Page 2 missing USED

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM LANE CAVERT, 1958 for his grandchildren

THE FARM COMMUNITY AND FARMING IN CHARLTON, SARATOGA CO., N. Y. CIRCA 1900

Thinking that it might be of interest to future generations of Caverts to know something about the environment in which their forefathers and foremothers lived I have herein set down some recollections of the community of Charlton, its agriculture and its people as it was in my early youth.

The Community: The Cavert family lived on the Cavert homestead about one mile due East of Charlton. Charlton was a community of perhaps 20 families located about 9 miles North of Schenectady and about 9 miles Southwest of Ballston Spa, the county seat of Saratoga County. The nearest railroad station was Ballston Lake, 5 miles Southeast of the farm.

The business establishments in Charlton were the following: two general stores, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, a carriage shop and a shoe cobbling shop.

The carriage shop was run by one Thompson Heaton, whose reputation for an excellent product survived him by many years. I recall that about 15 years after his death, at a farm auction, a wagon of his make would bring a premium over a similar wagon of other makes. Each of these establishments except the two stores was a one man institution. Each of the stores ordinarily had one clerk to assist the proprietor.

The Freehold Presbyterian Church of Charlton was the center of community activities for, perhaps, three-fourths of the population. The pastor was, perhaps, the most influential man in the community. He was paid $800 per year plus parsonage. In addition to the Presbyterian Church, there was an Episcopalian Church that had a small group of faithful followers. Also, in my early years, there was a Methodist Church but this ceased to function about 1903 and most of the members joined the Presbyterian Church. About 6 miles to the Northwest of Charlton was the West Charlton United Presbyterian Church, 5 miles East of Charlton was the Ballston Center Presbyterian Church and about 5 miles West was the Glenville Community with its Dutch Reformed Church. (The Dutch Reformed Church was the Holland version of Calvinism.) Thus, the rural community of our acquaintance was dominantly Presbyterian in outlook and background.

In general, the Presbyterians frowned upon dancing, card playing and alcoholic beverages. For social purposes, the community was divided into two groups, those who accepted the Presbyterian viewpoint as to dancing and card playing and those who didn't. A minority of back sliding Presbyterians consorted more or less with the dancing and card playing group.

Church was at 10:30 o'clock each Sunday morning, followed by an hour of Sunday School. Sunday school was attended by a major portion of both adults and children. Doubtless, this grew out of the fact that there was no convenient way for the children to attend unless they either walked home or the parents waited until they were ready.

Footnote p9- United Ch Christ
(1961) 75 (name change)

For many years, the Superintendent of the Charlton Presbyterian Sunday School was one Dr. James T. Sweetman, a devout Presbyterian and the wealthiest man of the neighborhood. (He was reputed to be worth several hundred thousand dollars). It was customary for the Sunday School in each opening exercise to recite in unison the answer to one question from the Presbyterian Shorter Catechism. As there are 107 questions and answers in the Shorter Catechism, it must have taken over two years to go through the Catechism.

In addition to the Church and Sunday School Service, there was a Christian Endeavor Service on Monday evening. However, only a few of the faithful attended the Monday evening service.

Of course, the Church Community was strictly fundamentalist in viewpoint. Most of the community doubtless regarded Charles E. Darwin* as a bad influence upon the world and there was a general feeling that the teachers of evolution were dangerous heretics. The pastor of the Charlton Presbyterian Church during most of my youth was the Rev. Edward R. James. He was a graduate both of Princeton and of Princeton Theological Seminary and Charlton was his first charge. Dr. Sweetman had urged that only graduates of Princeton Theological Seminary be considered as "One could rest assured that they were strong in the faith". Mr. James was probably "Strong in the faith" when he arrived but soon after he came to Charlton, he fell under the influence of a Dr. Moldenhauer, pastor of an Albany Presbyterian Church. Dr. Moldenhauer had come to have serious doubts about the literal interpretation of scripture including the virgin birth and other miracles and as a result of this influence Mr. James was convinced that the traditional position was not tenable and bit by bit let it be known to his parishioners. However, he was such a lovable sincere man that a portion of his congregation thought that which he accepted must be true and a portion were more or less won over to his way of thinking upon the basis of their own reasoning.

