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Gilboa Historical Society

Learning about, sharing, and preserving our history

SUMMER 2013 V. 15.2

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GHS Membership and Mailing of the Physical Newsletter

Are you a member of the society? To confirm your status, check the label on the back cover (an asterisk [*] or dagger [†] after your name means your membership is current). If you are *not* a member but *are* receiving a paper copy of the newsletter, please turn to page 38 *now*—you must confirm your presence on our mailing list in order to continue receiving the newsletter in the future.

If you use Firefox 21.0, please download the file and read it remotely--the links don't hold online with Firefox.

Regularly Scheduled Historical Society Meetings Each Month

First week—**Monday** 7:00, Stamford Historical Society, Stamford Railroad Station, Railroad Avenue, Stamford; **Wednesday** 1:00, Hobart Historical Society Business Meeting, Hobart Historical Society Museum, 57 Cornell Avenue, Hobart; **Wednesday** 7:00, Jefferson Historical Society, Jefferson Town Hall, North Harpersfield Road west of the center of town

Second week—**Wednesday** 7:30, Carlisle Historical Society, Carlisle Town Hall, 514 Crommie Road, Carlisle

Third week—**Wednesday** 1:00, Hobart Historical Society Working Meeting, Hobart Historical Society Museum, 57 Cornell Avenue, Hobart; **Wednesday**, 7:00, Gilboa Historical Society, 7:00, Gilboa Town Hall, 371 Route 990V, Gilboa; **Wednesday** 7:30, Cobleskill Historical Society, Assembly Hall of Zion Lutheran Church, 615 E. Main St., Cobleskill

Fourth week—**Tuesday** 7:00, Middleburgh Historical Society, Middleburgh Library, Middleburgh (occasionally at Town Hall or Best House)

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Connie Ruele, President	Linda Newerla, Vice President
Janette Reynolds, Secretary	Wilma Jones, Treasurer
Shirley Kutzscher, Recording Secretary	
Irene Hess, Richard Lewis, Linda Stratigos, Kristin Wyckoff, Directors	

The Gilboa Historical Society meets at 7:00 P.M. at the Gilboa Town Hall on the third Wednesday of the month, March–December.

The **Gilboa Museum**, 122 Stryker Road, is open noon–4:30 Saturdays and Sundays, from July through Labor Day, on Columbus Day weekend, and by appointment (607 588-9413). <http://www.gilboafossils.org>

The **Tourism Map**, **Newsletters**, and other items of general interest are available online at <http://www.gilboahome.com>.

Send feedback or suggestions on the Newsletter to
gerrys@gilboahome.com
 Gerry Stoner, 152 Starheim Road, Stamford, NY 12167

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Upcoming Events in the Area over the Next Three Months

Tuesday, June 18, 11:00

Picturing America: Free workshops to explore national and local history, a program developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that tells the history of America through its art and photography. It is a program ideal for history buffs and people who wish to learn more about America. Bill Birns, Ph.D., a noted regional historian, author, and former teacher, is leading each free workshop. For information, 607-746-3849, dcha@delhi.net. Delaware County Historical Association is on State Route 10, 2.5 miles north of Delhi.

Tuesday, June 18, 6:30

“When Horseless Carriages Came to Delhi,” by author and Town of Meredith Historian Frank Waterman. Sponsored by Delhi Historical Society. Cannon Free Library, 40 Elm St., Delhi. For information, spearson57@hotmail.com

Wednesday, June 19, 7:00

The Gilboa Historical Society hosts “Waterfalls of New York State” by Barbara Delaney and Russell Dunn. The Associated Press claimed Russell had written more waterfall guidebooks than anyone else in the world, and in their presentation, Russell and his wife, Barbara Delaney, will talk about how waterfalls became the backbone of the industrial revolution. The talk will be followed by a brief slide show presentation. Gilboa Town Hall.

Saturday, June 22, 7:00–midnight

Glory Haunt Hounds: Lectures on the paranormal and a sample ghost hunt in the Old Stone Fort with John Tobin of Glory Haunt Hounds and psychic medium Coryelle Kramer. Tickets are \$30 and limited to 35 participants, available at www.gloryhaunthounds.com. Proceeds benefit the Schoharie County Historical Society. Old Stone Fort Badgley Museum Annex, 145 Fort Road, Schoharie, NY 12157 (518) 295-7192, or theoldstonefort.org

Sunday June 23, 12:30–3:30

Richmondville Historical Society’s Summer Sundays Music at the Mill continues with Brazztet. An old-fashioned summer celebration with an evening of friends, music, ice cream, and cool beverages. Free admission, and donations to benefit the Richmondville Historical Society and the Bunn Mill Restoration Project. The Old Bunn Mill, High Street, Richmondville. For more information contact Dennis Shaw at 518.294.3265.

Tuesday, June 25, 7:00

Middleburgh Historical Society will hear Stephen Spretnjak sharing his research

on historical library finds of area, refreshments by Bunnie Bates and Pat White. Middleburgh Town Hall.

Saturday, June 29, 5:00–8:00

The Historical Society of the town of Middletown (HSM) will host a living history cemetery tour of the Clovesville and Irish Cemeteries on old Route 28 west of Fleischmann (rain date Sunday afternoon). The cemetery is located just west of Fleischmanns on Old Route 28. Tickets to the one-hour tour (\$10) are available by reservation (telephone only) this year. Call 845-586-4736 to reserve a tour time. Tours depart every 20 minutes, between 5 and 7 p.m. For information, visit www.mtownhistory.org.

Thursday, July 4, 10:00–3:00

The Historical Society of the town of Middletown (HSM) will hold their exhibit opening on Middletown in the Civil War. Free admission at the Society's Hall, 778 Cemetery Road in Margaretville. The hall will also be open 11:00–2:00 every Saturday in July and August.

Thursday, July 4, 10:00–5:00

Independence Day Celebration, Readings of the Declaration of Independence & other historical documents, Tryon County Militia "living history" and visitor-interactive debate on the issue of taking up arms against the government. Outdoor activities free. Old Stone Fort Badgley Museum Annex, 145 Fort Road, Schoharie, NY 12157 (518) 295-7192, or theoldstonefort.org

Friday, July 5, 7:00

Cabaret Night with Patti Van Tassel Trio will be sponsored by the Jefferson Historical Society and the Upper Catskill String Quartet. The show will be held at the Maple Museum on Jefferson's town square.

Sunday, July 14, 1:00–3:30

Gilboa Museum Open House featuring the husband-and-wife team Magpie is going to be our folk music entertainment for the afternoon, with a few central school students and vendors of jewelry, pocketbooks, wooden crafts, books, and more! The museum will be open 12:00–4:30 weekends through Labor Day.

Sunday July 14, 6:30

Richmondville Historical Society's Summer Sundays Music at the Mill continues with Hubb Shutts Rides Again. An old-fashioned summer celebration with an evening of friends, music, ice cream, and cool beverages. Free admission, and donations to benefit the Richmondville Historical Society and the Bunn Mill Restoration Project. The Old Bunn Mill, High Street, Richmondville. For more information contact Dennis Shaw at 518.294.3265.

Tuesday, July 16, 11:00

Picturing America: Free workshops to explore national and local history, a program developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that tells the history of America through its art and photography. It is a program ideal for history buffs and people who wish to learn more about America. Bill Birns, Ph.D., a noted regional historian, author, and former teacher, is leading each free workshop. For information, 607-746-3849, dcha@delhi.net. Delaware County Historical Association is on State Route 10, 2.5 miles north of Delhi.

Wednesday, July 17, 6:00

The annual Gilboa Historical Society Ice Cream Social held at the Gilboa Museum, 122 Stryker Road, Gilboa.

Friday, July 19, 7:00

Harmony Street Doo-Wop will be sponsored by the Jefferson Historical Society and the Upper Catskill String Quartet. The show will be held at the Maple Museum on Jefferson's town square.

Saturday, July 20, noon

Middleburgh Historical Society picnic at Huntersland Schoolhouse—bring a covered dish to pass, chairs, and beverages. Following this, around 1:30, we will tour the Christian Church just over the Schoharie County line in Huntersland.

