

Julius Bartlett, a town historian in 1955, wrote about the history of Gouverneur from 1805-1955. This book was published for the Sesqui-centennial in 1955 by the Historical Association.

Print copies of this publication are no longer available. The entire book is available on the Gouverneur Museum website.

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### "Highlights In the History of Gouverneur"

by Julius R. Bartlett, Village Historian, 1955

The Town of Cambray, later renamed Gouverneur, was formed in 1787 in the wilds of what was then known simply as Northern New York State. "There was scarcely more knowledge known of this area than we know of Central Africa," a writer of the time commented. Cambray was one of ten townships, often referred to in early histories, which were laid out by survey and sold at public auction at the Coffee House in New York City on July 10, 1787.

On May 5 of the previous year, the New York State Legislature had passed a law entitled "An act for the speedy sale of unappropriated lands within this State," which referred to all the lands of the present St. Lawrence County except small areas on the St. Lawrence River, all of the northern part of Jefferson County, much of Franklin County and probably to the Adirondack Region.

A Land Commission was appointed to carry out this law, and on May 25, 1787, the surveyor-general was directed to survey and map ten townships for sale, each to contain 64,000 acres, as nearly as possible under existing conditions. The shore of the St. Lawrence River was reasonably well-known and aided greatly in the survey. Less than two months later, this survey was completed in time for the public sale in New York City.

Five of the townships bordered on the St. Lawrence River. Beginning at Oak Point, they were Hague, later Morristown; Oswegatchie, which included Ogdensburg; Lisbon, Madrid and Louisville. The northern edge of the latter town was opposite Long Sault Island. South of these towns was a second tier of five towns, Cambray, which touched on Hague, and, in succession, DeKalb, Canton, Potsdam and

Stockholm. The towns were numbered until September 10, 1787. Just how the names were assigned is not positively known, but it seems possible that the Legislature may have had some hand in it. Some names are Old World in origin, but Oswegatchie is of Indian lore.

The Indians reportedly referred to the Oswegatchie River as the "Swagachee," or the river that runs around through the hills, and people who are familiar with the course of the Oswegatchie River know that it does just that. At the Coffee House bidding, Alexander Macomb bought nearly all of the ten townships and part of northern Jefferson County.

In 1791 he tried to induce Gouverneur Morris, then minister to France, to act as an agent to sell some of his lands. No record of interest then by Mr. Morris is known, but it may have given him an idea that later resulted in his land purchases in the area. When he was later in this area, about 1800, Gouverneur Morris made a really remarkable prophecy when he said: "The proudest empire in Europe is but a bauble, compared to what America will be, must be, in the course of two centuries, perhaps of one." Mr. Macomb failed in his gigantic ventures, amounting to many million of acres, and was in penury at the time of his death.

On November 17, 1798, Gouverneur Morris purchased of William Constable 20,000 acres, which consisted of a narrow strip beginning at the southwestern edge of Cambray and extending all the way through Hague to the St. Lawrence River. His second purchase, May 13, 1799, was for 60,641 acres from Samuel Ogden, founder of Ogdensburg. This was a wide section, adjacent to, and east of, the Constable Trace, and also extended all the way from the southern side of Cambray through Hague to the St. Lawrence River. His third purchase was from David Ogden, a narrow 9,500 acre strip which extended on the eastern border of Cambray and Hague to the St. Lawrence River. He also made another purchase, unrelated to his Cambray and Hague holdings, of the Knox tract located in what was later Rossie and Hammond. The way was cleared for Mr. Morris to start a settlement.

According to L. H. Evert's history, dated 1878, the first settlement was made under the leadership of Dr. Richard Townsend of Hartford, Washington County, N.Y., who

entered into an agreement in 1804 with Mr. Morris to act as land agent for the sale of these northern holdings to settlers. Dr. Townsend's service also included medical aid only in case of emergency.

In the summer of 1805, Dr. Townsend, accompanied by six neighbors from Hartford-Willard Smith, Issac Austin, Pardon Babcock, John Alden, Ambi Higby and Morris Mead - set out for Cambray, uncharted except possibly by some surveyor's marks. The party arrived first somewhat off its course at sparsely settled DeKalb, and then proceeded quickly to Cambray Township.

It is not likely that they arrived exactly at what is now Gouverneur Village, -but probably not far from it, for they noted at one point three small islands at a narrower pan of the Oswegatchie River where a bridge crossing could more easily be made.

The story of the settlement of Gouverneur could appropriately be entitled "The Three Little Islands," as it was these islands located at what is now the West Main Street Bridge which won the settlers to locate there. Dr. Townsend and his neighbors left Cambray and returned to Hartford after an absence of less than a month.

In the fall of 1805, Dr. Townsend, Willard Smith and Issac Austin again visited Cambray, and obtained the services of Barton Edsall of Waddington to layout some farm areas to be in readiness for more settlers to come in 1806. Great logs were either fallen or maneuvered onto the islands to provide an extremely crude crossing for the time. Mr. Smith and Mr. Austin then returned to their Washington County homes.

In February 1806, Willard Smith Issac Austin, Pardon Babcock and Eleazor Nichols came to Cambray with their families to make a permanent home. It is interesting to note that Mrs. Austin was bedridden with rheumatism. This first array of four settlers arrived with livestock. horses and provisions. Dr. Townsend also came at this time and had a surveyor, John Simmons of Brownville, layout more farms.

Gouverneur Morris took an active interest in his Cambray settlement as early as 1807, and selected what is now Natural Dam as the best site for a village because

of the natural power that existed there. He built a grist and saw mill, laid out a system of streets, and built a bridge across the Oswegatchie River about where the Rushmore Paper Mills now are situated. A road which led from the bridge to the Johnstown Road, about two miles from the present Village of Gouverneur limits, is shown on the 1865 atlas.

In 1809 he had Joseph Bolton, a Pennsylvania stone mason, build the walls for the stone house that still stands at Natural Dam and is known as the Gouverneur Morris Mansion. Capt. Rockwell Barnes, another prominent pioneer settler, did the carpenter work, and it is believed that the lumber in the building was produced in the sawmill at Morris, or Morris Mills, as the small settlement there became known. The stone house, had no ornamentation and was built into a side hill, providing shelter against the cold northern winter winds. Joseph Bolton resided in the Morris home for about seven years, after signing an agreement with Mr. Morris to clear lands three miles west of Gouverneur, just off the Brasie Corners Road. The Bolton farm is still occupied by a lineal descendent, Mrs. Marian Chisholm Murray, and her husband John Murray.

Despite Mr. Morris' preference for Natural Dam, the judgement of the settlers at Gouverneur seems to have been sound because the three islands permitted easy construction of a reasonably substantial bridge and dam. The Gouverneur site was actually probably more adaptable for varied industry than Mr. Morris' choice, despite the superior power.

Two of the islands may be seen now as one crosses the bridge, but the third island ceased to exist when the channel at the west end of the bridge was filled in after a freshet in 1918 destroyed the then existing dam and mill properties. There is nothing now to indicate that a water way ever existed about 30 feet west of the west end of the bridge.

Indicating the settlers' preference for their three island location at Gouverneur, a bridge to replace the somewhat risky and inadequate fallen log crossing was erected by Issac Kendall in 1808 at a cost of \$500. This second bridge had no railings for protection except beams pinned to the sides. A flattened pier was set in midstream between the eastern bank of the Oswegatchie River and the

easternmost island. The distance between this island and the bank is nearly 100 feet.

The men who worked on this bridge in the early spring of 1808 are said to have built a small log cabin for their living quarters, although early histories do not state on which end of the bridge. L. H. Evert's history states this cabin was the first building used as a school in the Cambray settlement.