The Schools: One of the features of the community was the Charlton Academy. This had been started by a Presbyterian pastor at about the time of the Civil War and was designed to give some education beyond that offered by the Country school. My mother, Elizabeth Brann and her brother Samuel McCrea Brann had both attended the academy in their youth. In my youth, one Mary E. Callaghan was the teacher at the Academy. She was then a woman of past middle age. The Academy was the only country school attended by the four Cavert children. Brother Samuel McCrea and I went to the Senior class in the Schenectady High School from there. So we went to Union College with only one year in High School. The Academy was run by her essentially as a private school. The tuition, according to the recollection of brother Dudley, was $22.50 per year for older children and $15.00 per year for the younger ones. Pupils of all ages were accepted. As the school was 1¼ miles from our home I did not start until I was nine years of age. However, I had been taught to read at home. The school had an attendance of 20 to 30 and had classes in the usual elementary subjects plus such traditional high school subjects as first, second, third and fourth year Latin; first, second, third and fourth year English; Ancient, English and American History, Algebra and Plane Geometry. Not all of these subjects were given every year but each subject was given from time to time as students were available for it.

* Charles Robert Darwin

United Church of Christ Saint Catherine
212 Commonwealth Ave
St Paul 651 646 7173

One of the students went to Cornell University after a year in the Schenectady High School and won a Phi Beta Kappa key there. Her name was Elizabeth Vandenberg. For many years, she was Registrar of the State Teachers College at Albany, N. Y. Walter Dudley Cavert did not attend any preparatory school except Charlton Academy. Samuel McCrea and Walter Dudley Cavert both won Phi Beta Kappa keys at Union College. Samuel McCrea was Valedictorian of his class. Miss Callaghan was a talented woman and a good disciplinarian. Her family lived across the road from the school. Of course, a public school was maintained in Charlton and my impression is that it was superior to most of the rural schools of the area.

The Agriculture: The agriculture of the Charlton Community centered around dairy cows, hay and apples. In my early youth, the customary way of handling the dairy was to take the milk to the cheese factory about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant from the Cavert farm when it operated (from about May 1 to November 1). The rest of the year butter was made at home. The cream was secured either by raising the cream in shallow pans or by mixing it with an equal portion of cold water. In the latter case it was put in a round tin can that had a spigot at the bottom for drawing off the milk and water mixture, after the cream had risen to the top. There was a small glass perhaps 1" x 3" in the lower part of the can so that one could see when only cream was left in the can. The dairy herds were small. Eight cows was the standard number on the Cavert farm. Perhaps the biggest herd among the patrons of the cheese factory was 15 cows. Herds of 6 to 10 cows were most common. Sufficient calves were raised for replacements.

Perhaps, it was about 1905 when our neighbors and we had an opportunity to sell milk in the Schenectady fluid milk market. As I recall it, the price was 80¢ per 10 gallon can above hauling. This would be two cents per quart or about 93¢ per cwt. The milk was sold without adjustment for butter-fat content. By present standards, the milk was unfit for human consumption. There was either none or only a perfunctory inspection by the City health authorities. Barn sanitation left much to be desired. The milk was cooled by setting the can in a tub of cold well water. In warm weather cooling was hastened by stirring with a dipper. Testing of cattle for tuberculosis and brucellosis had not been heard of in that community. The cattle were mostly of Jersey, Guernsey and Holstein breeding but after a fluid milk market developed, Holsteins rapidly took the lead. On the Cavert farm, cattle were watered by pumping water by hand with a chain pump from a well perhaps 20 feet deep and about five feet in diameter that was walled up with stone. In Summer, the cattle had water in the pasture.

One of the major cash crops in the area was hay. The Cities of Boston and New York as well as such neighboring cities as Schenectady and Saratoga Springs provided good markets for hay. The hay was baled. Much of it was baled by horse power in the early Winter. The bales weighed about 200 lbs. each. During periods in the winter when sleighing was good, there was heavy traffic (judged by our standards) caused by hauling the hay to the railroad station. The market paid a good premium for bright timothy hay, so the clover and low quality hay was largely fed to cattle. The clover hay was of course

superior to timothy for cattle feed. Probably, the major reason for the preference for timothy hay for horses was the fact that it was relatively free from dust. Dusty hay predisposed horses to heaves, a common and troublesome respiratory disease of horses.