Thursday, July 25, 7:00

Finds on the Borst Homestead in Middleburgh, formerly Hartmann's Dorf by Stephen Spretnja. Schoharie County Historical Society. Old Stone Fort Badgley Museum Annex, 145 Fort Road, Schoharie, NY 12157 (518) 295-7192, or theoldstonefort.org

Saturday, July 27, 9:00–4:00

Village of Middleburgh Arts and Crafts Festival Historical Posters displayed at St. Mark's Church with new membership drive

Saturday, July 27, 10:00–4:00

The 11th annual Hobart Horseshoe Festival will be held on Saturday, July 27, with vendors, horseshoe contest, food service, and entertainment, including a return of the popular musical group, "Whiskey Cross." The new *History of Hobart* produced by the Hobart Historical Society, and authored by a former Hobart resident, James Meagley, will be unveiled at the festival.

Friday, August 2, 7:00

The Sweet Adelines will be sponsored by the Jefferson Historical Society and the

Upper Catskill String Quartet. The show will be held at the Maple Museum on Jefferson's town square.

Thursday, August 8, 7:00

What is it? Try and identify items from the past found in homes, shops and farms by Ken Jones. Schoharie County Historical Society. Old Stone Fort Badgley Museum Annex, 145 Fort Road, Schoharie, NY 12157 (518) 295-7192, or theoldstonefort.org

Sunday August 11, 6:30

Richmondville Historical Society's Summer Sundays Music at the Mill continues with Patty & the Mygrains. An old-fashioned summer celebration with an evening of friends, music, ice cream, and cool beverages. Free admission, and donations to benefit the Richmondville Historical Society and the Bunn Mill Restoration Project. The Old Bunn Mill, High Street, Richmondville. For more information contact Dennis Shaw at 518.294.3265.

Friday, August 16, 7:00

The Blues Maneuver will be sponsored by the Jefferson Historical Society and the Upper Catskill String Quartet. The show will be held at the Maple Museum on Jefferson's town square.

Tuesday, August 20, 11:00

Picturing America: Free workshops to explore national and local history, a program developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that tells the history of America through its art and photography. It is a program ideal for history buffs and people who wish to learn more about America. Bill Birns, Ph.D., a noted regional historian, author, and former teacher, is leading each free workshop. For information, 607-746-3849, dcha@delhi.net. Delaware County Historical Association is on State Route 10, 2.5 miles north of Delhi.

Wednesday, August 21, 6:00

Gilboa Historical Society annual field trip, to the Wood Homestead to see the process of maple sugaring and sorghum harvesting, including possibly a taste of sorghum Schoharie Shine. This is a triple specialty spirit made from Schoharie-grown sorghum and distilled by Kymar Distillery, the first licensed distillery in Schoharie County since prohibition.

Thursday, August 22, 7:00

Dying for Beauty: American Women's Quest for Acceptance, by Harriet Davis-Kram. Funded by a grant from the NY Council for the Humanities. Schoharie County Historical Society. Old Stone Fort Badgley Museum Annex, 145 Fort Road, Schoharie, NY 12157 (518) 295-7192, or theoldstonefort.org

The Charcoal Burner” is from Ag and Markets Bulletin 203

THE CHARCOAL BURNER

Jared Van Wagenen, Jr.

In the years of which I write (from the earliest settlers to the Civil War) charcoal was one of the standard commodities. It was the sole fuel of the absolutely indispensable blacksmith—then a personage very much more important in the community economy than now (1927). The tinsmith (in New England sometimes called “tin knocker”) used it to heat his soldering coppers. In a few cases there were iron manufactories which demanded it in large amounts. Even today charcoal finds considerable use in the world, but an ample supply is available as a by-product of the so-called “acid-factories” where wood is distilled in iron retorts.

Wood for charcoal burning was commonly cut about four feet long. Any kind of wood might be used but elm was considered especially desirable. The man who laid the kiln began with a pile of light, dry kindling wood in the center. Around this the wood was set up on end, leaning toward the center and this was continued until a round pile was made about twenty feet in diameter. On top of this pile, another pile was constructed, the wood being set on end as before. A “pit” commonly contained 25 to 30 cords of four-foot wood. When complete the pile was thickly covered with earth and sods, and in general shape might have suggested an old-fashioned straw beehive. Openings were left in the earth covering to give some draught at the beginning. When all was ready, the pile was fired up by thrusting burning poles into it, and as soon as it was thoroughly on fire, all openings were closed with earth. To burn a “pit” satisfactorily required no small degree of skill, judgement and vigilant care. If the fire threatened to break out at any point, the spot must be immediately covered with fresh earth. The danger of the slow smouldering combustion turning into a conflagration was so great that the pit must be watched day and night for nearly two weeks, so the burner built a little cabin where he might be sheltered and possible snatch catnaps as he watched his fire. Sometimes two pits were laid close together and the cabin built between so that a man might watch two fires instead of one.

My informant writes me that a cord of four-foot wood commonly made about thirty bushels of charcoal. It would seem theoretically at least, that it should make more, but these are the figures given me.

Perhaps I may be permitted to tell a charcoal story in which my great-grandfather figures as the victim, but I believe the same disaster has happened to

other men. More than a century ago, my mother's grandfather—one Alexander McNeill—was a Scotch-Irish pioneer in the town of Carlisle, Schoharie County. He once finished burning a “coal-pit” and at evening the wagon—topped with a big slatted charcoal rigging, like a barley rack—was loaded in order that a very early morning start might be made for Albany, some 40 miles distant. He laid down to peaceful sleep and at the first streak of dawn arose and harnessed his team for the trip. When he came where his load stood, he found the irons of the wagon and nothing more. Evidently somewhere in the coal there had been a tiny spark of fire and when air reached it, the inevitable happened.

“The Charcoal Burner” is from “The Golden Age of Homespun” in the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Bulletin 203 prepared by Jared Van Wagenen, Jr. of Lawyersville, Schoharie Co., NY. Reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Waterfalls of New York State

Barbara Delaney and Russell Dunn

Russell Dunn is best known as a waterfall expert. Several years ago the Associated Press ran an article stating that Russell has written more waterfall guidebooks than anyone else in the world, including waterfalls in the Adirondacks, Catskills & Shawangunks, Hudson Valley, Mohawk & Schoharie Valleys, the Berkshires, and Connecticut. Six waterfall guidebooks later, he is currently working on a Vermont Waterfall Guide.

In his presentation, Russell and his wife, Barbara Delaney, will talk about how waterfalls became the backbone of the industrial revolution, and how they were both utilized and perceived over the last 400 years. The talk will be followed by a brief slide show presentation.

Cooperatively, the two of them have written two hiking guidebooks (Trails with Tales series), a 3-D Guide to the Empire State Plaza and its collection of works of art, two paddling guidebooks, one book of fiction called *Finding Griffin*, and one book of non-fiction about Great Sacandaga Lake.

Carpool a Friend.

We'll see you on Wednesday, June 19 at 7:00

Gilboa Town Hall

TIMBERLAND CORPORATION

Gilboa's New Enterprise in 1961

C. LaVerne Hubbard

Joseph Gallo ran a sawmill behind the Grand Gorge trailer court. To get rid of the waste wood, he and Howie Ploutz installed a Cornell Manufacturing Retort to turn waste into charcoal. The process cooked waste wood in an enclosed, oxygen-starved environment, drying the wood, reducing impurities, and improving quality. Charcoal had always been a valuable industrial product used by smiths throughout the iron age, and the market was growing in the 1950s and '60s—backyard barbecue was becoming essential to the American dream.

July 14, 1964

D. F. WARNER
CHARCOAL RETORT

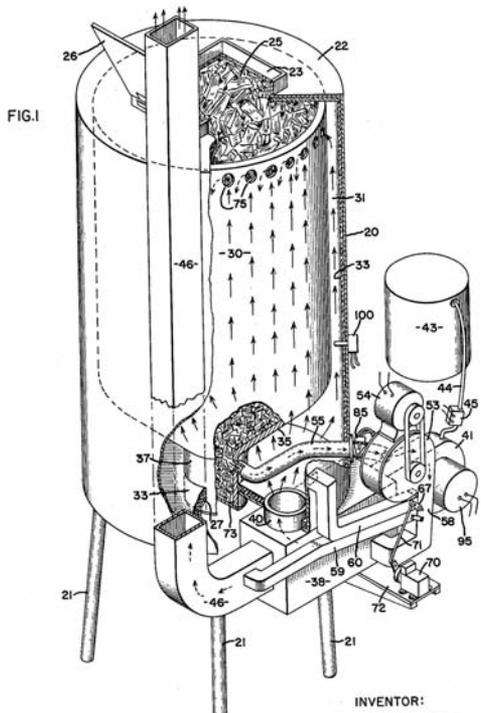
3,140,987

Filed Sept. 27, 1961

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

Gilboan Fred Murphy in 1960 was the septuagenarian owner of Grolier Society (Book of Knowledge) who used his vision and wealth to the economic benefit of the area he called home: Stamford. Gallo's operation and Murphy's vision saw the benefits of manufacturing charcoal using the native resources in this area.