The making of "black salts," potash derived from burning the trees they cleared from the land, was the chief income of the early settlers. Brick making started soon after the settlers arrived. Other settlers coming after the first four 1806 pioneers were Isaac Morgan, Stephen and Benjamin Smith from Vermont; and Daniel Austin, Israel Porter and Rufus Washburn, from Washington County - all coming in 1807. Dr. John Spencer came late in 1807 from Windsor, Conn., and was the first practicing physician. Miss Julia Spencer, 29 Trinity Avenue, is his great granddaughter.

In the succeeding year came Colburn Barrel, Roswell and Joel Wilder, James Parker, John Parker, Ephraim Case, Jonathan Colton, William Cleghorn, Henry Webb, Jesse Dewey, Stephen Patterson, Jeremiah Merithew and Benjamin Smith, brother of Willard Smith and an ancestor of historian Harold A. Storie, 20 John Street, Gouverneur. Also there came Jonathan Paine; Samuel Sprague, who has several descendants living here now; and James Thompson. These 16 settlers came from Washington County or that area.

James Haile also came in 1808, from Herkimer County. He is the great, great grandfather of Gouverneur attorney, Edward Haile Case. James Haile and Samuel Sprague were the first two white men to settle in the Town of Fowler, Mr. Haile in Hailesboro, named for him; and Mr. Sprague in Little York.

The Thompson family has the most unique record. James Thompson acquired a 160 acre farm on the Little Bow Road, one half mile from the village limits. His son, James Harvey Thompson, became the owner and operator after the death of the founder in 1845. Many years later, Mrs. Robert (Emma Thompson) Thompson, daughter of James Harvey Thompson, succeeded her father as owner and lived on

the farm, running it with the aid of tenants. Although her maiden and married names were Thompson, her husband was no close relation. She was followed on the farm by her son, James Bishop Thompson, who is still living. His son, James Hubert Thompson, is now the owner. This makes five generations of the same family in direct descent owning and operating the farm during the 148 years.

Arriving in 1809 was Timothy Sheldon, grandfather of James O. Sheldon, now residing at Potsdam. Also Reuben Noble, William Rhodes, Richard Kimball and Captain Rockwell Barnes, millwright and carpenter. This latter group came from the New England area, mostly Rhode Island.

In 1806, Emily Porter, two year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Israel Porter, died, and as there was no public burying ground, Gouverneur Morris donated two acres of land in the rear of the Presbyterian Church which extended back to South Street, enclosed on the two sides by William Street on the west and John Street to the east. None of these streets existed at the time, of course. He said he would deed it legally as soon as Cambray became a full fledged township. This cemetery was removed in 1858 to its present location south of the Oswegatchie River to the east of William Street.

By 1810 a road had apparently been built through to what is now Little Bow, since that was the site of the first school outside those in the settlement at Gouverneur. On or before that time both the Rich Settlement Road (Richville) and the Johnstown Road had been begun.

The Johnstown Road, the first to enter the village from the south, and on the 1829 state highway map it is listed as a state highway with no indication that any road existed on what is now Route II. It is known from letters written before 1829 that a trail through the woods was being followed into Gouverneur from Antwerp on a more direct route than the Johnstown Road. This entrance from Somerville and Antwerp was in common use by settlers by 1840, and the Johnstown Road was supplanted as the route from the south. This was during the plank road era which reached its high point in 1848.

By 1818, John Brown had started a general store at what is now 9-11 West Main Street, the later location of the Peter VanBuren home which was razed in 1954 by the Seaker-Graves Motor Company for use as a display car lot.

Moses Rowley settled in Gouverneur about 1815.

Israel Porter had built a crude public house on the west side at about the present 65 West Main Street section in about 1810. Gouverneur Morris was said to have used the hospitality of Isaac Austin during one visit here in that period.

Four families came to Gouverneur in 1806, seven in 1807, and 16 in 1808. By this third year the settlers were providing their children with a schoolhouse.

The log cabin used by the bridge builders, apparently located at the eastern end of the bridge, was used for about a year for the scant number of children already in the settlement. The first actual school house construction was a log cabin, 12 by 16 feet in size, built in 1809 at the site of the present Presbyterian Church, 22 Church street. This school was discarded in 1815 for a frame building erected on the site of the present Cougler Restaurant at 10 Church Street.

Evert's history also tells of a log school house built in 1811 in the flatiron area at the intersection of Hailesboro, Johnstown and West Main Streets.

About 1810 there was a school at Little Bow, which was formed as school district number two. The third school district was started about two miles outside the present village limits on the Richville Road, and the fourth district was about on the site of the cattle sales buildings of the Empire Cooperative's Gouverneur stockyard. The school of the fourth district was on this site until late in the 19th century. A full history of the education facilities that the people of Cambray and Gouverneur have provided for their children is given in a separate story of this book.

Cambray included the present Town of Gouverneur and about half of the Town of Macomb. On April 5, 1810, the residents of Cambray, who had been attached to the Town of Oswegatchie for representation purposes, held a town meeting at the home of Dr. John Spencer and decided to organize a town board and become a full-

fledged township. Dr. Richard Townsend was the first supervisor. The township continued to include half of Macomb until 1841.

The new town, which had accumulated 257 inhabitants during its first five years of existence, was renamed Gouverneur.

The name, Gouverneur, as a successor to the name of Cambray, has always been referred to by historians and writers as being in honor of the founder, Gouverneur Morris. It strikes some as being odd that he would use his first name to perpetuate his memory. As his mother's maiden name was Sarah Gouverneur, it is logical to assume that the name was changed from Cambray to Gouverneur at his insistence to honor his mother's family name. There is nothing about this to warrant controversy and as far as can be learned there is no absolute record concerning the renaming of the Town of Cambray. If Mr. Morris named the town from his mother's family name it was to his credit.

Although at first getting their grists and lumber from the mills at Morris Mills, now Natural Dam, the settlers continued to prefer settling in the three island location. It is the belief of this writer that Gouverneur Morris named his proposed settlement from his family name, and that the people by popular usage made it Morris Mills, a common practice in the pioneer days.

When Cambray became a town with its own government in 1810, Mr. Morris undoubtedly still was of the opinion that his Morris Mills location would eventually be chosen as the population center. His opinion of the settlers' intelligence was not high, according to some reports. He had some difficulty with his land agent, Dr. Richard Townsend, according to historical references, and Mr. Morris' insistence that Morris Mills be the site of the settlement was a possible source of trouble between the two men.

Gouverneur has the distinction of being the only town of that name in the United States.

Missionaries and itinerant Methodist preachers held meetings in the Isaac Austin home and other homes. In 1811 the Baptists organized a church which has carried



on continuously since. They now have a marble edifice at 50 Church street, built in 1894.

For a time in 1812-14, Indian uprisings were feared and a block house and stockade were erected at what is now about 28 Clinton Street, or the site of the parking area behind Sol Kaplan's Store.

The Oswegatchie River at that time flowed within easy sight of the stockade. The practical colonists gave up the stockade because they faced starvation through lack of manpower if so many men were called for sentinel or other military duties. No raids ever occurred and the lumber and timbers of the stockade were used in the construction of the 1814 dam and other buildings.

February 1, 1814 is the date of a contract between William H. Downs and Dr. Townsend by which Mr. Downs purchased a lot 38 by 24 feet on the easternmost island of the three already mentioned, with the privilege of erecting a dam and using enough water from the dam to run a waterwheel for the "propulsion of carding and fulling mill machinery." The island purchase was outright. The only stipulation was that the mill must be ready for the spring fleecing of sheep. A carding and fulling mill was, in the pioneer days, a mill to make cloth. The site of this early mill is on the island that projects downstream from the West Main Street Bridge, just west of the Gouverneur Village owned electric plant.

