

- Hamlet of Beaver Falls
- Hamlet of Belfort
- Hamlet of Indian River
- Hamlet of Naumburg
- Village of Croghan
- Beartown
- Forest City
- French Settlement
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- Sisterfield

# Highlighting the Town of Croghan History

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## Van Amber Road Bridge

History is being made every day and an example of this is the construction of a new bridge on the Van Amber Road. Part of the new bridge will be in the Town of Croghan and the other half will be in the Town of New Bremen.

The old bridge was a single span, steel iron through-truss, which is known as a Baltimore truss. According to “A Historic American Engineering Record of the Van Amber Road Bridge Over the Beaver River” prepared by Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. for Lewis County, the Baltimore truss is a type of Pratt truss which incorporates additional diagonals on the lower half of the truss. These additional members serve to strengthen the main diagonals and prevent buckling of these members.

The construction of the new bridge began in May 2015 which caused for a detour for residents of the Van Amber Road to go to New Bremen to get on the Van Amber Road. What will the new bridge look like?

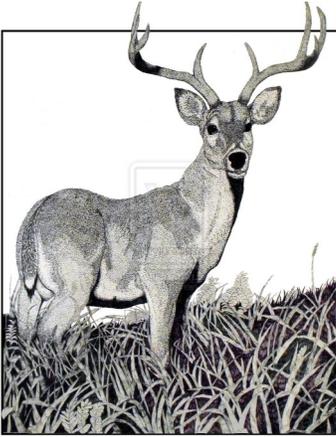


Van Amber Road Bridge as it looked like before it was dismantled.

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## Hunting in Belfort Vicinity



The Town of Croghan and surrounding area was and is known for its hunting and fishing. John Herzig was a guide from the Belfort area. He took a party hunting and what happened ended up in THE JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN, Belfort News, November 27, 1930 as follows:

“ John Herzig, the head guide, took a bunch of men to Blue Swamp to hunt deer and, being in hard luck, they hunted hard all week and never saw a thing until the last day; and in the lost corner, when they saw a big buck, also a big bear. John, the guide, shot three times at the buck standing, and then he dropped his gun and went to look for the bear. He thought he killed him so quick he didn't have time to fall, but when he got almost where he stood, then the buck started to run away, and then John went after his gun, but he was a little excited. I believe he had buck fever, for he couldn't find his gun, and Fred, his brother, came out of the corner where he was “playing dog.” John was shaking like a leaf, and Fred said: “What is the matter?” John said the buck almost hooked him, but John cooled down after awhile and then he said, “We will get him yet.” John took his bunch of men and went after him like a bunch of wild Indians. John was a little faster on a run than the rest of his men, so he got a distance ahead, when he saw the buck again and emptied his gun, and then the big buck charged on him before he could reload his gun, but being John's good luck, there was a big log lying a little off the ground and he crawled under it, to keep rolling from one side of the log to the other, and the big buck jumped from one side to the other, trying to get him, but John doing that way he kept the buck there till the rest of the men caught up to him and Fred, being a crack shot, pulled up his gun and knocked him down, and then John shouted from in under the log. “Is he dead?” Well, now I must tell you sports about the big bear that Red Peters, a member of the crew, shot at in the same corner. “You can believe it or not, Red Peters, being a young man and don't hunt very much, he didn't know just what to do when he saw him coming. He didn't know whether he should climb a tree or run. Being brave, he stood his ground and emptied his 30-30 Remington automatic rifle and the bear kept on coming, and when he got through shooting he thought it was Pete Yousey's big tame pig, until the bear got right in front of him, and got his paws on a log, when he let out a big growl, and then he knew the difference, for he knew a pig didn't growl; but then he didn't give it the second thought. He threw his cap and started over the big Grindstone mountain as fast as he could run. Believe me, he was running and his coat tail was sticking out straight. He shouted to Howard Yancey, who was playing dog, also, “Am I gaining on him?” but the bear was running the other way; but the bear was hit and they got him the next day. We would have got him same day, but we had to go hunting for Red Peters. We surrounded him up by Camp Hungry, just three miles from Harrisville. Well, the next day John said to Red, “We will go after big bruin.” Red said you can all go h\_\_\_\_, I have seen him once and that is enough. I am going to stay in camp, but we didn't have to go far for the bear, as we found him dead. This bear weighed 392 pounds dressed. It must have looked like an elephant to him.”