Murphy made an agreement with Gallo in March 1961. He'd start Timberland Products Inc. at Gallo's Grand Gorge mill, but his vision needed more space and a location away from the residential areas of Grand Gorge. Timberland purchased land from Charles Todd, and a new plant was built on the renamed Charcoal Road off Route 23 in Gilboa. Eight retorts were installed, and each would convert one cord of wood per day into charcoal.



Patent illustration of Cornell Manufacturing Retort. Reproduced courtesy of Cyrus J. and Bickford E. Cornell, doing business as Cornell Manufacturing Co., Lacyville, PA, Filed Sept. 27, 1961. www.freepatentsonline.com/3140987.pdf

Time Line for Timberland Products, Inc. 1961–1962

Timberland Products, Inc. was formed, manufacturing operations at the sawmill in Grand Gorge begun, and land purchased for new plant. Construction began and the plant became operational in 1962.

Raw materials

Murphy loved agreements where all parties would benefit. He saw that furniture operations along the Mohawk River, sawmills throughout the Catskills, and paper mills around Mechanicsville had significant costs in disposing of their waste, so Murphy proposed to truck it to Gilboa where local labor could make it into charcoal.

Management

Murphy was the head of the company, but he was also still active as the operational head of Grolier. Joe Gallo therefore became vice president and the on-the-ground head of Timberland.

Gallo personally bought a number of older trucks that Timberland then contracted as its fleet. Murphy and Gallo hired local residents LaVerne Hubbard to be head of manufacturing and Don Warner to manage the marketing effort. They both became vice presidents reporting to Gallo, but all three VPs had a lot of direct interaction with Fred Murphy.

Time Line for Timberland Products, Inc. 1963

Timberland marketing hit the ground running, lining up food brokers to sell Timberland products. Manufacturing subcontracted lump charcoal production and introduced two new product lines.

Manufacturing operations

In 1962, Timberland investigated two additional products for manufacture in Gilboa. One involved a Wrigley product, and the other was for charcoal briquets.

Philadelphia-based Wrigley was famous for a broad range of gums (my first contact with the company was Dubble Bubble), but they also held a patent for Brix: a clean, light-with-a-match charcoal product used for BBQ grills, fire starting, etc. Brix were made with ground charcoal and corn starch injected into a pulp paper container, then dried, coated with wax, and packaged. A manufactur-

ing facility and rights for producing Brix were purchased from Wrigley and set up on the Charcoal Road facility.

Brix was a blockbuster of a product for Timberland in 1963. It remained so for the life of the company and is still marketed under the Royal Oak brand.

Also in 1962, Timberland signed a contract with Nichol's Engineering of New York City to construct a large plant to produce loose charcoal briquets like those you still see in so many stores today. A continuous-feed furnace was built adjacent to the Brix plant, went on line in 1963, and operated for several years. Unfortunately, this unit also produced intense heat that was extremely hard on both the people and the mechanical portion of the furnace.

Manufacturing on these two lines was meant to run twenty-four hours a day for five days per week, but in peak periods operated 24/7. The original operation—producing lump charcoal on the retorts—was quickly eclipsed by these two new product lines.

Manufacturing personnel often had line specialties as well as plant-wide responsibilities. For instance, Rich Stannard was on Brix but was also shift foreman for all three production lines. I hope the people I might've missed will forgive my bad memory, but most of our manufacturing people were:

Maintenance

Sam Girardi (foreman, welder, machinist), Hank Gockel (electrician),
John Laux, Floyd Nickerson

Production

Don Hillicker (foreman, Brix setup, wood chipper), David Hubbard (Brix), Howard Ploutz Sr. (Brix), Howie Ploutz (retorts), Warren Schermerhorn (retort foreman, Brix plant manager), Volnita Stannard (Brix), Richard Stannard (Brix, shift foreman, plant manager), Milton Slauson (Brix, plant manager), Joe Wayman (logging, chipping)

Time Line for Timberland Products, Inc. 1964

Timberland success was amazing. The only storm cloud on the horizon was that demand for our charcoal was outstripping the raw materials available to us, and we were having to travel further and further to meet demand.

Trucking and transportation

The transportation department had one or two mechanics working on-site and a number of drivers bringing raw materials into Gilboa. The drivers reported to foreman Reggie Hill.

There were 3 or 4 full-time drivers during the winter, which increased to 8 to 10 during the other three seasons in the mid-1960s. Local full-time drivers included Max, Maxie, and Carson Stryker; Gerry and David Hubbard; and Jim Moseman. In addition, Prattsville's A. J. Carman Trucking Company hauled fuel oil to Timberland's 10,000 gallon tank.

My brother Gerry has a blog where he is uploading our mother's diary. After each of her entries (and many of them referring to her waiting up for one boy or another to get home from a trucking job), Gerry adds his own insights.

On August 19, 1964, she noted in her diary that "the brakes failed on Gerald's truck on Oak Hill."

Gerry's comments: "This would be my last trip for Timberland and Joe Gallo. Oak Hill is a very steep mile-or-so hill on Route 30 dropping off of Route 7 into the Schoharie Valley ending at the Intersection of Route 30 and 30A just outside of Schoharie. I hit the top of the hill at about 40 MPH overloaded with about 25 ton of bark when the trailer brakes failed. My biggest concerns were the stop sign at the bottom of the hill (and the cars that might be stopped there), and the cross traffic if I ran uncontrollably through the stop. Fortunately for me and the other folks in the traffic, the road levels out for a hundred yards or so just before the stop sign and the engine still had enough compression to slow the rig enough for me to shift to lower gears, inch up to the stop sign, move slowly through the intersection, and park the rig on the other side of the road.

"The next day, Reggie, the foreman, asked me what happened and I remarked something about poorly maintained equipment. Reggie and I parted ways at that point; I was out of work for about a week, and then got a job laboring on a pumping station in Central Bridge with my brother David—and making about twice as much money in half the time."

Time Line for Timberland Products, Inc. 1965

For the first time, no lump charcoal was produced in Gilboa, easing our demands on the immediate area for suitable wood. We also made new arrangements for obtaining wood in New England.

Extending Timberland's reach

Lump charcoal production had been contracted to plants in Lacyville, PA, and Ocala, FL, so no lump coal was produced locally in 1965. A new Timberland briquet plant was constructed in Jacksonville, FL, and that further eased the shortage of hardwoods in the Gilboa plant.

Fred Murphy came up with another win-win agreement, this one with Worcester Wood Products (WWP). This Massachusetts company sold hardwood to furniture manufacturers. Bought by Timberland, their trucks would deliver hardwoods to their customers and pick up their scrap wood destined for Gilboa at the same time. The agreement extended Timberland's reach into the Maine and Massachusetts area and put Timberland in contact with additional potential sources of scrap wood.

Timberland was settling down: for the first time, manufacturing operations at the Gilboa plant were working only five days per week and employment was steady at around 90 people per year.

Time Line for Timberland Products, Inc. 1966

This year was a watershed for Timberland: for the first time, the company had national ambitions, underwent a major restructuring, and began to organize for what they hoped would be a glorious future.

Reorganization

During the first five years, Timberland expanded in areas where it experienced growth and contracted from areas where growth was difficult. This is a reasonable approach, but it ignored the long-range needs for economic electric power and a sufficient supply of local hardwood scrap.

The corporation reorganized in 1965. Fred Murphy became chairman of the board; Donald Warner became president (his marketing department was turned over to Ralph Florio), and LaVerne Hubbard's responsibility was expanded to include manufacturing in all Timberline plants. Milton Slauson became the Charcoal Road plant manager, and Harry Rivers and Elizabeth Moore assumed corporate positions as treasurer and secretary.