The terms of the contract were carried out, and this clothing mill was the beginning of the industrial life of Gouverneur.

In 1815 Israel Porter, with three other men, built a sawmill on the extreme western side of the river, which later became well known as the Starbuck & McCarty Mill. Five years later Israel Porter also built a grist mill close to the west end of the present West Main Street Bridge. This mill ran continuously there until 1953, when J. E. McAllaster and Sons moved to a new location on Starbuck Street. The old mill has been used for storage since 1953.

The mill passed through various ownerships until 1887 when Joseph E. McAllaster took over operation, with a partner Nelson Howard until 1891, and then alone. His son, Archie F. McAllaster; his grandson, Joseph F. McAllaster, president of the Bank

of Gouverneur, and now his great-grandson, Joseph E. McAllaster, have owned and operated the business continuously for 68 years.

The 135 year old mill will be torn down by the state this year to make way for construction of a new four lane bridge to replace the 50 year old two lane span. The new 1955 bridge will be the sixth one built at the three island location.

Gouverneur Morris was in failing health by 1815 and died in November, 1816, ten years after the first four settlers moved with their families to Gouverneur.

The building of mills at Gouverneur ended the brief career of Morris Mills, and there was only sporadic activity there until 1866 when the Weston, Dean & Aldrich Lumber Company began operations at Natural Dam. Roger Maddock, land agent for Mr. Morris, succeeding Dr. Townsend, lived in the stone Gouverneur Morris Mansion, probably until Judge Edwin Dodge came in 1829 to assume management of the Morris estate until Gouverneur Morris, II, became of age.

In early 1817, the Congregational, or Presbyterian Church was formed and ran under that name until 1863, when it became the First Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Townsend had a hotel for a short time on the Johnstown Road on a hill just over a small creek, about two miles from the village limits. This hotel was later run by Dr. John Spencer, who also built a large hotel in 1828 at the corner of East Main and Depot Streets, covering 208 to 220 East Main Street, and extending from Sol Kaplan's present residence through to Depot Street.

Dr. Townsend had been doing what he could to provide some sort of a mail service for the settlers, and when the post office was formed here in 1824 he became the first official postmaster.

The first mails were transported weekly on horseback, later by stage routes, and in 1857 by the Potsdam & Watertown Railroad, changed soon to the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad, and in 1891 to the New York Central Railroad.

The rather rapid increase in the population of the Town of Gouverneur, and in the unincorporated village which had probably 100 persons by 1825, made inadequate

the frame school house built in 1815. In 1827 a one story brick building was built in the village, which is still standing at the rear of the Gouverneur Savings & Loan Association. Public elementary schools were by this time appearing all over the township.

Scarcely 20 years after the first settlers arrived, the town also began the move to provide higher educational facilities for the children of the village and township.

A second story was added to the new elementary school building in the village for use as a high school.

A separate high school building was soon built at the eastern end of the park, which was taken over in 1837 by the Methodist Church. This third church had only raised its standard in 1832. A public library had been instituted by public spirited citizens in 1815 and was located in various places until 1834 when it leased a small room in the high school.

The destruction by fire of the high school on January 1, 1839, burned all the books and library effects, and there was no successful attempt to revive it at that time. An important event of the 1840 decade was the formation in 1841 of the Town of Macomb from Morristown and Gouverneur. The Town of Gouverneur held to the line formed by Beaver Creek, and Morristown's boundary was the northern side of Black Lake. The township area of Gouverneur was reduced to 43, 167.8 acres, according to the chairman of the board of assessors, Maurice V. Johnson.

This was a decrease of about 20,000 acres from the original 64,000 acre Cambray area.

Judge Edwin Dodge had arrived in 1829 to assume his status as land agent for the estate of Gouverneur Morris, whose son Gouverneur Morris 2nd was still a minor. The name Gouverneur Morris appears on legal documents in the 1840 period, referring of course, to Gouverneur Morris II.

Mr. Dodge became one of the leading figures in Gouverneur's history as he was a St. Lawrence County judge, a member of the state assembly, and, for 19 years, postmaster. Many people are still living at this time who recall the woodland and

Dodge Grove which extended from about the location of the present Gouverneur Post Office, 33 Grove Street, nearly to the New York Central Railroad tracks. It was entirely enclosed by a stone wall. The eastern boundary of the grove was Gordon Street. The Dodge home was in the northern part of the wooded grove, and his land office was about where Dodge Place now enters South Gordon Street. The land office was converted later into a feed store, which burned in 1921.

Harvey D. Smith, another prominent early settler, arrived in 1824 and started a drug store. He became a leading figure also. He was appointed special county judge, elected to the assembly and elected St. Lawrence County Surrogate. He was probably best known as an advocate of settling difficulties without litigation.

Merchants appearing here in this 1840 period were James A. Cone, William E. Sterling, William H. Bowne, Whitfield Goodrich and Amos Egert. These merchants had in their various establishments everything for men or beast.

On the village dam the Joel Keyes Tooling Shop had started in 1830, which later became the Stephen B. VanDuzee Mfg. Co., now the site of the Gouverneur Village owned electrical plant.

There was a foundry and machine shop built in 1845 by O. S. Hill at the east end, and below, the West Main Street Bridge. This shop was later owned and operated by Jay S. and Amasa Corbin, the latter being the inventor of the disc harrow. J. Brayton Johnson and successors ran this plant as the Johnson Iron Co. to near the close of its existence in 1937.

The original fulling and carding mill had become a woodworking plant operated by Isaac P. Fisher. Newell Havens had started a woodworking mill on the west bank of the Oswegatchie River about 100 feet downstream, which obtained its waterpower through a penstock from the water channel then existing at the west end of the bridge. The Fisher mill, later the Samuel Graves Grist Mill, collapsed into the Oswegatchie River in March, 1920. Captain Rockwell Barnes started a sash and blind factory in the rear of the Hill Foundry in 1829.

Many tanneries, not on the river came into existence. One in 1841 was established on the west bank of the river, 300 feet downstream.

Water from the west channel was carried to the tannery by an open flume. This tannery became the Scholton Monumental Works in 1898 and that water power in 1916 was washed out by a freshet.

Allen & Easton bought the first island east of the west end of the bridge and started a mill and wagon works. This later became the Anthony Power and ran the privately owned waterworks in 1868 to 1890.

These mills furnished local needs and supplied the people of other sections.

In 1850, S. B. VanDuzee purchased the Keyes Tooling Shop and started a furniture and cabinet making shop. This was the standout business of the Gouverneur community for half a century. The William Street home of Mr. VanDuzee became the VanDuzee Hospital later through the will of his daughter, Mrs. Lucy Turnbull. The VanDuzee name was therefore imperishably written into local history.

A saw and grist mill began operating early in local history at what is now Elmdale. Elmdale was first called Carrington's Mills, then Smiths Mills, and also once Olds Mills. Francis M. Holbrook in a story in the 1905 Centennial Book tells of his father, Henry B. Holbrook, being engaged in clearing away the forest in the Gouverneur section, and he mentions Carrington's Mills.

A brief on the population in the Town of Gouverneur shows that in 1810 it was about 257; in 1820, 765; in 1830, 1552; in 1840, 2538, and in 1850, 2738. The 1850 census was the last one in the town as a whole, because the Village of Gouverneur adopting the same name as the town, was incorporated in 1850, taking effect on September 11. The population of the village was estimated at 600 when incorporated. In the New York State Census of 1855, the population of the new formed Village of Gouverneur was 785.

