

# Glimpses into the Past

EDITOR: BETTY WHITE, HISTORIAN, TOWN OF WESTPORT

OCTOBER 2007 VOL. 1 NO. 4

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MARINA?

## Ferries, Schooners and Steamships

There were two early ferries in our town--one at Rock Harbor and the other at Barber's Point. James Ring operated the Rock Harbor ferry for only a few years around 1790. This, most likely, was a sailboat, which transported passengers only. A later ferry which traveled the route from Westport to Basin Harbor was a horse-powered ferry, called the EAGLE.

The ferry from Barber's Point to Arnold's Bay in Vermont operated from about 1790 to sometime after 1850. This was called the Adams' ferry. It was on this ferry that John Brown's body was transported after he was hanged at Harper's Ferry.

The TROY was an early canal schooner that carried iron ore. In 1825, this heavily loaded boat sank in waters between Westport and Port Henry. Jacob Halstead, his 13 year old brother George, and the rest of the crew were lost when it went down. The wreckage of this boat has since been discovered by the Maritime Museum divers.

Another canal schooner, the O J Walker, sank off the shores of Burlington in 1895. This boat was carrying bricks and roofing tiles. Its crew was unharmed.

Following the success of Robert Fulton's first steamboat, CLERMONT, on the Hudson in 1807, the second steamboat was built by John Winans in Burlington, for operation on Lake Champlain. It was named the VERMONT, and launched in 1809. It was used in the War of 1812 to carry soldiers and supplies and sank in 1815. To accomodate the steamboats, about 1812, Charles Hatch built the wharf at the foot of Washington Street, and the Douglas wharf was built at the eastern end of Sisco Street (now Firefly Lane) about 1825. The Douglas wharf was sold to D.L. Allen in 1845, and to Daniel Payne in 1880. This "old steamboat dock" is currently private property and is no longer used as a dock.



The Vermont III

1903-1940



The Ticonderoga II

1906-1953



The Chateaugay

1888-1940



The Adirondack

1867-1875



Some of the steamships that operated on Lake Champlain are pictured above. Of course, there were many others: The Phoenix, the Water Witch, the A. Williams, and the Vermont II, to name a few.

The Ticonderoga is now on land in the Shelburne Museum, the Chateaugay was cut up and converted and reassembled in NH. The Vermont III was converted into a diesel freighter, the Water Witch was converted into a schooner, and the Phoenix burned and sank near Burlington.

### WEBSITE

There are many interesting sites which have information about the boats which sailed upon Lake Champlain. One of the best is the one operated by the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. [www.lcm.org](http://www.lcm.org). There you can view details about the canal schooner, TROY, as well as many others.

# SPOTLIGHT

## SHIPWRECK



### The Champlain II

The most famous shipwreck in our waters is undoubtedly that of the steamer CHAMPLAIN II. It started its journey as the OAKES AMES in 1868, and was designed to carry railroad cars between Burlington and Plattsburgh. It did also accommodate some passengers. In 1874, it was converted to a passenger ferry with 46 berths, a post-office and a barber shop. In 1875, when the steamship VERMONT became inoperable, the Champlain II took on the route between Ticonderoga and Plattsburgh.

On July 16, 1875, only moments after leaving the wharf at Westport, it ran up on the rocky shore between Barn Rock and Rock Harbor. Fortunately, there were no injuries. The passengers were transferred to the steamer ADIRONDACK, and the cargo was loaded onto the schooner J G WITHERBEE. Some parts of the steamer were removed to be sold or reused. The hull was sunk off shore. In 1998, the remains of the Champlain II were designated an underwater historic preserve.

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## BOOKS

The 2 volume set of books, "An Illuminating History of the Champlain Valley and Adirondack Mountains" by Gordon C. and Elsie L. Sherman contains much history of the lake and surrounding areas. It is out of print, but there is a copy in our local library. It contains much information not found elsewhere, and is the source of some of the information included herein.

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An article from the Nov. 19, 1875 Plattsburgh Sentinel reveals the reason for the wreck:

"It has been stated and denied that the cause of the unaccountable wrecking of the steamer Champlain, which occurred above Westport some time since, was attributed to the fact that the pilot was an opium eater, and was under the influence of the drug when the vessel struck the rock. This statement has been confirmed, and it has been ascertained that the pilot for six years past has been an habitual eater of the drug above mentioned. The affair was thoroughly investigated, and the store where he purchased the opium was found. The night of the unfortunate accident he had taken an over dose which so clouded his senses that he knew nothing of what he was about. His papers have been taken from him, and he will be a pilot no longer--"

## OBITUARY

### Captain James A. Allen

"Our lifelong friend Captain James A. Allen, who had so long been one of the familiar figures in the affairs of Westport, died at his home in Westport village Tuesday afternoon, in the 92d year of his age.