Previously, Timberland's charcoal lines had been promoted and sold by a network of manufacturers' reps and brokers; in 1965, marketing was reorganized into two groups. One group specialized in sales of briquets and lump charcoal in the eastern half of the country. The other group would operate *nationally*—selling Brix and Brix charcoal *grills* under the Timberland name.

In Gilboa, manufacturing operations still maintained a small line for briquets, but the biggest effort was on Brix—manufactured exclusively in Gilboa and shipped to a national market. Prattsville's A. J. Carman Trucking Company hauled finished Brix products from Gilboa to a Timberland warehouse near the N.Y. Central tracks in Scotia, NY. From there, Brix were transhipped to subsidiary warehouses in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and Los Angeles.

OLD-FASHIONED
COOK-OUT FLAVOR
WITH
SMOKEY BEAR
CHARCOAL BRIQUETS
MADE WITH
REAL-HICKORY
FLAKES

Real-Hickory! Woodsy, smoky...sizzling flavor! It's Smokey Bear Briquets for an old-fashioned pit barbecue cookout! Easy to light packs flakes of genuine hickory you can see! And they start faster...burn better. Bring Back the great outdoor flavor! -with Smokey Bear premium briquets.

Timberland PRODUCTS CO., INC.
286 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10001
P.O. BOX 1786, OCHA, FLORIDA 32078

Timberland opened a national sales office and showroom in New York City, and the two marketing groups ran ads out of that location. Above, an ad for Smokey Bear charcoal briquets (produced in the Jacksonville plant) carried a license from the United States Forest Service. LaVerne Hubbard had patented the production process subsequently transferred to Husky Industries, Inc. Opposite, an ad for a better type of cooker—the Brix “Look-n-Cook” (note the clear top). Both were products from Timberland ca. 1969. Timberland ad supplied courtesy of Gerry Hubbard. <http://gerryhubbard.blogspot.com/2012/06/monday-june-29-1964-frances-hubbard.html>

Cook with
brix
CHARCOAL

A Better Kind of Charcoal... brix
 1966 — The lightest kind of charcoal.
 1967 — No other charcoal is so clean.
 1968 — Lasts longer, burns longer, and is so clean.

A Better Kind of Cooker... "Look-n-Cook"
 1966 — The gas burner that looks like you're cooking.
 1967 — No other gas burner is so clean.
 1968 — The gas burner that looks like you're cooking.

Timberland 1966-1968, INC., 1000 N. AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017
 MADE IN U.S.A.

Playing in the Bigs

In the early 1960s, Timberland had been a successful small business operating in a regional market. Going into 1967, however, it was a self-declared national corporation. Marketing and manufacturing would be tested, and success might not come quite so easily.

I remained with Timberland for another 5 years but became less involved with the Gilboa operation. In that 5-year period, I moved to the Jacksonville, FL, plant; a fire destroyed the Gilboa briquet production line; Vic Mahler became president of Timberland; I moved back to Gilboa; and Husky Industries from Atlanta, GA, bought Timberland. [The Keeter family was able to purchase that division, and the business now is Royal Oak Industries of Roswell, GA.]

I joined the Husky team and traveled around the country working with their various charcoal-producing plants—I was sent wherever there was a problem or a new operation to be brought on line.

Finally, I tired of the travel and the pace. I resigned, returned to Gilboa to be near my roots, and eventually started a 20-year career in the insurance business.

In terms of career satisfaction, I was really happy during those early years at Timberlands—the pace was frenetic, the challenges great, success attainable—it was an electric time in my career and I loved it. However, I also created a second career and realized that satisfaction is not synonymous with reward.

I had the best of all worlds by experiencing both.

Lessons for local entrepreneurs

Fred Murphy wanted to create jobs in the area. He succeeded admirably with Timberland for more than ten years, but he failed in the long run.

If there are any like-minded entrepreneurs reading this, you might want to consider what I observed during my Timberland experience.

Business operations have to be sustainable

If your ultimate goal is to create local jobs, the company has to stay in the area. If the goal is to maximize profits, the company must have resources available—even if this means continually moving.

Ownership has to be committed to the area

If you want a company to stay in the area, create a plan so that the ownership is made up of people who are tied to the area. Help managers finance the purchase of the company, or promote employee ownership, cooperatives, or associations.

Compensate for the shortcomings of local management

Drawing management exclusively from the local area means that your pool for management talent is limited. To offset this, build training and motivation into the corporate culture so your managers will be as good as, or better than, the managers of competitive companies.

All Gilboa Historical Society Newsletters are available free at <http://www.gilboahome.com/>.
Email this address to friends & family.

GILBOA MUSEUM 2013!

Kristen Wyckoff, Chair, Museum Committee

The Gilboa Museum is continuing this year with our extraordinary fossil exhibit highlighting the new forest floor and discoveries from the reconstruction site at the Gilboa Dam in 2010. People from all over the world and country have contacted me through our website and many are stopping by our museum this summer while traveling through the area.

We are having a great Open House this July 14th from 1:00–3:30. The husband and wife team from Middleburgh called the “Magpie” is going to be our folk music entertainment for the afternoon. We are going to be hearing from a few high school students who will perform during Magpie’s break also this year. Many vendors will be coming to join in the festivities. We’ll have jewelry, pocketbooks, wooden crafts, books, and more!

The museum is always looking to improve every year and this year we have made a commitment to upgrade our video room technology and we’ll be getting a new computer and TV for the same small video room or an entire group in the main museum room. We have created a children’s corner and have a couple of desks with chalk boards, wooden toys, and real antique dress up clothes. Hopefully it will allow parents to be able to focus more on the museum while their children are having a good old-fashioned time! To go with our children’s corner this year we are in the process of having a coloring book printed for our museum! Sylvia VanHouten and Marlynn Kessler have been illustrating pictures all winter from fossils to settlers to Gilboa today. We look forward to sharing our coloring book with all the young folks (and maybe adults too!)

Gilboa Museum is a part of the “putting the pieces back together” in the Schoharie County Puzzle. Yes, we have 2000 pieces and you will need one to complete your puzzle.

Dr. C.S. Best House and Medical Exhibit

1568 Clauverwie, Middleburgh, NY 12122

(Across from High School, to east and behind Methodist Church)

518 827-4504 518 827-5142 518 827-7200 (Thursdays only)

**Open Thursdays, 10:00 AM–3:00 PM
and by appointment**

GILBOA FOREST

One of America's Top Geo-Sites

Peter Fox

How far would we need to travel in order to discover one of the world's most important geo-sites? What would it take to stand on the exact spot where the world's first forest grew some 380 million years ago? How close are we to what is "widely recognized as the most significant location in the world for the preservation of Devonian-age flora" (Albert B. Dickas in *101 American Geo-Sites You've Gotta See*, p. 138)? The answer is Gilboa, New York, in the scenic valley of the Schoharie Creek.

In his book, Albert Dickas lists the Gilboa Forest as one of the top geological sites in America. As Dickas points out, little was known about the geological significance of Gilboa until 1850, when an amateur naturalist found a sandstone cast of a portion of a Devonian-age tree trunk in the Schoharie Creek. This find was the first documented discovery of fossil tree stumps in North America.

In 1920, after the City of New York claimed the village of Gilboa to build the Gilboa Dam and the Schoharie Reservoir, the New York State Museum ordered a full-scale search for these fossils. About 50 were found: some were shipped to the New York State Museum, while others were shipped to interested scientists and museums around the world. Nine were left in Gilboa and are currently on display at the Gilboa Museum and outside the Gilboa Post Office. These stumps (given the scientific name of *Eospermatopteris*) are blocky, with rounded bottoms and tall, slender trunks. They have long been an attraction to the area.

The Gilboa Forest story, however, does not end with these stumps. Two subsequent discoveries of importance have recently been made. In 2007, a long fossil was discovered in the adjacent town of Conesville that proved to be unique—it was a single *Eospermatopteris* fossil showing the actual shape of the stump, the development of the trunk and an apparently complete crown. Additional excavation in Gilboa was completed as part of the renovation of the Gilboa Dam, and this work revealed the floor of this ancient Devonian forest, and two additional trees were found: a club moss (named *Lycopsid*) and a "snake tree" (named *Tetraxylopteris*) that wound around the forest floor. Of particular interest was the fact that scientists were able to map a significant portion of the forest floor and to learn how these trees formed an interdependent ecosystem. The implications of these new discoveries were featured in a *Nature Magazine* article in March 2012.