The common rotation was to keep land in hay as long as it produced a fair crop, perhaps for three years. Then it was followed by corn and the corn was followed by oats seeded to a clover and timothy mixture. The first year, if one secured a good stand, and it didn't winter kill, the hay was largely clover. After that it was mostly timothy. If the stand was poor, the hay was largely white ox-eye daisies. No lime had been used on the soil by any farms in the vicinity although that was one of the crying needs. One to two hundred pounds of commercial fertilizer per acre were ordinarily used on corn and small grain. Probably the usual formula was 3-6-6 or thereabouts. The usual crop set up on the Cavert farm of 93 acres was about as follows:

Corn	6 acres
Buckwheat	3 acres
Oats	9 acres
Hay	30 acres
Total	48 acres

In my early years about 5 or 6 acres of rye was usually raised leaving only about 25 acres for hay. Rye was sold at a local mill but the mill went out of business and then there was no market for rye. In addition about 5 acres of crop land were pastured and about 5 acres were in apple orchard. The rest of the 93 acres aside from building site was in permanent pasture. Much of the permanent pasture was covered with brush or was swampy and was of very low productivity.

Most of the small fields were surrounded by tumble down stone fences which had been made by a previous generation from stone picked from the fields.

The hay was mowed with a two horse mower with a five foot sickle. It was raked with a one horse rake. Usually, it was put into cocks ~~to sweat~~ by hand and dry for a day or two. It was then pitched on to the wagon by hand.

It was put into the mow with a harpoon fork operated by horse power. Haying was the busy time of the year. As I recall it, harvesting the 30 acres or so of hay was the major occupation on the Cavert farm for about three weeks.

The corn was usually planted with a hoe, one man could do about one acre per day. Sometimes it was planted with a "stab" planter which permitted up to three acres per day. One objection to the stab planter was the fact that it was considered necessary to coat seed corn with coal tar and then dry it with plaster in order to prevent pulling of the young corn plants by crows. It was generally considered that stab corn planters did not drop corn uniformly after it had been treated with coal tar.

The corn was cultivated with a one horse cultivator and frequently was hand hoed once. One man could hoe about one acre per day. The corn was cut with a corn knife and bound into bundles. One man could cut about three-fourths to one acre per day. Fifteen to 25 hills went into a bundle. The bundle was made by setting the stalks from 14 to 24 hills around one hill, which was left standing. The completed bundle was then bound either with rye straw or binding twine. When dry, the corn was husked, sometimes in the field. Sometimes it was hauled to the barn and husked during the winter.

Nearly every farmer raised a few acres of buckwheat. It could be seeded up to July 8 on land that was too wet for other crops or on land that was too low in fertility to make a worthwhile corn crop.

Both oats and buckwheat were harvested with a self rake reaper drawn by two horses. My recollection is that it cut a five foot swath. The grain was laid off in unbound bundles. The loose oat bundles were loaded onto wagons with an "oat fork" and usually hauled to the barn and later threshed at the convenience of the neighborhood thresher man. Loading unbound oats on a hay rack so that the load did not slide off before one reached the barn was quite an art. Each buckwheat bundle was bound with a handful of buckwheat and set up one bundle in a place. The average yields per acre were probably about as follows: hay, one ton; oats 35-40 bushels; corn, 30-35 bushels; buckwheat, 20 bushels.

Nearly every farm had three to ten acres of apples. The commoner varieties were Baldwins, Rhode Island greenings and Northern spies. Very few of the orchards were sprayed but usually the codling moths were not so numerous but that most of the crop was relatively free from worms. About 1915, the San Jose scale came into the area. After that it was impossible to produce a good grade of apples without spraying.

The common method of handling apples was for the grower to pick them and put them in a pile in the shade of a tree. The purchaser then sent his employees to "pack" them in barrels furnished by the buyer. "Packing" consisted of sorting out the no. 1 apples, putting them in barrels in proper style, and putting the head in the barrel. The no. 2 apples were either fed to livestock or used for cider.