Peter VanBuren, who had operated a hotel, the original John Brown Store, located part way up the incline from the bridge on West Main Street, was burned out in 1848 and in 1849 he built the first VanBuren House on the approximate site of the

present Woolworth Store, 51 East Main Street. He used part of the Benjamin Smith House for his hotel.

He rebuilt a residence on his West Main Street property, and it was occupied by his daughter, Mrs. Emmeline VanBuren, until her death in 1927. It then became known as the Red Brick Tavern, owned and operated by Mrs. Beatrice Collins, and later as a tourist home by Mrs. Hazel Hudson until torn down by the Seaker Graves Motor Company in 1954 for use in connection with their garage.

When the high school was erected in the east end of the park in 1834, there apparently was no idea but that the park section would be built up. It was a wind blown sand lot and not very attractive. Being located in his new hotel across from the sandy park space, Mr. VanBuren became interested in its preservation and drew water from the Oswegatchie River by ox team to water the saplings then in the park.

East Main Street, which was known as the DeKalb Road until about the time the village was incorporated, was largely built up between Clinton and Park Streets.

Grove Street existed as it does now, and was known as the Fowler Road.

With the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian Churches established with sizable congregations, the Roman Catholics were stirring, and started their history in 1856.

The Universalists had church services here and in Fowler in 1832 and continued for a time after 1850.

In 1853 a fire burned the sawmill on the extreme western power channel, and the grist mill which is now the McAliaster Storage Building at the west end of the bridge, both owned at that time by John Fosgate. The fire then jumped to the Alien and Easton Wagon Shop on the island just east of the Fosgate Mill, and continued to the next island to burn, the Isaac P. Fisher Wood Working Plant, successor to the original Downs Clothing Mill.

The bridge was damaged, but a bucket brigade saved that structure with river water. This fire brought up talk of better fire protection, but the village was just issuing from its cocoon and nothing was done until 15 years later.

The Potsdam and Watertown Railroad penetrated here in 1857, ending stage lines which paralleled the railroad. Some of the stage lines, however, operated as much as 50 years after the appearance of the railroad. The Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg bought out the Potsdam and Watertown Railroad in a short time, and, in 1891, the New York Central acquired the R. W. & C. Lines.

The Gouverneur Agricultural and Mechanical Society, better known as the Gouverneur Fair, held its first exhibition in 1859 in the section of the village bounded on the south by East Main Street between what is now North Gordon, and Rock Island Street. Its northern boundary was the present Barnes Street. Rock Island Street was the eastern boundary, and the North Gordon Street area was its western limit. Barnes, Rowley and North Gordon Streets had not been laid out by 1859.

The fair operated for six years on this site, and then moved to its present fairgrounds on the north side of East Barney Street.

In 1860 the population of the town was 3204 and the village nearly 1,000, but no banking facilities existed.

Charles Anthony, who came here from Evans Mills about 1830, started a law office and a private bank, the latter in 1860. This venture was known as Charles Anthony and Co. and his partners were James G. Averell and William J. Averell. The latter was the grandfather of Averell Harriman, present Governor of the State of New York. The bank started business in some part of the present B. O. Kinney Drug Store site, 29-31 East Main Street. The Averells were from Ogdensburg. Their father, James Averell, also of Ogdensburg, bought in 1829 the residence and store at 93 East Main Street owned by Moses Rowley, surveyor, postmaster and storekeeper. His purchase included the Rowley house, a lot about the normal store width in frontage on East Main Street, and extending all the way down Park Street to Trinity Avenue.

In 1871, Mr. Anthony, who became owner of the Averell lot at Park and East Main, moved the residence to what is now 37 Rowley Street, next to the present residence of G. Wilson Dodds.

He then built a two story brick structure on the East Main Street lot, and occupied it with the Anthony & Co. Private Bank, which was incorporated as the Bank of Gouverneur in 1879.

Amos S. Egert, a local merchant, built in 1863 the three story brick building which is now the Odd Fellow building at the corner of East Main and Clinton Streets. Interested with him in the venture were the two Ogdensburg Averells. The Odd Fellow building is the oldest structure now standing in the East Main Street business district.

Francis E. Merritt of Sandy Creek came here in 1864 and started a newspaper called the Gouverneur Times. This was the first permanent newspaper. The village population in 1865 was 1157.

An interest in the great variety of mineral rocks in this section begun to show up at this time. Dr. S. C. Merritt, a veterinarian, was one who particularly noted the many formations.

Weston, Dean and Aldrich started their lumbering operations at Natural Dam in 1866.

The Gouverneur Water Works Co., a private company, was organized on April 17, 1868, by Charles Anthony, Augustus E. Norton, Edwin G. Dodge, Peter VanBuren, Stephen B. VanDuzee, Lyman Litchfield and Charles E. Clark. The system was known as "The Holly" and was operated by a waterwheel located on the island nearest the western end of the bridge, formerly the Allen & Easton Works.

This waterwheel pumped water constantly from the Oswegatchie River into a water main that extended from the bridge eastward through the main business section to the Spencer Hotel at Depot and East Main Streets. Hydrants along the route were available for use by the stores and homes. As the waterwheel operated constantly and there was no standpipe, a relief valve prevented over-pressure on the mains when there was little or no demand.

The first fire department was formed at this time with hand hose carts.



Trinity Episcopal Church began holding services in 1862 in the Presbyterian Church, according to Evert's History. The present church building was completed in 1869.

The Town of Gouverneur erected a covered bridge over the Oswegatchie River on William Street in 1865. This is believed to be the first bridge at this point.

In 1876, the first iron bridge over the West Main Street crossing was built, the fourth bridge at the three island location.

After much prospecting, Augustus L. McCrea, Sr., G. A. Mendon and "Colonel" Henry Palmer, all of New York City, promoted a talc company in 1876 known as the Agalite Fibre Company.

Both Mr. Mendon and Mr. Palmer were California Gold Rush Miners in 1849. Neither remained long in the Agalite Company, Mr. Mendon died two years later. Col. Palmer, it seems likely, disagreed with the Agalite Company over a discovery he made of what he discerned as a superior grade of talc at Freemansburgh, now Taleville, in the Town of Edwards. He noted the white chalky deposits near the surface while driving through a new road that was under construction there.

The Agalite Company ran a steam talc mill in the Town of Fowler, (marked in 1954 by a historical tablet,) for three years, and then relocated on a waterpower site at Haillesboro. Augustus L. McCrea, Jr., who later was known as "Gus" became the superintendent of the Agalite Company, and one of the most widely known promoters in Northern New York.

Just previous to the Agalite Co. venture was the development of a mill one mile below Natural Dam to make paint, promoted by Daniel Minthorn of Watertown, with Watertown capitalist support. A dam was built, but by 1873 the paint mill venture was concluded in failure. Mr. Minthorn then with New York financial backing, started the Mineral Attrition Mills to grind talc which in 1878 became the Natural Dam Pulp Co. and introduced Augustine J. McDonald of New York, who became a leading talc mill figure. He wrote the talc history in the 1905 Centennial Book.

In 1873 there occurred the positive setting of the village park. The Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary Trustees, who still owned the east end of the village park, deeded their holdings to the village with the stipulation that the lot could be used only for park purposes, and that the Averells, who still owned the western end of the park, do likewise. The two Averells agreed, and thus the tender care of Peter VanBuren of the park area has been handed down to posterity. Mr. VanBuren died in 1870, and his son, James W. VanBuren, continued his hotel business.

