Sutton has entered the business.

Miss Ina Geraldts has recently built a millinery and dry goods store on Maple Ave., and has been very successful in her line of work.

Since cold storage has become so common and many fruit farmers have built their own refrigerators, ice harvesting has become profitable and quite a heavy winter business.

The land around "Basket Street" which once was the home of basket making because of the thickets and cane brush there, is now covered with vineyards. The first market vineyard in the Hudson Valley north of the Highlands of the Hudson was planted in what is now known as the heart of the village by William T. Cornell, in 1845. From that small beginning has spread the fruit culture that covers all the hills and valleys of the wide towns of Esopus, Plattekill, Lloyd, Marlborough, Newburgh, and much of New Paltz, pouring thousands upon thousands of tons of the finest fruit of the world into all the great cities of the nation. The fruit of Clintondale is now shipped direct to New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago and many smaller cities. The Isabella was the pioneer variety of grape. Wm. Kniffen, a stone mason, having a few acres of land was induced by Wm. Cornell to plant a vineyard. In Mr. Kniffen's vineyard, "One day", says Bailey's American Grape Training, "a large limb broke from an apple tree and fell upon a grapevine, tearing off some of the cane and crushing the vine into a peculiar shape. The vine was thought to be ruined, but was left until such of its fruit as might mature could be gathered. But as the fruit matured its large size and handsome appearance attracted attention. It was the best fruit in the vineyard!" Mr. Kniffen observed and thought and experimented until that drooping system of pruning know as the Kniffen system, was perfected by him, and is most largely practiced of all now throughout the United States. Clintondale stands forth then the mother of the Hudson River vineyard industry,

and the almost peerless instructor of the nation in grape pruning.

It may also be noted here that the famous standard grape, the "Concord" was introduced in the Hudson valley by Andrew J. Caywood, who lived near Clintondale and bought out the vineyard and nursery of Wm. Cornell.

#### Schools

To trace the history of school work has been the most difficult and fruitless. The State records, county records, and town records have been searched and appealed to in vain for any substantial data. The trustees' book gives meager particulars back of 1841, and no further, and the memories of the oldest inhabitants seem at fault in this line.

Teachers under the auspice of the Friends taught early in the century in the Friends meeting house. In the earliest time the oldest well-informed citizen set up school in his own house. The earliest record of town tax help is in 1813, when the munificent sum of \$100 was voted for public money for the schools of the town. The present is much more. In 1894 the district of Clintondale raised a little over \$500 by tax, and the State moneys were \$306. In 1835, by a printed trustees' report to town commissioners, in possession of James T. Ellis, we know that the children that attended school that year were eighty-two in number, and the census showed eighty-five between the ages of five and sixteen. The teacher from January 1, 1834, to January 1, 1835, taught ten months and twelve days, and received \$145.12, in cash and boarded around. In contrast to that, the year 1894 witnessed one hundred and eleven pupils in attendance taught by two teachers who taught thirty-nine weeks each, receiving respectively \$405 and \$341.25. Assessed valuation, \$50,000, and persons of school age one hundred and twenty. At present there are one hundred and twelve in attendance. There are two teachers receiving \$750 and \$900 for a term of forty weeks.

There was probably no school-house previous to 1820. In that year, by a curious lease now in the possession of S.P. Thorn, the present triangular lot

was leased to the School District for ninety-nine years and "the building built thereon should be for the rent thereof". In the following year a school house was built a little south of the present structure. Then the old part of the second edifice was built in 1847, practically rebuilt in 1870, the east part added in 1878. The present patent seats were bought in 1888.

#### Streets

Hull, Maple and Vesper avenues are parts of one of the earliest roads in the town, known in early Marlborough as "The Lattingtown and Paltz Road". It was known as District No. 19 later. The old road from Paltz to Paltz Landing (by way of Bailey's Gap) ran through our modern Maple avenue (lower end from Friend's Church to E. Andrews), Crescent Avenue and Aurora Avenue. It was formerly rated District No. 20 and in 1868 the west end from Cliff Street was established into District No. 25.

Cliff Street at the petition of John Thorn, and Heaton Avenue, at the petition of R.B. Heaton, were laid out and recognized as public roads in 1868, and formed District No. 52. Cascade Avenue is District No. 51.

The "Highland and Modena Turnpike", was built in 1866, creating as new highway the whole of Main Street. This was rebuilt as a state road in 1911.

#### Hotels

There are no hostelries recorded as licensed, within Clintondale borders. No soloons have ever been tolerated. In 1884 John Van Ostrand started a temperance hotel on Main Street, which is still kept by his widow Hannah Van Ostrand.

#### Boarding

From the summer house on table rock on the grounds of "Cedar Hill" can be seen more or less of seven counties, and three States, and the eye sweeps a circuit of from sixty to seventy miles.

"Mountain View", kept by Mr. Lincoln Dingee, "Locust Farm" or "The Elixir Spring House", by S.P. Thorn, "Bonnie Brae Inn" by Mr. Alida Sutton, and several others are prominent summer boarding houses.