If you are looking for an interesting day out, come to see the fossils and visit the Gilboa Museum on Route 990V and Stryker Road in Gilboa, NY. The museum is centrally located within an hour's drive from Albany, Kingston and Oneonta, NY. For more details, contact Kristen Wyckoff at 607-588-9413 or at www.gilboafossils.org. It is not every day that you have the opportunity to see one of the top geo-sites in America.

Peter Fox

Ice Cream Social

Starting as Esperance's Volunteer Fire Department Band in 1946, members came from all over. Andrew Quick was the band's director and was succeeded by Peter Holmes in 1997.

The size of the band varied for the venue and scheduling, but it regularly visited the Broome Center Chapel for 25 years at an annual ice cream social. For the last several years, the Esperance Band has kept up this tradition with the Gilboa Historical Society.

Always a great drawing card, the band will play as the sun is setting on July 17, from 6-8:30 PM at the museum (weather permitting, otherwise at the Gilboa-Conesville Central School), with ice cream and toppings courtesy of Stewart's.

Wednesday, July 17 at 6:00

at the Museum (or the school in case of rain)

Bring the kids, and carpool neighbors who don't do night driving.

Zadock Pratt Museum

KAATERSKILL CLOVE: WHERE NATURE MET ART

Clove artwork by contemporary painters Athena Billias, Patti Ferrara, and Carol Slutzky-Tenerowicz, alongside one of the late Thomas Locker's renderings of Kaaterskill Falls.
P.O. Box 333, Main Street, Prattsville NY 12468

Open Sat. & Sun. 11 AM-4 PM

(last tour through the museum at 4 PM)

large groups by appointment 518-299-3395

Nomenclature of Early Firearms

muzzle loader: A firearm loaded from the muzzle—the open end of the barrel through which the bullet will be fired. A ramrod is used to seat the load at the rear of the barrel.

breechloader: A firearm loaded at the breech—the rear part of the barrel.

smoothbore: Early firearms were little more than a pipe to guide a bullet on the first part of its journey, and used spherical bullets to minimize deviation from a straight flight path. They were accurate at short range, but the bullets still curved on longer flights. Early, muzzle-loading smoothbores were called muskets; modern smoothbores are shotguns, mortars, and cannon that fire vaned shells.

rifle bore: A rifle has spiral grooves cut into the inside of the barrel, creating what we call lands and grooves. On firing, the lands cut into the sides of a bullet and spin it around its axis. This gyroscopic motion stabilizes flight, prevents tumbling, and increases accuracy.



With a rifled bore, you can use cylindrically shaped ammunition. This has two advantages: the mass of a cylinder is greater than that of a sphere of the same diameter, and a cylinder has a larger surface for a faster spin. A faster spinning, heavier bullet has greater range, accuracy, and impact.

loads: Loads have two parts: powder and shot. Powder is usually gunpowder, although compressed air may be used for propelling a bullet. The shot might be a single bullet, a number of pellets, or another form of projectile.

In addition, there has to be a mechanism that keeps the force of the exploding gunpowder from escaping around the shot. When fired, modern bullets are tightly pressed against the sides of the barrel so the expanding gas cannot escape around the load; with smoothbore firearms, a pad behind the shot is used to contain the expanding gases.

Early Catskills shooters preparing for a hunt carried their powder in powderhorns and made lead bullets in molds on frontier evenings. Over the decades, they discovered ways of speeding up the loading of their firearms. The earliest—premeasured powder in a paper wrapper—was called a cartridge, and the name stuck. Cartridges now made of cardboard or metal, are mass produced, safer, and are a single item containing the powder, pad, and shot.

loading: Manual loading of a muzzle loader requires time: measure and insert powder; insert a patch and ram the two tightly into place; insert the shot; insert a second patch; and ram the load into place. Revolutionary and Mexican war soldiers could fire 2 to 3 shots per minute.

Loading a breechloader is quicker: open breech; insert cartridge; close the breech. A Civil War trooper could fire 6 or more shots per minute.

Many firearms use a magazine to hold a number of bullets. John Wayne often used a Winchester 1892 **repeater**: he would fire a shot, rotate a lever behind the trigger to reload, cock the hammer, and be set to shoot again. A soldier using a **semi-automatic** M-1 rifle in World War II would fire, release the trigger, and be ready to fire again immediately. Fully **automatic** firearms (Tommy guns, machine guns, AK-47s) can fire continuously while the trigger is pulled or until the magazine is empty. Most automatic rifles are capable of firing in either automatic and semi-automatic mode.

Repeating rifles need some action by the user to reload; *semi-automatics* automatically reload but need the user to trigger off a second shot; fully *automatics* shoot as long as the trigger is held and the ammunition lasts.

firing mechanism: All firearms require ignition of the load.

Early firearms and cannon used a wick or primed touchhole and a sliver of burning wood to ignite the touchhole and set off the main charge. This firing mechanism was unreliable in bad weather, and in the 17th century the *flintlock* eliminated the need for a fire source. It was more reliable, but it wasn't until the 1820s that the *percussion* cap enabled firearms to fire reliably in any weather.

The 1823 Deringer flintlock (top) has a piece of flint clamped to a spring-loaded hammer. In front of the hammer is the frizzon, an L-shaped piece that can pivot forward. The upright section of the frizzon has a rough surface facing the flint, and its base is a flat surface that covers fine-grain powder in a pan. Pulling the trigger releases the hammer that rotates down, pushing the frizzon forward and uncovering the pan. As the flint strikes down the steel rasp, a spark fires the fine-grain powder and the firearm.

The hammer of the 1863 Enfield caplock (center) works similarly, but a nipple replaces the flint and frizzon at the breech. The shooter loads the gun and places a cap (three types are shown) with a small explosive charge on the nipple. When the trigger is pulled, the hammer hits the cap, which explodes and fires the gun. "Tower" and the model number is stamped on the lock.

The centerfire cartridge (bottom) has the firing cap built into the center of the cartridge, and is used in a firearm with a firing pin built into the rifle. When the trigger is pulled, the firing pin is driven forward, igniting the cap and firing the bullet. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.



GUNS IN THE CATSKILLS

in the First Half of the 19th Century

Cordy Rich

Guns played an integral role in the Catskills—as a means of survival in a hostile land, a way to provide protein for the table, a status symbol among the neighbors, and even guns that were used as traps for varmints like coyotes.

Flintlock Muskets

My interest is mainly in Civil War weapons and unique or interesting firearms from other periods. In the early 19th century, most weapons used around farms were flintlock muskets, possibly used in European wars but also manufactured by area smiths. These local productions generally had a smaller caliber (.38–.45) firing a round ball for hunting deer and other large animals, putting protein on the table. The range in the hands of a tolerable shooter would be about 100 feet, and a less accurate marksman would have to get nearer for a clean shot. As a smoothbore, these muskets could be used as a shotgun, firing a few small pellets instead of a single round shot. These muskets would be effective in bringing down a single bird.

The 1817 Common Rifle might be “retired” to Catskill farms (left). It is a muzzle-loading flintlock used by the Army in two Seminole Wars (1814–1819 and 1835–1842) and on the frontier. With 7 lands and grooves, it fired a .54 caliber ball and had a large oval patchbox. This rifle was one of 13,000 manufactured in 1823 under a federal contract by Henry Deringer of Philadelphia (aka the Deringer M1817 rifle). At that time, spare parts left over from one job and might be used on a later job, and Deringer added a European-style finger lever (the brass piece attached to the stock between the trigger guard and the butt) on all of his M1817 rifles. This firearm has “US” on the lock; inspector’s mark on the stock; and “G. Hay, 1st Regt., Conn.” on the barrel. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.



United States Armory and Arsenal at Harpers Ferry

In the mid-1700s, Robert Harper settled in the area where the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers met—a strategic location for transportation and providing ample waterpower for mills.

In 1794, Congress authorized the manufacture and storage of weapons in armories (for small-caliber arms such as rifles) and arsenals (for large-caliber arms like cannon). President Washington selected Springfield, Mass. as the first in 1794, and Harpers Ferry as the second in 1796. Construction in Virginia began in 1799, and three years later, production of military arms commenced. However, the armory's size—one room and 25 employees—seemed inadequate for producing the weapons needed on the frontier.

Harpers Ferry developed the practice of manufacturing prototype firearms and specifications, and then licensing regional manufacturing—thus the name “1817 Common Rifle made by Deringer in Philadelphia.”