In 1878 the village erected a hose house on Clinton Street, at what is now 21 Clinton Street occupied by two business places. This appears to have been the first permanent building built by the village. The village population had increased to 1627 by the 1870 census, due largely to the increasing of the corporate limits and the adoption of a new village charter in 1868.

In the same year, 1871, Joseph E. McAllaster built a two store brick block, three stories high, which is now occupied by the stores of Edward Harold Cole, 33 East Main Street, and the Western Auto Supply Co., 37 East Main Street.

The major fires in the village are recorded in a separate story, but it should be mentioned here that on January 9, 1875, all the buildings from Park and East Main Streets to what is now the J. J. Newberry Store at 67 East Main Street, were all burned out, and mostly rebuilt the same year.

On May 1, 1877, all the stores from the Odd Fellow building at the corner of East Main and Clinton Streets to the Cole Hardware Store were burned, and all replaced by 1878.

In 1875, Willett Bowne and S. B. VanDuzee erected a three story building at William and Church Streets, which included a public hall. This structure burned in 1877 and was rebuilt at once by practically the same combination, with stores and offices and another public hall. The latter had a long and interesting career before it was closed in 1916. This building was destroyed by fire on July 17, 1922.

The Godard & Co. private banking house started in the early part of 1874 at what is now the store of Ernest McCullough, 15 East Main Street. Its founders were Col. Abel Godard, of Richville, and Hiram Herring, a tannery mill operator of Rodman,

N.Y. They erected a banking building at 55 East Main Street in the spring of 1875, which was incorporated as the First National Bank in March, 1881.

The arrival of the first of the so called Yankee Cheese Factories in 1869, operated by Abner Gillette, was followed by the setting up of scores of other similar small plants situated a few miles apart, serving the needs of farmers for a better disposal of their dairy products. Previously the butter or cheese had been made at home. These factories had regular selling organizations for more than 50 years until the large milk plants slowly put the Yankee Cheese Factory out of business. The large milk plant at Gouverneur Village started in the Centennial Year, 1905, as the St. Lawrence Farms, now the Pioneer Ice Cream Division of the Borden Company.

The 1880 to 1890 period was the golden era of local history. The population of the town in that decade rose from 4,165 to 5,851. The village population had the spectacular rise of from 2,070 in 1880 to 3,459 in 1890, again of 1,389.

The quarries just south of the village were furnishing stone for many local buildings, as well as buildings in such large cities as Chicago.

The Presbyterian and Baptist Churches, the Masonic Temple, three stores on East Main Street adjacent to the temple, and the marble veneering of the Methodist Church were accomplished in the 1890 period.

The Fowler Talc Industry had five mills at Hailesboro, one at Gouverneur. one near the present Village of Balmat and one at Talcville. The Gouverneur Mill, never running successfully, burned in 1894.

The marble mills, due to their location and the fact that all shipments were made from here, affected the local economy more than the talc mills, but the influence of the talc industry was very apparent here.

The First National Bank remained at the same location until September 28, 1953. In 1952 it bought the house and lot of the late Dr. Samuel W. Close at 62 Church Street, corner of Church and Grove Streets, razed the home in 1953, and built its present modern structure. Abe Locker, now proprietor of Wilson's Restaurant,

bought the old bank and remodeled it with a modern store front, changing the face of a landmark which had remained practically unchanged since 1875.

The Gouverneur Reading Room Association was started in 1885, and the library grew steadily. In 1900 Newton Aldrich donated the present building.

The telegraph companies came before the Civil War, and the next wonder was that of electricity.

Villagers voted in May, 1887, to pay \$1,200 to William J. Morrison of New York to light the village streets and to do what lighting he could in the village in private homes and stores. The steam boiler in the Gouverneur Machine Company produced the electric power. A local group headed by such men as Mr. Charles Anthony, Joseph E. McAllaster and others took over the business late that year, operating as the American Illuminating & Power Company. They sold out to "Gus" McCrea in 1894.

Telephones came in a minor way in 1884, and an exchange service with other localities was inaugurated in 1885.

The burning of the first VanBuren House in 1881, and the Spencer Hotel at Depot and East Main Streets in 1889, brought out a demand for better fire protection and a water service over the entire village. The present water system was voted in early 1890 and put into use on January 2, 1891.

The year 1893 brought about both the building of the New York Central Branch Line to Edwards, and the formation of the International Pulp Company from four talc companies- the Agalite Fibre Company, St. Lawrence, Natural Dam and Adirondack Pulp Companies.

In 1895 the International Pulp Company, having an idle water power, organized a subsidiary electric holding company named the Oswegatchie Light & Power Company. The company developed its idle water power one mile east of Hailesboro, and built a transmission line to Gouverneur. The electric business of Augustus L. McCrea, which he acquired from the American Illuminating Company, was purchased by the International Pulp Company.

Talc mills such as the Ontario Talc Company, promoted by Anson A. Potter the American Talc Company; the Keller Talc Company; the Columbian Talc Company and others sprang up in the 1890-1900 period in the Town of Fowler. The building of the Gouverneur and Oswegatchie Railroad to Edwards stopped most of the hauling of talc by team, but some mills were not on the G.& O. Line.

The second VanBuren House fire in 1893, covering the section in East Main Street from the Sunshine Accessories Store, 39 East Main Street, to the First National Bank at 55 East Main Street, resulted in the erection in 1895 of the St. Lawrence Inn, promoted by "Gus" McCrea, located at the site of the present Woolworth Store.

Francis E. Merritt, who started the first permanent newspaper here in 1864, sold out in 1878 to Horace Reynolds, who called his sheet the Times-Herald. The Gouverneur Free Press, owned and published by Barnard G. Parker, started in 1882. The name of the building where he operated is in evidence on the four story building at 59 East Main Street, now one of the combined stores of the J. J. Newberry Company. The Northern Tribune, predecessor of the Tribune-Press, started in 1887, and bought the Gouverneur Free Press in 1929, two years after the death of Mr. Parker. Myron R. Sacker, last principal of the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary, was the first publisher and owner of the Northern Tribune.

The end of the activities of the Starbuck & McCarty Steam Saw Mill soon after 1890 made available a large area on either side of what is now the Rushmore Paper Company office on Prospect Street.

The steam sawmill had used this space for piling lumber. A street was laid out, designated as Prospect Street, and B. G. Parker built many of the homes on this street. This steam mill was situated just above the West Main Street Bridge on the west bank of Oswegatchie River.

The Gouverneur Savings & Loan Association was formed in 1892, mainly through the efforts of Benjamin F. Brown, a former school teacher. Mr. Parker was the first president of the Loan Association and remained in that capacity until his death in 1927.

The 1865 covered bridge on William Street over the Oswegatchie River was replaced by an iron bridge in 1892.

A new road was opened in 1892, eliminating the necessity for using the East Main Street crossing through extending Rowley Street to the Richville Road. This road is now identified as Route 11 past the Rotundo Airport.

Previous to 1895, the road from Somerville and the south entered into Gouverneur Village by way of the marble quarries, and crossed the railroad track twice. In that year a new road to the west was laid out, eliminating the two track crossings. This change and the one on the eastern end of the town made it possible to drive through the village without crossing the railroad tracks.

Relocating the New York Central Station from the south side of Depot Street tracks to the north side of the tracks was effected in 1909, after being on the south side since 1872.

The Northern Power Company was given a village franchise in 1907, after a bitter fight by the Oswegatchie Light & Power Company against this move.