## Others in the Party

**Belfort**—THE JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN, dated January 1, 1931 had a continuation of the article that appeared November 27, 1930. It appeared as follows: “After reading the hard luck story of the Blue Swamp party, with John Herzig as head guide, printed in the Journal and Republican several weeks ago, I hardly think it quite complete without the names of the other two hunters that made up the party.

Sam Yousey, a good sportsman, was always a ready help, whether to hunt or help around the camp, and especially with the cooking, which we understand is a hobby of his. One of the main dishes, we hear, was a stew which was served with pancakes. Of course there was other good eats besides, among them being salads, soups and so on. Sam says he isn't so fond of salads, but never really complained about the victuals and really enjoyed helping with the different dishes.

Then, there was Mike Zehr and the cook. Now, Mike, a very able young man from Indian River, wasn't so much on the hunting. He says hunting doesn't agree with his rheumatism and so was often left to help with the stew, which took considerable time and work to make in order to have ready when the tired and hungry hunters arrived late in the evening.

Much as the party regretted leaving camp life had to be given up and all left for home after the week of hard hunting, every one agreeing the 15th came to soon and to live in hopes that all would be together again another year.—One of the party.

## Claude Larget

In the Town of Croghan there have been several people who have lived to a hundred and more. One person who lived to 106 was Claud/Claude Larget. Very little is known about him except that he lived a long time. Articles in the JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN were very sparse but gave a little insight to this man. In the LEWIS COUNTY DEMOCRAT dated March 12, 1884 it states that he “is the oldest man in town as he is in his 97th year and is hale and hearty”.

When he reached the age of 100, there was an article in the JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN dated March 6, 1913 with an article of “Twenty-five Years Ago” stating that he “is the oldest man at present residing in northern New York. His age is 100 years and two months. He came to this country from France 70 years ago, and soon thereafter located in Croghan. He makes a practice of walking one mile every day, and invariably celebrates the fourth of July.”

He died in December 1893. A small article appeared in JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN stating that “Claude Larget, the oldest man in Lewis county, and perhaps in the State, died Sunday at the residence of Augustus Valin in Croghan, aged 106 years.”

Claude Larget was one of our early pioneers in the Town of Croghan and what stories he could tell of the beginnings of this township.

## 100 Years Ago—1915-2015



For Supervisor of Croghan.

An article appeared in BLACK RIVER DEMOCRAT (October 21, 1915) with his picture as follows: “Jacob Weirich, democratic candidate for supervisor of the town of Croghan, is a man who has served his constituency so well that it is realized by the electorate, irrespective of party ties, that to retain him for another term with redound to the benefit of the town as a whole. Mr. Weirich is known on the board of supervisors as a man who gives close attention to detail. Associates on the board less familiar with figures and business methods than himself, often call on him to assist in spreading their taxes. Both his education and influence with members of the board makes him of special value to the people he serves, who can leave the town’s affairs in his hands, confident that they will be efficiently administered.” Note: Jacob Weirich won the 1915 election for supervisor. He served as Town of Croghan Supervisor for a total of eight years (1913-1921)

## 75 Years Ago—1940-2015

Belfort—Nortz House: “Extensive alterations are being made to the interior of the Nortz House at Belfort, by enlarging the dining room, connecting with the Grille with large double doors for accommodating large gatherings, for which the hostelry has become famous. This hotel has been under the Nortz management for more than 50 years. First the late Mr. and Mrs. George Nortz and since 1924 by Mr. and Mrs. Hilary Nortz, who purchased the hostelry from the parents. (Source THE JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN, Croghan News, February 22, 1940)

In March 1940 the barn at the Nortz House collapsed. “The barn of the Hilary Nortz hotel at Belfort, 70 by 30 feet, collapsed under the weight of snow during the night of March 2nd. An investigation has been made as to snow removal, but it was not deemed necessary because of the belief that the milder weather would melt the snow and it would slide from the roof. The car in the barn was not damaged, and a cow and pig in the basement stable were unharmed. This barn has been constructed to meet the needs of the hotel in horse and carriage and lumbering days when L.V. Bisha erected the hotel and was proprietor nearly 65 years ago. Mr. Nortz will rebuild the structure as soon as the weather will permit, but on a smaller scale.”