#### Lawyers

Clintondale boasts but one settled, practicing attorney and lawyer in its history, and that is Dewitt Ostrander, Esq., whose office is on Main Street. He studied with Sol. Young, of Highland, and was admitted to the bar in 1880.

Aurora Avenue has been prolific in lawyers. Lawyers James H. Brown, Sol. G. Young, and S.G. Carpenter were either born or brought up there.

#### Inventors

Charles Crawford was the inventor of a fine and popular machine for manufacturing berry cups.

Dubois Geraldts had a patent for a much approved cold storage system.

Charles Roe had a patent for a lamp chimney stove.

The Roberts had press was invented and sold here by Benjamin Roberts.

#### Physicians

Dr. H.P. Heston was after Dr. Adna Heaton, the first settled physician.

Between the two almost a half century swept by. Heston practiced from 1878 to 1880, and then removed to Gardiner. He returned to Clintondale and in 1908 moved to Poughkeepsie.

Dr. Mann came in 1882 and left in 1885.

Dr. Freston succeeded for two years, and his place was filled by Dr. Wm. C. Birdsall, a graduate of the New York Homeopathic College. He began practice in 1890, and moved to Beacon in 1904.

#### Societies

The following societies have been organized. Some still exist and some do not. Independent Order of Good Templars, Lodge of I.O. of G.T., society of Y.P.S.C.E., Grange, society of Epworth League, Friend's S.S. and Methodist S.S. The W.C.T.U. is also one of the efficient organizations. At present there is the Red Cross Chapter.

#### Churches

In 1807 Samuel Adams, Zeph. Birdsall, James Pine, Merritt More and Tristram Russell were appointed a committee by the Marlborough Monthly Meeting to establish a meeting in Clintondale. Religious services had been held some years prior in

a building near the site of the present edifice. It was moved away, and became Stewarts grocery in 1810, and the building now known as Temperance Hotel was built. This was succeeded by the present meeting house in 1889.

Among the leading families or persons who aided in building and establishing the first Friend's Society and building, is Dr. Adna Heaton, a physician of wide reputation and a minister. He was perhaps the prime mover. With him were Daniel Lawrence, Reuben Bernard, Benjamin Roberts, Joel Cornell, Heydock Carpenter, John Sutton, Nathaniel Selleck, John Gough, Sarah Heaton, daughter of Adna Heaton and mother of Mary Sutton, and Hannah, wife of Caleb Church.

The Friends have never had settled and salaried preachers until about 1880, Adelbert Wood being the first one. After him have been Thomas Willis, Harrie R. Keits and James D. Wood. The previous ministers of note in this church were Dr. Adna Heaton, Hannah Church, Nathaniel Selleck, Nathaniel Thorn, Sarah Roberts, Sarah E. Roberts, and Esther Weeks. Of these Esther Weeks became famous throughout her denomination in the United States. The Friends has become the strongest denomination in the village. In 1908 the church was enlarged. Rev. J.D. Piper is the pastor at present.

The Episcopal Church was built in 1879, under the inspiration of Rev. Mr. Johnson, rector at Highland. It never developed a great deal of denominational strength. Later it was given over to the Pentecostals. At times it has been very strong but has never exerted a very great influence. At present what little congregational strength it has dispersed among the other religious organizations, or has removed from the Place.

The first Methodist Episcopal Church, costing \$1,700 was removed from Lattington, and re-erected on the corner of Main and Maple avenues in 1872. The present house of worship was built in 1894 and paid for on its day of dedication, June 20, 1894. Its cost furnished was a little over \$5,000.

The first preaching service aside from private house meetings was in the "Chapel" once the Gerald's store, now the residence on Maple Avenue.

Clintondale is part of the Modena, East Plattekill (Hait Hill) and Clintondale circuit.

In 1786 Revs. Ezekiel Cooper and John McClosky established a six weeks circuit, embracing Sussex County, New Jersey, and Orange and Ulster Counties in New York. In 1788 the charge was called Flander's Circuit, and the Revs. Jesse Lee and Aaron Hutchinson were appointed pastors and they organized the M.E. Church at Modena and East Plattekill. In 1844 Clintondale, under the pastorage of Thomas Newman, was recognized as an appointment by conference and joined with its sister churches in 1850. The Clintondale charge had six members. At this time (1844) a class was formed here of five members, having Rev. Adna Ellis as leader. Adna Ellis, David Gerald's, David Ellis and Sarah Ellis were four of the six. In 1852 there were as yet only ten members. Afterwards this class was abandoned, but revived in 1862, with David Gerald's leader and a membership of twenty-one. Since this time the church has steadily progressed and is now well supported by its membership. There has been a long line of pastors. The present pastor is Rev. Mr. McClure.

It has been rather hard to collect data because of loss of records and the death of some of the oldest residents but I think it is as nearly accurate as is possible to get it. In conclusion let's boost the flourishing little town and may it continue in its present state of progression.