The International Lace Company plant was started in the fall of 1902 and finished early in 1903. The big event of the first decade of the new century, and about the most important in the history of the Town of Gouverneur, was the 1905 Centennial Observance. It was held from August 24 through August 29, and was opened with a sunrise whistle blowing and bell ringing serenade. A parade was held the second day, marred by rain. Education Day followed, in which William H. Eustis, former Mayor of Minneapolis spoke and referred to his early home here.

The Memorial Arch in the village park had been completed and the last day of the observance was listed as Memorial Day, at which time the Arch was dedicated.

During the week there were present such prominent personalities as Admiral Winfield S. Schley; General Newton M. Curtis; William D. McKinstry, editor of the Watertown Times; Col. Myron R. Sacket, American Consul at Prescott, and others.

Amasa Corbin was chairman of the 1905 Centennial Committee. Jay S. Corbin wrote the history of the town up to the date of this Centennial.

The present two lane West Main Street Bridge was built in the late summer of 1905. Now, 50 years later, contracts have been let by the State of New York to build the sixth bridge, a four lane structure with four lane concrete approaches for several blocks on either side, which will greatly change the physical contours of the East and West Main sections. Another mark of progress in the village in 1905 was the installation of the automatic fire alarm system. A team of horses was placed at the same time in the Clinton Street Fire Station to answer alarms. A motor pumper was purchased from the American LaFrance Fire Engine Company in February, 1921 for \$9,000, which took the place of the fire team.

This venerable fire truck is still owned by the Gouverneur Fire Department, and kept in running order.

After losing two mills by fire in 1905 and 1906, the International Pulp Co. in 1906 bought the United States Talc Co. Mill located one mile above Emeryville. In 1907 it merged with the Union Talc Co. A. J. McDonald continued as head of International Co., and the Oswegatchie Light & Power Company.

He resigned in 1912, and John J. Wallace, Union Talc Company Manager, succeeded him as head of these talc companies and of the Oswegatchie Light & Power Company. These two men were among the leading local industrialists of that period. Mr. McDonald died in January, 1931, and Mr. Wallace in April, 1947.

The rivalry between the Northern Power Company and the Oswegatchie Light & Power Company was strong during this period, and in 1911 the latter added another electric plant in Hailesboro Village to its original one built in 1895.

Civic minded people tried to start a hospital here in 1914, but the movement stopped when it was revealed that Mrs. Myra Dean and her two daughters, Miss Jennie and Miss Cora Dean, had decided to donate a new high school building and equipment at East Barney and Rock Island to replace the 1894 school at East Main Street. Hopes had been that the Dean gift would include something toward a new hospital, but it did not, and the hospital movement was postponed.



The first east and west state highway through the village, Route 11, was built in 1912 and 1913. East Main Street, which had ended in a dead end about where the gas stations are now located, was cut through to the outer Rowley Street Road.

The north and south highway through the village was built in 1915 as Route 58.

World War I found a complement of Gouverneur boys marching off for service in France.

The Christian Science Church held its first meetings in 1898, and began meeting in the former Unitarian Church in 1916. The Unitarian Church was organized in 1899, but within a few years its membership dwindled to a small number. The church had built a modern looking structure of light colored brick at 21 Trinity Avenue the story of which is told in the Gouverneur Centennial Book of 1905.

The village, in addition to the hose house on Clinton Street, also by this time owned another hose house on the West Side, its own pump house, bought in 1909 a village dumping ground on outer Grove Street. In 1918 the village acquired a lot on Darwin Street, now used for storage.

The Federal Post Office Building on Grove Street was erected in 1916-17. The post office had been in various places, often according to who was postmaster, until 1892, when it was situated at 32-36 Church Street, the present location of the Gass & Christensen Hardware Company Business. It remained there until the new post office opened for business on April 1, 1917.

The population of the town in 1890 was 5,851. In 1900 the town's population was 5,915 and the village's 3,689 a village gain of 231 and a loss to the population outside the village. In 1910 the whole town had 6,020 persons, and the village 4,128, a gain for the village of 489 and a still further marked loss in the outside population. The 1920 census disclosed 5,762 residents, of which 4,143 were in the village. This was a loss to the town as a whole of 258.

The village in 1912 enlarged its west side corporate limits to include everything south of Smith Street to the present limits, probably taking in 40 new families.



There would have been a population loss in the village except for this enlargement of the corporation boundaries.

In the 1905 Gouverneur Centennial History, Frank Starbuck, lumber dealer, referred to the local lumber business as an extinct industry. The 1905 Starbuck remark on lumber can now be said of the marble industry that existed here from about 1880 to about 1910, a business that employed about 200 men at the peak of its existence.

Except for a part of the vacant Gouverneur Marble Company Mill, there is little left but open water filled quarries of a business that once shipped building marble to many cities in the United States. The Balducci Crushed Stone Company on outer Parker Street is now the only reminder of the once great marble industry.

Of the many quarries that once existed just at the southeastern border of the village, the Gouverneur Marble Company, organized originally in 1884, ended its days as the Jones Cut Stone Company in 1941, the last quarry to produce. Richard Jones bought the Gouverneur Marble Company in 1936 to get out local marble to match previously constructed buildings.

His purchase was made from the Hampton & Sons Company who had bought the business in 1930 from Morris Eckmann. Mr. Eckmann, now 86, resides at 99 Park Street. In 1942, one year after the quarry ceased operations, the quarry and buildings were sold to Charles I. Ruderman, and were partly burned in 1953.

The 1905 Centennial History has an account by Daniel J. Whitney that covers the major part of the quarrying activities. The business had by 1905 declined greatly from its original status, but was not extinct.

Quarries of the 1880 and 1900 period included those owned by the Davidson Bros., of Chicago, who opened two quarries here and closed about 1908. Joseph C. Callahan was the final owner of No. 2 Davidson Quarry and his estate now owns the site. The mill burned in 1911.

The St. Lawrence Marble Company, formed in 1883 with the help of New York Capitalists headed by Milo M. Belding, Sr., was the largest operation for many

years. Both Thomas J. and Daniel J. Whitney were interested in these early companies, and the latter was the St. Lawrence Manager for many years until 1915, when Joseph C. Callahan became manager.

This plant closed about the end of World War I and was purchased in 1927 by John J. Sullivan, who was a prominent personality in the local quarry business after 1900.

The Empire Marble Company and the Northern New York Marble Company, incorporated in 1890, and situated two miles from the village south of the present Gouverneur Empire Cooperative Stockyards, ran with varied success until a fire in October, 1912, burned both plants.

The Extra Dark Marble Company, formed in 1897, ceased operating in 1908 and Mr. Callahan was the owner when it burned in 1910.

The Rylestone Company, opened in 1903 northwest of the village at the rear of the Somerville Road farm now owned by Merton Gallaher, had a difficult time financially. John J. Sullivan became the owner and ran it to get out church and public building stone at first, and rip rap rock in 1918 for the Aluminum Company's St Lawrence River Canal. Mr. Sullivan sold the quarry to the Onondaga Litholite Company in 1922. Mr. Gallaher now owns the site.

The White Crystal Marble Company, situated on the Seavey Road four miles north of Gouverneur, was opened by Syracuse men in 1901, due to a demand for its more than unusually white marble. This was another quarry that was later run by Mr. Sullivan and he now owns the site, which is on the former Hall Farm.

On the Scotch Settlement Road three miles from Gouverneur, H P. Bingwanger of New York started in 1897 what he intended to be a marble business, but never got into production. It was sold to the Corrigan-McKinney Company in 1905 and operated by their subsidiary, the Genesee Furnace Company, to produce fluxing material. It was closed in 1917 and the machinery dismantled. Fred J. Porter, 89, was the manager of this plant from 1908 to the time it closed.