(Source THE JOURNAL AND REPUBLICAN, Croghan News, March 14, 1940)



## From the Farmhouse Kitchen

When someone tried a new recipe and you happened to like it, it was not uncommon to share the recipe. The practice of sharing recipes is still being done today. There were recipe books but the best recipes came from a family member, friend, or neighbor. Here is a recipe that was shared by one neighbor to another.

### Fried Cakes

1 cup sugar

1 tsp. baking soda

2 eggs

2 tsps. baking powder

3 tbs. melted shortening

1 cup sour milk

3-1/2 to 4 cups flour

1/2 tsp. nutmeg

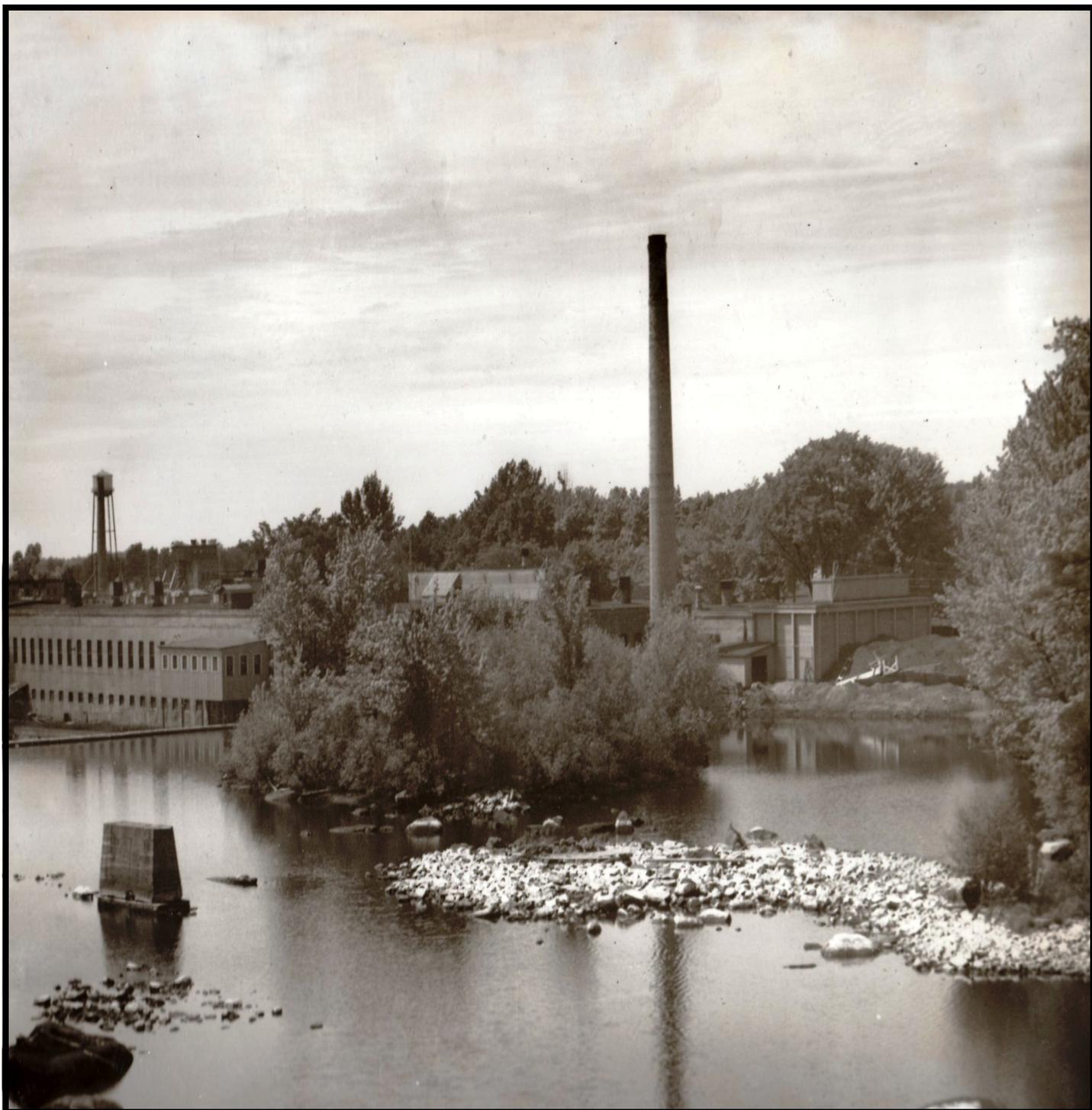
1/2 tsp. lemon flavoring

Mix the ingredients. Roll out the dough and cut with a doughnut cutter and fry in hot oil.

## Farm for Sale in 1908

For Sale: The Philander Smith farm of 150 acres, about 3-1/2 miles from Beaver Falls on the Third Road, with the best of soil, together with all farm implements, stock, etc., consisting of 17 cows, two 2-year old heifers, four yearlings, four hogs, six pigs, one good team of horses, one extra horse; also one Deering harvester, good as new; one grain drill, one mowing machine, new; one disc harrow, one spring tooth harrow, hay rake, and all modern tools in first-class condition. The buildings are in fine condition throughout; house has 12 nice rooms with woodhouse and good workshop over woodhouse, cement cellar bottom, running water; barn has underground stable, cemented in front of the cows; fine water for stock. This farm is well fenced. Price for everything: \$4,300; \$2,500 down. Haller's Real Estate Agency, Carthage. (Source: CARTHAGE REPUBLICAN TRIBUNE, July 13, 1983, 75 Years Ago.)

In today's market this would be a real bargain for the land but the equipment would be antiquated.



Back of Latex now Omniafiltra LLC, Beaver Falls, New York. Circa 1960's The smoke stack is no longer there but the water tower to the left is still standing.



Belfort, New York. The old Belfort Bridge with Wetmore Electric Company plant underneath the bridge. The tall white building to the right is most likely the Belfort Grange.

**Town of Croghan  
Historian's Office**