Apples were usually worth $1.00 to $1.50 per barrel of eleven pecks. The lowest price that I recall was 40¢ per barrel. This was perhaps about 1896 or 1897. Cider apples were frequently as low as 15¢ per barrel. The usual harvest from the five acres of apples on the Cavert farm was, perhaps, 100 barrels. Many of the trees would be considered worthless by modern orchardists due to their excessive height and consequent high expense for spraying, pruning and picking. I recall that I used a 27 foot ladder on some of the trees and could not then reach all of the apples. The apples on these high trees were frequently not harvested in years of low prices.

We kept about 100 chickens. I took a special interest in the chickens. They were raised by putting 13 to 15 eggs under a sitting hen. When the

chickens were hatched, the hen and brood were placed in a coop slatted in front that confined the hen but permitted the chicks to run about in the immediate vicinity. Eight or 10 hens in coops with perhaps 80 to 100 chickens represented at least an hour of work per day. Recently, I visited a broiler producer who cares for 4000 to 5000 in one hour per day and his chicks were far more thrifty and growthy than ours were.

The 100 hens ordinarily laid from none to 5 or 6 eggs per day during November and December. During January, production picked up somewhat and eggs were in abundant supply during late February, March, April and May.

Some of the more enterprising poultry raisers hatched their eggs in a 50 to 200 egg incubator, kept in the kitchen. These chicks were brooded in a small brooder. Both incubators and brooders were heated by kerosene lamps.

The following is my rough estimate of the annual receipts and expenses of the Cavert farm as of about 1900.

Receipts

Butter and cheese from 8 cows (Butter was perhaps 20 to 25¢ per lb. and cheese 10 to 12¢ per lb.)	$250
Hay 10 tons @ $12	120
Rye, 90 bu. @ 80¢	72
Eggs & chickens	30
Hogs - 7 pigs av. 130# dressed weight @ 8¢	73
Apples - 75 bbls. @ $1.00	75
Pears	10
Veals - 5 @ $7	35
One cow	35
Total	$700

Expenses

Labor - 5 mos.	$100
Board for labor 5 mos. @ $8	40
Threshing	10
Taxes	40
Fire insurance on buildings	10
Machinery & repairs	50
Horseshoeing	30
Building repairs	40
Fence repairs	8
Feed bought	22
Total expenses	$350

Receipts above Expenses (Pay for family labor and investment) $350

The foregoing estimates are probably representative of the period from 1880 to 1905.

The farm probably had a market value of about $3500 and the cattle, horses and equipment had a value of perhaps $1000 or a bit less. So the total investment was perhaps $4,500. If one allowed interest on the investment at 5% or $225, the cash pay for the labor of the family was $350 less $225 or only about $125. In addition, they had a house to live in, some firewood, milk, butter, eggs for a family of eight and the meat and lard from perhaps two hogs. If there had been any debts, payments of interest and principal would have come from the $350. In the case of the Cavert farm, there fortunately was no debt and in addition Father had some income from outside work and in some years a fairly substantial income according to local standards from dealing in apples.

His outside work consisted of such jobs as township superivsor and treasurer of the County Fair Association. These, perhaps, brought in $200 per year but expenses connected with the jobs ate up part of the income.

He early got started as a small scale apple dealer. I do not know how he happened to get into the apple business but he was in it from my earliest recollection until several years after I permanently left home in 1912. The volume of business was very erratic as the apple crop in any one year varied from a near failure to one in which every tree was loaded.

The total volume handled in a good many years was probably in the neighborhood of 2000 barrels. In two or three years, it was perhaps up to several times 2000 barrels. The apple business is one in which prices are very erratic and in which it is easy to go broke. However, Dad never had any season in which the loss was more than $200 to $400 and he had several in which he cleared around $2000. Perhaps in the majority of years, it added $1000 to his income and that was a substantial addition to the very modest farm income.