The Adirondack Pyrites Company was started by Amasa Corbin in 1903 to produce pyrite ore for use in manufacturing sulphuric acid. It later was owned by the New York Pyrites Company and ran until after World War I.

The brimstone wells of the south superseded the use of local pyrite ore, but the interests that produce sulphuric acid still have claims staked out on the local areas that have pyrite ores.

The garnet mine, which produced an abrasive similar to emery, was started by Amasa Corbin in 1902 on the Clinton Road, two miles from the village limits. This operation continued for about three years, when it became evident that the carborundum abrasive was too strong a competitor for garnet rock.

David G. Scholton operated a monument business in this village in a plant situated below the village dam on the Oswegatchie River, J. Walter McLean also had a monument shop. Charles C. Dunkleberg was an operator of a marble finishing business early in the industry here. There were other small marble enterprises.

It would be interesting to know how many churches, public buildings and houses that were constructed of Gouverneur Marble.

Local buildings include the Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian Churches, the East Main Street buildings from the Kamargo Store at 111 East Main to the Masonic Temple, and the fronts at 59 East Main Street, part of the Newberry Company Store and the former St. Lawrence Inn, now the F. W. Woolworth Company Store, and the Bank of Gouverneur.

The Free Methodist Society had been in existence here for several years when their resident pastor, Rev. Hilon L. Cilley built in 1922 what was known as the "one man church" at 86 West Main Street.

Rev. Mr. Cilley, working alone the larger part of the time, built the church, displaying a good knowledge of mechanics.

The Church of the Nazarene appeared here about the World War I period. They held meetings in homes for a time, and then in the St. Paul Chapel property of the

First Methodist Church at Read and West Main Streets. They bought the St. Paul Chapel property in 1922.

Harry H. Hodgkin, 265 East Main Street, and G. Wilson Dodds, started the Gouverneur Limestone Company in 1915 on the No. 2 Davidson Quarry to the east of the Balducci Company's Quarry and Mill on outer Parker Street. After one year they moved to the present Balducci site.

Mr. Dodds retired from this business in 1930, and Mr. Hodgkin continued until 1944 when war conditions made quarry operating difficult and the Limestone Company closed. Mr. Hodgkin sold the business in 1948 to John and Ferdinand Balducci of Canastota.

John Balducci is now the sole operator and produces principally crushed stone and limestone fertilizer. The plant burned in 1953, but was rebuilt.

Starting off the 1920-30 decade, the Aldrich Paper Company plant at Natural Dam, of which Nelson R. Caswell was the active head, burned on June 1920. This plant was rebuilt in 1924 as the Oswegatchie Paper Company, which never operated successfully.

Compensating in part, however, for the lost quarrying and paper mill industries, Willis H. Loomis started in 1920 his first talc mill at Emeryville and later enlarged his mills.

The International Lace Company Plant was closed indefinitely in 1928 and all the weavers and other employees drifted away.

The 1930 Federal Census showed the town as having 5,512 residents, a further loss of 250. The village population was 4,015, a loss of 128. The Village of Gouverneur had lost population continuously from 1910 to 1930.

However the citizenry adopted more progressive features in the 1920-1930 decade than any time in village history. After much argument with the Oswegatchie Light and Power Company and the St. Lawrence Transmission, successor to the Northern Power Company, over the installation of meters and rates charged, the village on

October 22, 1923, voted favorably on a bond issue of \$100,000 to build their own electric plant for pumping the village water supply and lighting the streets.

It was in this public utility argument that Mrs. Rhoda Fox Graves headed a "kerosene club" movement whereby an attempt was made to induce people to stop using electricity and use kerosene. Mrs. Graves was elected to the New York State Assembly at this time. The electrical story is given in the story of the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, the present corporation that furnishes the lighting and power service here.

The taxpayers voted on March, 1924 to purchase the Spooner-Campbell Co. Garage at 33 Clinton street for use as a municipal building, at an approximate cost of \$65,000. In 1927 the taxpayers voted \$17,000 to complete the municipal and plant and \$15,000 to acquire the McAllaster Power, which made the total amount on the electric plant, \$132,000. This made nearly \$200,000 voted in four years. The village had to acquire all the nine water powers, which made the ultimate cost of the village owned plant around \$150,000.

Mrs. Lucy Turnbull, daughter of B. Van Duzee, in a letter to the Gouverneur Chamber of Commerce in November, 1922, offered her home built about 1870 at 26 William Street, to the village for use as a hospital, the gift to become in force at her death.

The Chamber proceeded to interest people of the village in an organization known as the Stephen B. Van Duzee Memorial Hospital Association to carry out the plan of Mrs. Turnbull as she suggested. In late 1927 Mrs. Turnbull urged that the village proceed at once to remodel and occupy her home, and said she would move to another home on the lot. The offer was accepted and in 1928 an outside fund raising agency succeeded in raising \$72,000 for the remodeling of the old home. Mrs. Turnbull died in September, 1928, just as the fund raising campaign was completed. The hospital was opened on March 10, 1929. The building committee had about \$28,000 left after the alterations were made.

The Gouverneur Country Club was started in 1929.

In the summer of 1929 the village park was narrowed nine feet both in E. Main and Church Streets. This move was taken to widen the two streets and improve motor traffic conditions, and it involved only the removal of the sidewalks on either side. The park received landscaping and shrubbery treatment in that year.

The 1931-33 depression brought considerable hardship to many citizens here. The farmers' plight was serious, and local banks were closed as they were everywhere. They were reopened within a few days, except for the First National Bank.

In 1935 the Rushmore Paper Company of Groveton, N. H., bought the defunct Natural Dam Paper Mill of the Oswegatchie Paper Company and immediately set the mill into operation, the first time it had been run in about seven years. The Rushmore Mill burned in May, 1937, but was rebuilt at once.

The Lace Mill Company, idle since just before 1930, started in 1937 to make lace products and stockings.

The St. Joseph Lead Company started its Balmat Mill in 1929, built a village of 50 homes there, and installed a spur from the railroad line at Emeryville to Balmat Village. This village was named from the original owner of the land, John D. Balmat.

The acute distress of farmers through the 1931-34 period began to lessen.

The original Macadam Road through the village along Route 11 was reconstructed of concrete in 1933, and with backing from the Gouverneur Chamber of Commerce the people voted overwhelmingly to pave Church Street and the section of Grove Street needed to return Route 11 traffic from Church to East Main Street.

Several substantial new homes were built in this period, and the auditorium and junior high school annex was added to the Dean High School in 1936, partly with Public Works Administration Funds.

The Rotundo Airport was opened on Labor Day, 1931, fronting on Route 11 on the Richville Road. Many planes flew here for the opening ceremonies.

The 1940 Federal Census disclosed a reversal of the population decrease of the two previous decades. The township population increased from 5,512 in 1930 to 5,900.

The village gained 463 persons, numbering 4,478 by 1940. This represented a gain of 25 in the rural population.

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, bought the Unitarian Building in 1940.

Overtones of the approach of World War II were brought home by war maneuvers held in St. Lawrence County in 1940, in which Gouverneur High School was used as the headquarters of the commanding officer, General Hugh Drum. Tents covered much of Rock Island Street just outside the village, and the Richville Road.

The lace mill industry closed its plants in 1942-43, and stated that they would never again operate here and that the building was for sale. The Chamber of Commerce tried to alleviate this situation, but met with a blank wall. In 1945, however, the Rushmore Paper Company purchased the lace mill property and began to use it as a converting plant.