Percussion Cap Muskets

The percussion cap was not immediately adopted in rural areas. Both traditional flintlocks and the new percussion cap weapons were muzzle loaders, so they had equal rates of fire—and percussion cap muskets were more expensive.

Fowlers

Smoothbore firearms meant to hunt birds were called “fowlers,” and the most common difference between a smoothbore musket and a fowler is in the internal shape of the barrel. When firing pellets, a slight constriction of the internal diameter toward the end of the barrel—called the choke—will better control the spread pattern of the birdshot. A smoothbore can propel a single bullet or a number of pellets; a fowler can shoot only the pelleted load. For this reason, fowlers were a luxury that most people could not afford. They were, however, favored by the wealthy who also had an interest in bird hunting and skeet/trap shooting.

Punt Guns—a specialized form of fowler

In frontier areas of the early 19th century where waterfowl was plentiful, a very large-gauge shotgun called a punt gun was used for commercial hunting.

Our immediate area did not have large rivers, lakes, or huge flocks of waterfowl, but the punt gun was used on Lake Champlain, the Great Lakes, and the Hudson and lower Delaware rivers.

Shotgun Gauges

Gauge is the measurement a shotgun's bore determined by the weight of a solid sphere of lead as a fraction of a pound. A one-twelfth pound ball fits a 12-gauge bore; a one-twentieth pound ball fits a 20-gauge bore. This means that the gauge of a shotgun goes down as the caliber—measuring of the diameter of the bore—goes up. A 12-gauge shotgun has a caliber of 0.72-inch, a 20-gauge shotgun has a caliber of 0.615.

Any smoothbore can be used for hunting birds and small game by changing the load from a single bullet to a number of pellets ranging in diameter from .065" to .23". Selecting the correct size and number of pellets is dependent on the game being hunted and the probable distance to the target.

Punt guns were huge: they were rated as 2 gauge, would fire a single load equal to about 40 standard 12-gauge shells, and could kill over 50 waterfowl with a single shot. They were too heavy to be aimed and fired traditionally—instead, the butt was wedged on the bottom of a flat-bottomed punt and the barrel was placed in a notch on the bow. The one-man boat was disguised with branches and stealthfully paddled within range of a target.

Punt gunning proved so effective at killing flocks of birds that many states outlawed it by the time of the Civil War.

A Better Mousetrap—for a Coyote

Rural farmers, conservative about new technologies, were innovative when motivated by an itch they can't scratch—predators like the coyote.



Above left is a double-barreled, side-by-side pistol. The barrel nearest the viewer is loaded with a musket ball in the standard manner; the barrel away from the viewer is loaded with an arrow on a shaft that acts as the trigger—pushing it down the barrel cocks the gun. The farmer tied the gun to a solid branch or stump, placed a piece of meat on the arrowhead and pushed it down the barrel. When the coyote tried to take the meat, the arrow would come out with it and spring open, holding the coyote's mouth open. The arrow being pulled would fire the gun at a perfect target. A version of this coyote trap was patented by R. Reuthe on May 12, 1857. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

Prideful Pieces

Weapons have often been used as status pieces, from armorial shields of feudal lords to this double-barrel over-and-under target rifle created in the Catskills—an ornate tribute to local gunsmithing skills.



A. R. Davis in Deposit created this .38 caliber over-and-under percussion cap rifle for Ransom Fish in 1856. Fish was supposedly a poor man, but he obviously wanted to dispel this impression by having such a luxurious work created. The curly maple stock and silver engraving is exceptional. Above, clockwise from the top left, is the butt plate, an escutcheon with an eagle, the patch box, and the mid-stock with a whimsical play on the craftsman's name and the trigger area. This target rifle has a rarely seen feature: there is a set screw between the two triggers to adjust the trigger pressure necessary to fire the gun. Once adjusted, the rear trigger will reset the mechanism, and the front, straight trigger can shoot the gun with just the right amount of pressure. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

Gun Digest, 18th Edition, 1964

AIR GUNS

and the Lewis and Clark Expedition

William R. Barbour

The subject of air guns, as developed on the Continent and later in England, between 1750 and 1820, is an intriguing one. Here were the first breechloading repeaters, capable of firing 20 shots in a minute without replenishing the charge of compressed air in the reservoir. They were powerful enough to kill a man at 150 yards.

In the Napoleonic wars a whole regiment of Austrian soldiers was equipped with air guns. They created such havoc that Napoleon gave orders that any enemy caught with an air gun in his possession was to be summarily executed.

There is a record of a Bavarian count who killed with his air gun a 24-point stag weighing 400 pounds. The fabricators of air guns, who belonged to a different guild from firearm makers, had no power tools, no micrometer calipers, and rather crude hand tools, yet they were able to work to such close tolerances that the reservoir valves and the pumps withstood pressures of over 500 pounds to the square inch. One reservoir is reported to have held its charge undiminished for over sixteen years.

Air guns were noiseless and smokeless, they shot equally well in rainy or windy weather and their barrels did not get fouled or become hot from shooting. Their great fault, which eventually brought them into disuse, was that they were expensive to manufacture and difficult to maintain in shooting order.

The Air Gun Carried on the Lewis and Clark Expedition

There remains to be mentioned a gun carried by the explorers which was not a firearm. This weapon is still somewhat of a mystery. The diaries make frequent mention of an air gun with comments such as: "The air gun was fired, which astonished them greatly"; "in the evening we exhibited different objects of curiosity, and particularly the airgun, which gave them great surprise"; "also, their admiration was raised to astonishment by a shot from the air gun"; and "nothing appeared to give them greater astonishment than the air gun." It was quite evidently no mere BB gun, but a weapon of impressive power. There is a record of its having killed the deer. Coming down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh, before the expedition started, Lewis demonstrated the air gun, then let an on-looker try it. Being discharged accidentally, it wounded a woman 40 yards away.

We cannot be entirely sure what type of air gun this was. It seems to have been



a repeater, in that a number of shots could be fired without replenishing the supply of compressed air. It probably was one of two types, with the reservoir either in the butt or in the form of a ball above or below the lock. In either case, it had been most likely imported, together with a pump capable of building up a pressure of some 500 pounds to the square inch in the reservoir. We know that, in spite of its weight and complexity, it was carried by canoe, on horseback, and on foot, over high mountains and across deserts, to the Pacific Ocean and as far back, at least, as the mouth of the Yellowstone. At that point, when Captain Lewis, having been accidentally wounded on an elk hunt, was lying alone in the boat while his followers scoured the surrounding woods for hostile Indians, he recorded that his armament consisted of his rifle, a pistol and the air gun.

If this air gun is still in existence, and could be identified, what a collector's prize it would be!*

* G. Charter (Nick) Harrison, long time arms student and a collector of air guns, believes that the Lewis and Clark air gun has been found. Some years ago Mr. Harrison bought a full stocked "Kentucky" styled air rifle of the type with a ball reservoir carried underneath. This gun (now in the Smithsonian collection, presented there by Mr. Harrison) has the seal of the United States carved into the metal of its patchbox (though somewhat crudely) and the ball reservoir exhibits a repair. Note the comments that Lewis had to make about his gunsmith Fields, and the repair he made to their air gun.

Reprinted from Gun Digest, 18th Edition 1964, edited by John T. Amber and written by William R. Barbour. Presented here courtesy of Gun Digest the Magazine. www.gundigest.com

This rifled air gun is a muzzle loader: the slug is wrapped in cloth and forced down the muzzle into place by the ramrod. Then, the round bulb is unscrewed and screwed onto the end of the air pump similar to those found on bicycles; is pressurized; and is then rescrewed onto the rifle. You would cock the hammer in the traditional way, and pulling the trigger releases air into the barrel, propelling the shot. This rifle, similar to that carried by Lewis and Clark, was manufactured in Cherry Valley of Otsego County. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

MILITARY WEAPONS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Cordy Rich

Most military tacticians and non-commissioned officers (drill instructors) teach what worked for them in their past. Because of this, the tactics and military weapons being taught to recruits just before the Civil War were designed for tactics of an earlier time such as the Napoleonic era.