Dad's usual practice was to minimize the speculation by selling some apples every week during the season, beginning in the Fall. The apples were stored in farm cellars. As there was no heat in the basements, the cellars under farm houses provided fairly good storage and the later varieties could be kept in good condition until about the first of March. During the Fall season, he frequently had a crew of 4 to 8 men who were packing apples. Some farmers instead of selling in the Fall, would store their apples in bins in the basements of their houses. So a crew of two men was frequently kept busy during a part of the winter. Now it would be difficult to induce self respecting citizens to sort apples in a cellar by the light of a kerosene lantern but at the time there was no objection to the job. The usual pay for packing apples was about $1.75 plus dinner for a nine-hour day.

The Neighbors: Perhaps, the best way of giving a picture of rural Charlton is to briefly sketch some of the Cavert neighbors.

Mr. and Mrs. Constantine Jansen: This elderly couple occupied an adjoining 50 acre farm to the West. The farm was mostly tillable and had perhaps 7 acres of good apple orchard. He kept about 5 cows, 2 sows, perhaps 40 to 50 chickens and two work horses. He would ordinarily sell 200 barrels of apples, 10 tons of hay, 10-12 pigs and perhaps 300-400 pounds of butter. The total gross receipts in the early 1900's perhaps ran around $500-$600. The couple was well past middle age. At that time, the two sons had left home and he was not robust so it was necessary to keep a hired man for about eight months of the year. The hired man probably received about $20 per month plus board. Yet, Mr. Jansen never owed any debts and was reputed to have some savings beside the farm. Every aspect of the business was well cared for to the best of his knowledge. No money was spent on liquor or tobacco and practically none for recreation. They had a comfortable house according to the then prevailing standards and were excellent neighbors. One of his grandsons, Carl B. Jansen, graduated in engineering from Union College and has become President of the Dravo Corporation, Pittsburg, a leading contracting firm in that area. He is a trustee of Union College.

The George Heatons: George Heaton, a bachelor and his two maiden sisters lived on a farm of about 50 acres, lying between us and Charlton Village. The farm had about an 8 acre apple orchard, well cared for according to local standards and producing 100-300 barrels a year. Perhaps 100 hens and 2 or 3 cows were kept. Perhaps 10 to 15 tons of hay were sold. Here again was a farm that spent very little cash on living. I recall that on one occasion Dad loaned him $200 with which to replace a horse that had died. Perhaps, that was the only time that he was ever in debt.

Dr. James T. Sweetman: As previously mentioned Dr. Sweetman was by far the wealthiest man in the neighborhood and one of the pillars of the Presbyterian Church. He also had more education than anyone in the community other than the Minister and Miss Mary E. Callaghan. In his early years, he had studied medicine and acquired an M.D. but so far as I know he never practiced except for a bit of charity work. He owned the farm to the North and spent substantial sums fixing up the buildings and in building stone wall fences to enclose fields of 5 to 8 acres. Apparently, he thought that a stone wall fence was a structure that would be useful for all time. He was very public spirited and took the lead in establishing the Charlton Industrial School for Boys. The funds for this unique undertaking were given by John S. Hawley, of San Diego, California, a former Charlton resident who had acquired a fortune in the confectionery business. Evidently the terms of the gift were such that the funds were to be available, if Charlton citizens would take over the responsibility of establishing and managing the school. Dr. Sweetman took the lead in setting up the school, picking out the land to be bought and in associating with him several local residents as directors. The school was intended as one that would guide in the right direction, homeless boys or those who had shown some tendency toward minor delinquencies. During most of its early existence it had 12 to 20 boys and some of them are known to have become worthwhile citizens but I have no idea as to the percentage

of success. Father was one of those whom Dr. Sweetman associated with him in the Directorship of the School. After Dr. Sweetman left the community, Father was the treasurer for many years.

The first Superintendent was Richard Carter of Galway, N.Y. Mr. Carter was a unique character. An upright Christian gentleman, he was also a capable farmer, a good business manager, a good disciplinarian and one who had the welfare of each boy close to his heart. The operation of the School in its original form came to a close when the buildings burned, perhaps about 1930. Lately, in part, through the activities of Rev. Walter Dudley Cavert, the land and endowment is being utilized for a school for girls who have shown wayward tendencies.

The Sweetman family, along with the Caverts, and others, were among the early settlers when Charlton township was settled, soon after the Revolution. The Sweetman fortune was said to have had its start through the general store that Dr. Sweetman's father had kept at Charlton for many years.