Deceased was born in the month of November, 1819 and up to about January 1st last had been in the work harness, for many years carrying the express between Westport village and the D & H RR station, being at the time of his retirement a few weeks ago the oldest public carrier in Essex County, if not in Northern New York.

Mr. Allen formerly served as D & H RR station agent at Westport and for some years kept hotel where D W Disotell now keeps The Westport. He also served as Westport dock keeper and drove stage.

Captain James A. Allen probably knew more about Lake Champlain boating than any other man with whom the present generation is acquainted. He was a link connecting the rapidly receding past with the all absorbing present.

He is survived by a widow past 85 years of age and a daughter, who has lived with the aged parents.

Funeral services were held at his late home at 2 o'clock this afternoon. Farewell faithful friend from whom we have all received interesting reminiscence. Memories of thee shall not quickly fade away.

# GENEALOGY

## CLARK

### GENERATION 1

David Clark b. abt. 1784; m. Sybil Adams b. abt. 1789  
David died 1862; Sybil died 1866. Both are buried in Hillside Cemetery, Westport, NY

### GENERATION 2

Aaron Clark b. Shoreham, VT May 19, 1819; m. (1) Harriet Frisbie (dau. of David and Sally Frisbie) b. 1822. and m. (2) Sarah Doxie on Jan 3, 1889.  
Aaron Clark died in Westport Dec 22, 1900. Harriet Frisbie Clark died in Westport July 29, 1888. Both are buried in Hillside Cemetery, Westport, NY.

### GENERATION 3

Theresa b. abt. 1842; married Nelson Gibbs;  
Mary b. abt 1846, married Edmund J. Floyd  
David A. b. abt. 1848; He married Mary (Minnie) E. Pattison (b. abt 1852). He died May 6, 1907; She died Feb 27, 1939. Both are buried in Hillside Cemetery, Westport.  
Aaron B. b. abt. 1855; went to the Dakotas and HI.  
Anna M b. abt 1860; Willie b. abt 1864.  
Anna Marie Clark married on October 24, 1883 to Theophilus Carter Middlebrook, in Westport.

### GENERATION 4

#### **CHILDREN OF DAVID AARON AND MARY E PATTISON CLARK.**

Unnamed infant daughter d. Apr. 6, 1878  
Clifford Pattison Clark b. 1879; d. July 24, 1949; m. Ruth Davis on April 9, 1901 in Westport. She died June 14, 1958, age 76. They are both buried in Hillside Cemetery, Westport.  
Florence T. b. 1881 d. Aug 14, 1908; m. Daniel Dodge  
Chester David Clark b. 1881; m. Blanche Giroux (Gerow) on Oct. 19, 1905. He died in 1938, she in 1946..  
Mable H. b. 1885 d. 1945; m. \_\_\_\_\_ Stone

### GENERATION 5

#### **CHILD OF CLIFFORD PATTISON CLARK AND RUTH DAVIS CLARK:**

Eleanor b. 1904; d. 1992; m. Warren G. Cross

#### **CHILDREN OF CHESTER DAVID CLARK AND BLANCHE GIROUX CLARK:**

Mary A; b. April 22, 1906

Raymond Chester; b. Feb. 19, 1908; d. 1992; m. Harriet Osborne on June 21, 1943. Burial is in St. Phillip Neri Catholic Church Cemetery.

### GENERATION 6

#### **CHILDREN OF RAYMOND C. CLARK AND HARRIET O. CLARK:**

Sandra m. \_\_\_\_\_ Arrington

Susan m. \_\_\_\_\_ Hooper

## DO YOU KNOW?

### OWNERS OF THE MARINA

The marina (dock) (wharf) was built by Charles Hatch abt. 1812 as mentioned on page 1. In 1854 it was sold to James A Allen, and then in 1879 to Samuel Price. It then was purchased by David A Clark who operated it until his death in 1907. His sons, Chester and Clifford continued to operate it until Chester died in 1938, and Mrs. David A Clark died in 1939. Clifford then sold it to Giroux & Adams. In 1946, it was sold to Bruce Cray who then sold it to Albert Gordon. In 1964 he sold it to four local educators: Francis Feltman, Bruce Hoskins, Donald MacIntyre and Loren Bulles. The current owners, the Carrolls, have owned it for the last 25 years.