At Waterloo, three ranks of soldiers would advance firing volleys: the first rank would fire and kneel down to reload. The second rank would step past the kneeling soldiers and become the new first rank; they would fire and kneel down to reload. The third rank would follow suit, so that the attack would be a slowly advancing unit firing rolling volleys that roared out about every 10 seconds—six volleys per minute. The climax would be a running charge with fixed bayonets and hand-to-hand combat.

In the middle of the 19th century, the U.S. Army—one army made up of southerners and northerners—were trained for this type of warfare carrying muzzleloaders heavy enough for a melee but not so heavy to impede movement. They carried a bayonet were long enough to be used as pikes.

For the Mexican War (1846–1848), the armories at Springfield and Harpers Ferry converted Model 1832 Springfield flintlocks to caplocks for the 6,000 enlisted men of the army, and subsequently were using caplocks for all the 31,000 soldiers that had enlisted by the end of that war.

Nearing the end of the decade, a regiment of mounted soldiers serving on the frontier had been equipped with more modern M1841 carbines, but the rest of the army was using muzzle-loading, percussion cap muskets; it was federal Secretary of War Jefferson Davis who authorized the production of the first *rifled* weapon *produced for general issue* by the U.S. Army.

SOP for the eve of the Civil War: all participants were using these outdated weapons; stockpiled weapons were flintlocks; and faster firing breech loaders and repeaters submitted for Army testing were rejected because the “soldiers would shoot too much ammunition.” Only late in the war did troops carry smaller caliber breech loaders and repeaters.

Retooled Weapons to Protect the Capital

As states seceded, the largest stash of reserve weapons was in the U.S. Armory and Arsenal at Harpers Ferry—the original flintlock version of the 1832 Springfields. To get these to the army as quickly as possible, the arsenal subcontracted the conversion of flintlocks to caplock muskets in the late 1850s.



The Model 1832 Springfield musket was converted to a caplock sidearm for the army at Harpers Ferry (left). The breech was modified to accept a cap head, the flintlock was removed, and a new caplock (above) from Hewes and Phillips was installed. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

Rifled Muskets

Early *smoothbores* were called muskets, so the term “rifled musket” sounds like an oxymoron. However, a rifled musket is the accepted name for a specific weapon of the 1850s and the Civil War.

Both ordnance departments—North and South—assumed that the weapons for this war would have physical characteristics of the traditional musket, but they also wanted these guns to have the accuracy of a rifle.

The problem is that a firearm with rifling is hard to load through its muzzle—the bullet has to be *large enough* to firmly grip the lands of the rifling—a bullet for a rifled barrel should ideally be slightly larger than the land-to-land caliber of the gun. This is like trying to fit a size 9 foot into a size 8 shoe.

The solution turned out to be in the bullet. The Minié ball is cylindrical and sized to fit within the land-to-land diameter of the rifled barrel. It would fit into the muzzle for loading and the greased bands around the bullet allowed easy positioning with the ramrod. It was pointed at one end and

concave at the other, and when it was fired, the convex base caught the escaping gasses and expanded the skirt of the bullet into the grooves of the rifling.



Minié balls from the Civil War. The ball on the right has a bulb on the bottom: this was called a Williams

cleaner, and would channel the explosive force of the powder against the barrel and clean out firing residue. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

The Model 1853 Enfield was standard for the British Army before the American Civil War, and nearly a million of these rifled muskets were imported by both the North and the South. The Enfield M1853 was the second-most widely used firearm of the Civil War.

The federal ordnance office contracted for a domestic version of the Enfield—the Springfield Model 1861. It was nearly a duplicate and fired the same caliber Minié ball. However, it was an inch longer, possibly more accurate, and became the most popular weapon of the Civil War due to its range, accuracy, and reliability.

The major supplier of European arms was Enfield, and the 55" long, .58 caliber Model 1853 Enfield (left) with its square butt was the standard weapon for the British Army. Note that the rifled musket had a opening of 0.58 caliber and fired a .577 Minié ball. The 0.003" difference allowed for easy muzzle loading. Enfield became a major supplier of these rifled muskets to both sides in the Civil War, and the Model 1853 was issued to many New York State units. The Springfield Model 1861 (right) fired the same caliber Minié ball, and became the most popular weapon of the Civil War due to its range, accuracy, and reliability. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.



Rifle verses Carbine

Both rifles and carbines have rifled barrels so when you talk of rifles and carbines—unlike the distinction of rifles and smoothbores—you are considering only the length of their barrels.

The Spencer 1861 rifle was 47" long with a 30" barrel.

The Spencer 1861 carbine was 39.25" long with a 22" barrel.

And both had the same internal mechanics. The same pattern was seen with all long guns developed in the Civil War period.

- The rifle's longer barrel provides increased accuracy at long range, but at the cost of increased weight (good for minimizing recoil, bad if you have to carry it great distances).
- The carbine is about a foot shorter and lighter than the rifle, and is the firearm of choice for those working in tight areas or needing maneuverability. Mounted infantry and cavalry generally favored the carbine.

Weapons for the New War

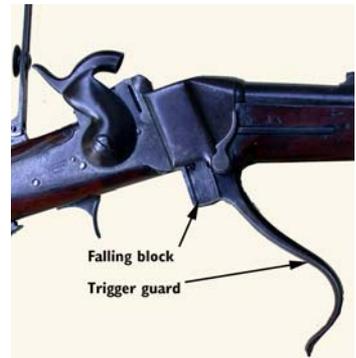
The Northern strategy was warfare by attrition—using the wealth and population of the North to erode Confederate forces. Southern strategy was to outmaneuver the North and make them lose heart.

The Southern plan paid off for the first two years (until Chattanooga in November 1863)—*but at a cost that could not be borne*. After Chattanooga, the stars of Grant and Sherman were both in ascendance; the aggressive Grant controlled the war of attrition while Sherman, his cavalry and mounted infantry armed their new, fast firing Sharps, Joslyns, Henrys, and Spencers controlled the warfare of maneuver; and the South did not have the strength to respond.

Sharps Model 1852

The Sharps was a single-shot breech-loading percussion cap carbine that became common in Union cavalry regiments; Confederate clones of the Sharps typically used brass fittings, and the overall quality of the clones was erratic.

The Sharps Model 1852 used a falling-block action where a solid metal breechblock slid vertically in grooves cut into the breech of the weapon and was actuated by a hinged trigger guard. This opened the firing chamber for a new cartridge. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.





Merrill Models 1858 and 1863

The Merrill carbine was a breechloader designed by James H. Merrill in Baltimore. It fired paper cartridges using a percussion cap, and sported brass fittings (butt plate, patch box, trigger guard, brass band, saddle riding ring and bar on the left side). The 21st Indiana infantry regiment was the only unit to be completely outfitted with these carbines. The two models were also used extensively by cavalry and sharpshooters attached to infantry units.

Merrill Model 1863 (left)

The Merrill breech (right) has a lever folded against the rear sight. The lever is released by a spring latch and opens to expose the firing chamber to accept a Minié ball and paper cartridge (below, right). Closing the lever will seat the cartridge properly, and a percussion cap is then placed on the nipple to the right of the breech.

From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.



Henry Model 1859

By 1863, the Henry Model 1859 was the most common weapon carried by Union cavalry regiments. Like the Joslyn, the Henry was a single-shot breechloader that accepted paper cartridges. By 1864, however, many of these rifles were replaced by the 7-shot Spencer repeating carbines.



Joslyn Model 1855, 1861

Joslyn was a prolific gun designer, selling a pistol design and four models of carbines/ rifles to the government. The Joslyn Model 1855 was a .54 caliber using paper cartridges and percussion caps. The Army purchased 50 rifles but never followed up on testing. However, in 1858 the Navy ordered 500 carbines in .58 caliber.

The later Model 1861 used metal center-fire cartridges and 860 carbines were delivered to units from Ohio in 1862. An order for 20,000 more rifles was authorized, and the Model 1865 carbine won an order for 5,000. The war ended before the government orders for the 1861 and 1865 models were filled.



The Joslyn Model 1861 .54 caliber carbine had a hinged block over the breech (above) to load a brass, centerfire cartridge. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

Spencer Repeaters

The Spencer rifle was submitted to the federal chief of ordnance in 1860, but he rejected it as “The men would fire too much ammunition.”

Spencer also made a carbine version and asked Abraham Lincoln to test fire it behind the White House. After that, it was decided that the carbine would be truly tested by the cavalry. On July 3, 1863, the only Spencer carbines at Gettysburg were with the Michigan cavalry commanded by a 4-day-old brigadier general: George Armstrong Custer. Facing them was General J.E.B. Stuart with more than twice the force with Enfield rifled muskets.