Melancton (Spelling?) Callaghan: One of the unique characters in the Charlton of my early childhood was Melancton Callaghan, the proprietor of one of the two general stores in Charlton. When Cleveland was President, Mr. Callaghan was the Charlton postmaster but when the Republicans had the presidency, Mr. Alfred Slover, a Civil War veteran, the other store-keeper, was the postmaster. The mail was carried to and from Schenectady on each week-day by a two horse stage that served the communities of West Charlton and Charlton. So the stage made a round trip of about 32 miles per day. The stage also carried passengers and goods. The stage had seats for about 9 passengers as I recall it. Mr. Melancton Callaghan (the father of Mary E. Callaghan previously mentioned), was noted for his salty sayings and in general for his wisdom and common sense. One of his minor failings was that he was always late to church. He usually went to the family pew well toward the front of the church just before the sermon began. It is my impression that he never joined the church. Probably, he had some reservations about accepting Presbyterian doctrine toto.

The Callaghan store was not greatly different from the one now on display at the Cooperstown Restoration, Cooperstown, New York. About everything came in barrels and boxes. Flour, sugar and salt were all taken from the appropriate barrel by the merchant and put in paper sacks to order. One's kerosene can was filled from the metal barrel in which the merchant kept it. One of the features of this and of country stores in general was a shelf of patent medicines, from which one could select a bottle that would cure almost any ailment of man or beast. On the shelf, one ordinarily found such remedies as the following: Kendall's Spavin Cure, Lydia Pinkham's Pink Pills for Pale People, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription (for ills peculiar to the human female), Peruna (for kidney ills), Swamp Root, Piso's Consumption Cure, Smith Brothers Cough drops, and many others that I cannot recall. In addition to groceries, the Callaghan store like other country stores carried a line of such items as cheap grades of cloth, underclothing, thread, buttons, wagon grease, harness repair items such as hame straps, sweat pads, etc. coarse foot-wear and lubricating oil (chiefly for the mowing machine).

The country store also provided a market for eggs and farm made butter. When the rural delivery of mail became general in the early 1900's, the end of the old time country store was in sight. However, a good many of the country stores survived in diminished glory until automobiles became fairly common in rural areas; this was about the close of World War I.

Prior to 1900, it frequently happened that the rural store-keeper was one of the financial pillars of the community. Mr. Callaghan had a moderate degree of prosperity but reports were that he would have been much more prosperous if he had been less willing to "Charge it". Among the local characters, who made the store a hang-out was a Mr. Hastings, who was a veteran of the Mexican war. I have always regretted that I did not get him started on his early experiences.

The food: Food was in abundant supply on the tables of farm families in the Charlton area but boys and girls of the present generation would not enthuse over the diet. Of course, kitchen refrigerators were unknown and only an occasional farmer put up a supply of ice.

In the winter, the meat was mostly home slaughtered pork and dairy cow beef. Meat was preserved during the winter by freezing. After freezing, it was frequently buried in the oat bin as the oats provided considerable insulation in the event of a thaw. Frozen meat of those days was distinctly inferior to the present day quick frozen product.

The side pork from the home butchered hogs was salted down with brine in a barrel or big crock for summer use. The hams and shoulders were pickled in brine for several weeks and then smoked.

During the summer, the fresh meat supply consisted of chickens and meat supplied by a local butcher who made the rounds of the country-side once or twice a week. There was a generous supply of apples for eating and cooking from late July to mid-March or later. There was always an ample supply of potatoes in the cellar or field. Potatoes from the previous crop were used until new ones were available, about July 15.

During the spring and early summer, sprouting the potatoes was a good rainy day occupation. Such vegetables as carrots, beets and turnips were stored in the cellar in the fall. In my earliest youth, a considerable amount of sweet corn was dried for winter consumption but commercially canned corn and peas displaced dried corn in my early youth. Home canning of corn, peas and beans was not done at that time as it was not successful. Considerable amounts of pears, cherries and peaches were canned. Potatoes were served three meals per day except that they were omitted from breakfast during the buckwheat pancake season. For breakfast and supper, they were usually fried. For dinner they were usually boiled.