The Church of God organized here in September 1942. The present church at 71 Rock Island Street, corner of Rock Island and Barnes, was built in 1952.

The 50 year old St. Lawrence Inn was sold by the Lee family in August 1945 to the Watertown Mattress Company. The Inn, a five story, 50 room hotel, closed on September 1, and the Mattress Company started remodeling, which was completed in April, 1947. The company leased the ground floor and basement to the F. W. Woolworth Company in 1950 and moved next door to the store of Ben Saidel, a furniture establishment at 49 East Main Street.

The outstanding event of this present decade was the successful termination of years of planning toward improved hospital facilities here. There was much respect for the venerable Stephen B. Van Duzee Hospital, but its lack of fireproof features and its inadaptability as a first class hospital was apparent to nearly everyone.

On May 20, 1947, Edward John Noble, Greenwich, Conn., a former native of Gouverneur and head of the Lifesaver Company and chairman of the board of the American Broadcasting Company, announced a contribution of \$300,000 toward the erection of an adequate new fireproof hospital, providing the people of Gouverneur, would raise a similar amount.

Although local people responded generously to the hospital fund drive, when bids were estimated on the proposed building the funds available, \$750,000, fell far short of the estimated costs. Negotiations with federal authorities by Albert E. Boughner, chairman of the Noble Hospital Association, resulted in 1948 in a Federal Grant of \$302,000 and the way was cleared for construction of a hospital on a strip of land above the Oswegatchie River on West Barney Street.

The hospital was opened on August 8, 1950. Its cost was \$1,166,000. The people of the village and surrounding area raised \$371,188.30, the Federal Aid was increased to match it, and Mr. Noble kept pace with locally raised funds. A complete detailed history of the Noble and Van Duzee Hospitals is available at the library and the historian's office.

In 1947 the R. T. Vanderbilt Company of New York started construction of a talc mill on the site of the former American Talc Company just north of Balmat Village. The project was completed in late 1948 and named the Gouverneur Talc Company, making the third talc company operating in this area.

No figures were given out on the possible production of the latest talc mill, but it was believed to be about 200 tons per day.

Some of the Gouverneur Talc Company workers reside here, and Robert S. McClellan, vice-president and general manager, is now chairman of the Gouverneur Noble Hospital Trustees. This company is an additional factor in the life of this village and its civic endeavors.

At the end of World War II, bronze tablets were placed on the memorial arch in the village park showing the names of the boys who met death in both World War I and World War II.

The end of World War II saw the beginning of considerable new building and by census time in 1950 about 40 new homes had been constructed. A new development, Valley Drive, was opened up.

The Census again showed favorable population figures. The whole township had 6,500 and the Village of Gouverneur had 4,916, or a gain of 438. For the first time



since 1910, the outside areas had gained. The rapid buildup of the Somerville Road, or Route II, section accounted for much of this gain.

The 1892 iron bridge over the Oswegatchie River on William Street was torn out in 1950 and the new concrete and steel bridge opened to traffic on July 3, 1951.

Centralization of the Gouverneur Central District 1 was effected in June, 1950.

In 1953, the International Talc Company bought out the W. H. Loomis Talc Company and began operating the business of both companies in 1954.

The pictures and brief sketches of most of the prominent people before and after 1905 were shown in the 1905 Centennial History. Two mentioned in the 1905 book were Robert P. Noble and Edward John Noble, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey H. Noble, a Gouverneur coal dealer. Both have shown interest in their former hometown, and the latter has played a leading role in local history especially through his contribution toward the local hospital.

St. Lawrence County Judge and District Attorney James C. Dolan and Charles M. Tait, Village President and President of the First National bank, were young men in 1905 and mentioned briefly.

Others prominent after the 1905 list are Mrs. Rhoda Fox Graves, State Assembly Woman and later Senator, her son Paul D. Graves who succeeded her as State Senator and who was appointed in 1954 as a State Supreme Court Justice; Frank L. Seaker, Assemblyman; Joseph F. McAllaster, one time head of J. E. McAllaster & Sons and now President of the Bank of Gouverneur.

Albert E. Boughner, who came here from Richville in 1924 where he had been head of the Horton Company Ice Cream Manufacturers. He took over as manager of the present Borden Company's Pioneer Division Milk Plant at Gouverneur, and is now also President of the First National bank.

Clayton F. Rush, one time owner and publisher of the Northern Tribune and now is President of the Gouverneur Savings & Loan Association; Andrew K. Laidlaw, executive of the loan association, his brother, Earl E. Laidlaw, a leading farmer and secretary of the Gouverneur Cooperative Association.

Burt O. Kinney, who started a drug store here 53 years ago and now has stores throughout the North Country; Sol Kaplan, prominent department store merchant; Edward H. Case, attorney, member of the State Power Authority and St. Lawrence County Republican Party Chairman; John W. Rouse, construction company owner, Mason R. Smith, editor and publisher of the Gouverneur Tribune Press; Charles I. Ruderman, machinery exchange business owner.

Others, now deceased, include Mrs. Lucy Turnbull, who donated her home for the Van Duzee Hospital; Willis H. Loomis, President of the Loomis Talc Corporation from 1920-1945; and Harold B. Johnson, Editor and Publisher of the Watertown Daily Times.

The new Elmdale Bridge, situated on Route 58, five miles from Gouverneur on the Brasie Corners state highway, was opened for full traffic shortly after July 4. It is a steel truss bridge, with concrete roadway and there is no load limit. It replaces an iron bridge built slightly downstream, about 50 years ago.

The D. A. Collins Co. of Mechanicville, N.Y., contractors for the new West Main Street Bridge, started work Wednesday, August 3, 1955, ending almost exactly 50 years existence of the old bridge. Completion set for December, 1956.

The old bridge girders, Town of Gouverneur property, will be used in some new town bridges. Although residents of the Town and Village of Gouverneur are not anticipating any skyrocketing boom because of the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway, or from any other source, there is confidence that a moderate growth will develop in both the rural and village areas. While communities do not refuse a sudden mushrooming of population, it is recognized that the difficulties coming from such growths in planning and providing schools, housing and general living conditions, do not make this type of expansion entirely desirable.

Farm milk prices declined in 1954, causing a certain amount of unrest and concern among the dairymen, which is still in evidence, though not as acutely, this year.

Considerable building has been done on the Somerville Road, making portions of that area almost a street. Similar construction has been carried out on the Hailesboro Road.

Over 90 houses will have been built by the end of this year since the end of World War II in 1945.

Valley Drive, off Gleason Street, was started in 1948.

In the matter of schools, the adoption of the Gouverneur Central School System in 1950 brought the entire township under one central system.

The village now has nine churches.

The area is proud of the Edward J. Noble Hospital with its 65 beds. This institution is supported to the extent of approximately \$15,000 annually, by the civic minded people of the region.

The municipal building, located at 33 Clinton Street, purchased by vote of the taxpayers in 1924, has proved a sound investment. An engineer employed by the Planning Commission, headed by William H. Foster, has recommended the installation of a filtration plant to replace the use of the present water, untreated except by chlorination, from the Oswegatchie River.

A Zoning Commission is endeavoring to provide plans for the desirable handling of housing, industry and other types of projects in the future.

Both the town and village are practically out of debt.

The village owned electric plant has been in operation since October, 1927. The wooden dam, built in 1814, which caused the placid mill pond above the West Main Street Bridge, has been replaced by a concrete dam to provide for the operation of the village electric plant. This placid mill pond is a "bit of Gouverneur" today, as it was yesterday.