

Photos

Rich Auger, P.15 (both); Doug Jones, P.1,4 (top), 5 (bottom), 13 (all), 20; Margaret Mucci, P.16 (all); Unknown, P.4 (bottom), 5 (top).

Art

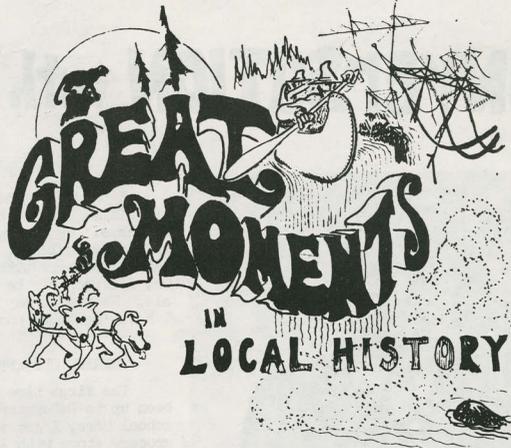
Arlene Farrell, P.9 (bottom), 18; Sue-Ryn Hildenbrand, P.9 (top); Nancy Hubbard, P.8; Ann Jones, P.6, 7; Keddy Outlaw, P.17; St. Lawrence County Planning Board, P.19.

Economics



ROOTDRINKER is an independent publication that isn't funded by a college, arts council, endowment or by the Sierra Club. As such, it must sell advertising space in order to pay for itself. Many commercial magazines do this callously, considering ONLY the financial principles involved. ROOTDRINKER's advertising policy involves much more than this, however. One of our publication's major concerns is promoting community cooperation within a local economy. In conjunction with this we support small, locally owned and operated businesses who, as far as we know, promote a similar spirit of concern for the North Country community. Most of our advertisers are either known to us personally or come recommended to us by friends who know and respect them.

So, please read our ads — they are not there just to pay for the magazine—they make a statement, as well. We regret that there are many businesses that should be represented here that are not. In future issues, we hope to include more of them.



When God made St. Lawrence County there were babbling streams, black flies, and periodic snowfalls. The deer herds were so large that at noon they would block traffic on Route 11. The French were the first to investigate, dragging their heavy bateaux around the rapids.

They cursed the English dogs who built a fort at Oswego. The English had, like the French earlier, discovered that Lake Ontario was connected to the St. Lawrence River. A war ensued. There was the matter of the Indians. Each side told them their version of the handwriting on the wall. The French were a little heavier on the religion: convert or we will destroy your villages. Pour La France. The English, not counting on the colonial revolt to come, promised that everyone would be kept on the East Coast and passed the British North America Act to keep the colonists this side of the Appalachians, infuriating the colonists even more. The English beat the French, then the Americans deported the English.

Settlers streamed in. Woods were cleared. Boundaries were surveyed, crops planted.

It was a time when timber wolves prowled the village parking lots peeing on hub caps, when there was said to be a mountain lion in the balcony of a Hermon movie theater, mens was mens, etc. A rough and wild era, like a Robert Service poem or a Jack London novel. Gradually this changed.

Riffraff from New Jersey began to move in. Cornell introduced the bulk tank system. Hay was up to \$15 a bale. Students from Westchester County were selling their horses. The protest gathered momentum, tensions mounted. A special session of the County Legislature was called in a room that looks like the public men's room in the Lincoln Monument and it was decided to call in the R.C.M.P.

Sgt. Preston and King arrived on the Morrisburg-Waddington ferry. Good media coverage. King was a little surly, snapping at photographers. Standing on top of his dogteam sled, Sgt. Preston told reporters he had come to put an end to all this North Country Lameness once and for all.

In the name of the Queen. He fired his pistol three times in the air and left, muttering. Word went around among all the French loggers in the CCC camps to watch out for this one, this crazy English in the red uniform with the dog team. The riffraff from New Jersey stashed their loco weed. Preston reached the main intersection in Hermon, NY, the next day at 10 o'clock in the morning and fired three shots into the air. Old folks awoke from the long dreams of years gone by past their windows, drunks in the hotel bar stumbled to the door, a cat stared disbelieving from a porch. Rehab stopped its presses. The traffic light dumbly changed from red to green.

It must be Santa Claus, thought some of the little kids, despite the hot July weather. (In Hermon it doesn't matter. Little inconsistencies like this are part of the general space/time warp.) Preston cleared his throat and addressed the gathering crowd of people of all ages, shapes and sizes.

North Country Lameness is running rampant in your community, said he. Being from Ontario Province, I am well acquainted with the problem. Long winters, alcoholism, a political system funded by the Augsburg Oil Corporation, and various other psychic disturbances culminating in a schizoid delusional system with marked tendencies toward anti-authoritarian attitudes and cynicism.

Maybe it's the Second Coming, thought some of the older folks. This time a Canadian police psychiatrist. Down at the El Rancho, where the Hispanic field labor hung out, people were outside by the door, looking up the street at the crowd. Preston waved his arms wildly, told everyone to get their trip together because he was going to be back soon to see what progress they had made. He left in a flash with husky dogs yelping and running.

Six months later he came back. Nothing had changed except for a new sidewalk in front of the IGA. Incest and unemployment raged on as usual. Neighborhood kids threw rocks, so Preston turned his team around and left, muttering that this place was the worst he had seen since Whitehorse during the Gold Rush.

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