Buckwheat cakes were served daily for breakfast from about November 1 to April 1. Some batter was carried over from one day to the next to provide yeast. An additional supply of flour was added each evening. It was considered that the cakes were inferior for the first day or two after starting

with commercial yeast. The buckwheat flour was ground in local mills. From the time that the hogs were butchered until late winter, pork sausage always accompanied the cakes. Home baked bread was on the table at every meal except when buckwheat cakes were served. The flour was purchased in 196 lb. barrels. Cereal with cream was always served for breakfast. Usually the cereal was oatmeal. Eggs always accompanied ham or pork shoulder. Usually a salted codfish hung in the cellar and was served in the place of meat about once per week in the summer. In the summer baked beans with salt pork were served about once per week. Home baked pie - apple, pumpkin or cherry - nearly always topped off the noon dinner. The evening meal was usually topped off with cake.

Frozen desserts were used very sparingly. If one was to have ice cream, it involved getting ice from one of the few neighbors who put up ice and then turning the crank of the ice cream freezer for a half hour or so. Ice cream was largely reserved for summertime church socials and Fourth of July celebrations.

Two major problems of housekeepers of around 1900 were flies, rats and mice. The houses were screened but the nearby horse manure piles produced flies in great abundance and with frequent opening of doors, large numbers got into the kitchen. By the use of fly poison and sticky fly paper plus care in opening the doors, the numbers in the house could be kept down but the minimum number then would drive most present day housekeepers to despair. All of the barns and poultry houses were more or less infested with rats and mice and at times, they would get into the pantry or cellar. In the cellar, food stuffs were hung from the ceilings or handled in some other way to protect them from rats or mice. Vigorous trapping would get rid of them for a time but soon the process would need to be repeated.

Conveniences: In the Cavert home, the winter fuel both for heating and cooking was hard coal. This cost about $7 per ton when one did his own hauling from the railroad station. Hard or anthracite coal in our area was about as cheap as bituminous coal due to the fact that the nearest coal fields were of the anthracite type. In the living room was a big coal stove and a special pipe from the coal stove ran into a register in the floor of the room above, so one upstairs room was heated in a fairly adequate manner. In spring, at housecleaning time, the coal stove in the living room was taken down and replaced by a wood burner. At the fall housecleaning, the hard coal stove replaced the wood stove. As I recall it, we used about 8 tons of hard coal per year so in relation to the income, the expense of $55 to $60 per season was quite substantial. The kitchen stove was adapted to either wood or coal. Attached to the kitchen stove was a water reservoir holding perhaps 8 gallons; this provided warm water for dishes, face and hand washing, etc. A portable boiler on top of the stove provided wash-day hot water.

The household drinking water supply was a well under the porch in front of the kitchen. This was operated by a chain pump. Soft water for

household use was provided by a cistern under a corner of the kitchen. In a corner of the kitchen over the cistern was a suction pump and a sink where two persons could wash up at once.

I do not recall that we or the neighbors ever felt sorry for ourselves because of the lack of indoor toilets, running water and central heating.

Travel: Of course all local travel was by horse. When the roads were good, a good road horse would ordinarily make the eight miles to Ballston Spa, the county seat, in one hour.

In hauling farm products such as baled hay or apples, two loads hauled per day to Ballston Lake, the nearest railroad station was considered a hard day's work for both man and beast. The usual load was about one and a half tons per trip.

There was very little travel to places other than the local trade centers. A railroad trip to Albany, 27 miles, New York City, 170 miles, or the Adirondacks, 50 to 100 miles to the North, was quite an event. Oxen were not used on our farm in my time but they were used to some extent on the Mead and DeRidder farms and seven or eight yokes of cattle were usually on exhibit at the County Fair.

Automobiles began to appear occasionally on country roads about 1905. Both horses and drivers were afraid of them. Autos were regarded as a plaything of the rich and the feeling was quite general that they had no right on the road. Meeting autos at night was particularly dreaded.

I was a student at Union College, 1906-1910 and as I recall it, there was neither a student or faculty member who owned a car. I was a student at Cornell, 1910-12. There I knew one student who owned a car. He was a youth whose father had died and left him a substantial annual income. At that time some of the faculty owned cars.