Custer’s Michigan cavalry pushed the superior enemy forces back and the use of Spencers was broadened. In his *Memoirs, Volume 2*, General Sherman recalled “This brigade was armed in part with Spencer repeating rifles, and its fire was so rapid that General Smith insists to this day that he encountered a whole division; but he is mistaken; he was beaten by one brigade” [nominally, a brigade had 4,000 troops, and a division 12,000].

Later in the war, the Union army, using the longer-range Spencer rifles, found them accurate at up to 700 yards.

The Spencer Model 1861 carbine was a .56-56 repeating weapon that used rimfire cartridges stored in a 7-round tube magazine inserted through the butt plate. To reload the Spencer, the trigger guard was levered to extract the used shell and feed a new cartridge into the breech. The hammer had to be manually cocked in a separate action. The schematic inset is from the original patent application showing this lever action of the trigger guard. The firearm came with ten magazines packed in a Blakeslee Cartridge Box with a belt so that each soldier could easily carry 70 shots without having to reload a magazine. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.



TOY GUNS

Cordy Rich

Yes, toy guns were around in the early 1800s. This one dates from 1864 and was capable of shooting a spit shot or pea, with an effective range of nearly 20 feet.



Left: an early toy pistol loaded and with the catapult locked to the hammer/trigger mechanism. Right: the gun after discharge. Bottom right: chickpea ammunition. From the collection of Cordy Rich, photos by Gerry Stoner, courtesy of Cordy Rich.

The Eleventh Flat Creek Kids Parade July 4, 2013

Participation open to all.

Line up for the parade at 12:30 at the Flat Creek Baptist Church parking lot. The parade will step off about 1 PM.

The parade goes around the “block”—up Flat Creek Road to Back Road, then across Back Road Spur, and then back to its beginning. The parade is held rain or shine.

Join friends and neighbors afterward for a pot luck picnic at 843 Flat Creek Road. Hot dogs, hamburgers, and lemonade will be provided. Please bring a dish to share.

A collection will be taken for the Conesville Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

**The 11th Flat Creek Kids Parade
Wednesday, July 4, 2012, 12:30 PM
843 Flat Creek Road, Gilboa, NY**

Bring a dish to share.

Please carpool a member or bring a friend!

Gilboa Historical Society Field Trip to Wood Homestead



Milo Wood (1803–1884)

Born in Massachusetts, Milo Wood was active in the anti-rent wars and established the Wood Homestead.

Picture courtesy of donnarose64 on ancestry.com

Wood Homestead has a long and venerable history in the area. Founded by Milo Wood, this homestead was home to two very different types of Indians: Native Americans and Anti-Rent War Indians.

As it enters its third century as a working farm, the homestead is now owned by Tony and Mary VanGlad, and can boast of evolving from an early subsistence farm to a much larger one in 1900, and now in a new millenium uses much of the same equipment for maple products in the early spring and sorghum in early fall.

Farming is usually a labor-intensive enterprise, but Tony and Mary have developed equipment and processes that allow the two of them to harvest these crops. The homestead cooperatively works with other area businesses to make new products for the new century: from maple cream to sorghum liquor.

What is sorghum liquor?, you might ask. Well, the trade name is Schoharie Shine, a triple-distilled specialty spirit made from Schoharie-grown sorghum (sorghum had often been used in the south by moonshiners when cheaper cane sugar was unavailable). Now Kymar Distillery (the first licensed distillery in Schoharie County since prohibition) uses Wood Homestead sorghum for this blast from the past. Need we mention Schoharie Mapple Jack?

Come explore this new operation—and sample some of the produce—during the field trip of the Gilboa Historical Society to the Wood Homestead.

Wednesday, August 21

Put it on your calendar.

Bring the kids. Carpool your neighbors.

We will caravan from the Gilboa Town Hall at 6 PM

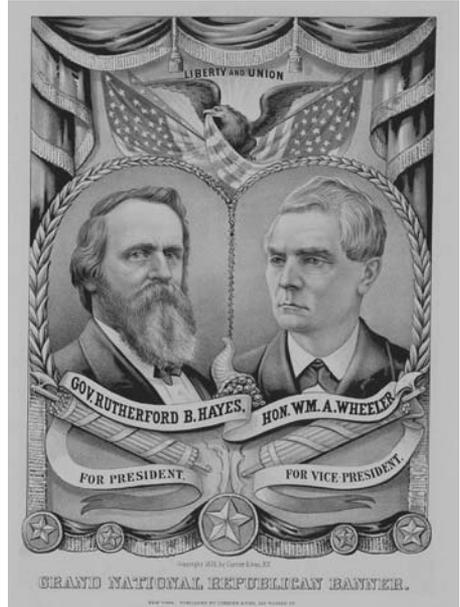
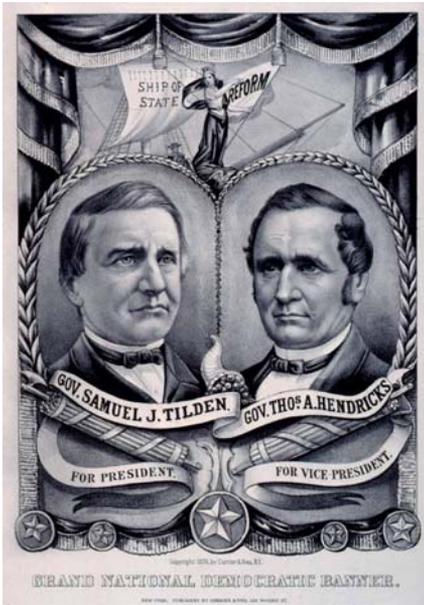
Stamford Mirror Tuesday, October 24, 1876

HICKORY AND PINE

Karen Cuccinello, *Stamford Village Library Archivist*

On Saturday, Oct. 14th, 1876, the Democratic boys of Gilboa raised a nice hickory pole, and displayed from its top a beautiful Tilden and Hendricks flag. The Democratic boys are numerous and patriotic. The Republican boys, assisted by men, contemplate raising a Hayes and Wheeler pine pole, and a spliced one at that.

Stamford Mirror, Tuesday, October 24, 1876.
Reproduced courtesy of the Stamford Village Library Historical Room



Samuel J. Tilden of New York won the popular vote and 184 electoral votes to Hayes's 165 in the 1876 presidential election—but he was not chosen by the Electoral College. Twenty electoral votes were disputed, and a deal was made where all 20 went to Hayes in return for the Republicans' agreement to withdraw federal troops from the South. This gave the Republicans the presidency by one electoral vote and ceded political power in the South to the Democrats.

This was the only election in which a candidate for president received more than 50% of the popular vote but was not named president by the Electoral College.

GILBOA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

and Mailing of the PHYSICAL Newsletter

If you are a current member of the Gilboa Historical Society and are receiving the physical copy of the newsletter, this notice has NO IMPACT on you. To confirm your status, check the label on the back cover—an asterisk or dagger [* or †] after your name means your membership is current.

Likewise, this notice will not impact on you if you are receiving only our monthly emails and downloading the newsletter from gilboahome.com.

For All Others Receiving the Physical Newsletter

you may not want the newsletter any longer—
 you may have moved away—
 your interests may have changed

In other words, we may be mailing you a newsletter at the society's expense while you may no longer want to receive it.

This lose-lose situation can be cured by doing nothing: your unwanted subscription will end with this issue.

On the other hand

We're proud of our local heritage, and we're hoping you want to continue exploring that heritage with us. Our goal is to have everyone who is interested read the newsletters.

To continue receiving the physical newsletter, fill out the left half of the application form on page 39, and mail it back to us. You will receive the next 4 issues of the newsletter at no cost, sent to the address(es) you indicate.

But, before you turn the page . . .

We would love to have you join the society—think of the community you'd be joining and how much time you will save not having to read this reminder in the June issue of future newsletters.

To join, simply fill in the right-hand portion as well, and nestle a bank draft with the application into a stamped, appropriately addressed envelope.

You can use the PDF form online at http://gilboahome.com/ghspublications/GHS_Application.pdf (and PayPal will soon be available there!).

Gilboa Historical Society
Post Office Box 52
Gilboa, NY 12076

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P.O. Box 52
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