“We are all citizens of history.” —Clifton Fadiman, American author, editor and radio personality (1904 -1999)

**Mark your Calendar :**

**April 9, 2016**

**Town of Croghan 175th  
Anniversary Celebration**

The Town of Croghan Historian's Office is located at the Town of Croghan Municipal Office, 9882 State Route 126, Beaver Falls, New York. If you have any questions or additions to the articles in this newsletter, please feel free to contact me at my home phone:

**(315) 346-6201**

This and previous newsletters can also be downloaded from Town of Croghan web site:  
[www.townofcroghan.com](http://www.townofcroghan.com)

If there is a special topic you would like to see in a newsletter or if an error has been made, let me know.

Thank you.

Mary Sweeney

## From the Town of Croghan Historian's Desk

On April 17 and 18, 2015 the Historian's Office held an Open House at the Town of Croghan Municipal Building. There were 44 people who attended. A special thank you to Neil Keib for having the Jerden Falls display, Daniel Pierce who loaned the Sylvester Virkler ledger for the open house and to all who attended the event. The farthest were people from the Syracuse area who had family in Croghan and Kirscherville. There were new displays as well as displays from previous years. As research continues, more information is added.

Next year will mark the

175th anniversary of the Town of Croghan. There will be historical displays as well as other events on Saturday, April 9, 2016. Mark this date and be a part of history as well as learning about this historic town.

If you have any suggestions or ideas for our 175th Anniversary celebration, please let Mary Sweeney or Laurie Halladay know. Thank you.

At the May 18, 2015 Laurie Halladay was appointed deputy Town of Croghan Historian.

During the summer from June 10th through September 9th, the Historian's Office will

have office hours on Wednesday from 9:30 am to 12:00. If you cannot visit at this time, you can make an appointment with the Town Historian at (315) 346-6201 and a time can be arranged to come to the office.

**IN MEMORIAM**

**JACK E.  
SWEENEY**

**1939-2015**