WEST POINT FOUNDRY
Maker of The Parrott Rifle, Famous Civil War Cannon
The Napoleonic Wars demonstrated the importance of artillery in modern warfare. This was brought home to the American people when in the War of 1812, they found themselves opposed by heavy artillery in the hands of seasoned troops, both of which we lacked.

The first graduate of West Point Military Academy, General Joseph Swift determined that it would not happen again. He was able to enlist the financial backing of Gouverneur Kemble, William Kemble and others.

In 1818 they organized the West Point Foundry with establishments at Cold Spring and New York City. It was necessary to "bootleg" skilled labor out of Europe by way of Ireland. They were able to evade ship pursuit. Their first government demonstration of heavy cannon firing caused some of the cannon to burst. But they were able to prove the fault was not in the cannon but in the faulty ammunition. So, this Foundry along with three other foundries were subsidized by the government.

Success followed their enterprise until it was said, "there was no other foundry like it in America". From 50 to 100 heavy ordnance were made each year with the accompanying ammunition. They branched out. Stoves were just becoming popular. Iron pipe replaced wood for water mains in New York and Boston. Machinery for making sugar in South America and the Southern States was in demand. Engines for steamboats and railroads were made. The famous "DeWitt Clinton" railroad engine was built in 1831. It is now the property of the New York Central. A seventy-foot vessel was built, much of it made of iron, but this venture was not followed up. The castings were made at Cold Spring and finished in New York. They went by sloop in summer and by team in winter. In early years, one hundred men were employed the year round to mine ore, cut hardwoods, prepare it as charcoal and team it eight miles to the Foundry. Forty tons of iron were processed in the blast furnace every day. Later iron was mined and smelted in Pennsylvania and shipped to Cold Spring to be finished.

The year after the first government tests at Cold Spring, Robert Parrott enrolled at West Point Military Academy. The interest in the Foundry across the Hudson River probably determined his specialization in artillery. By 1836, he had advanced to Captain of Ordnance and was located at Washington, D.C. as the Assistant of Ordnance.

In that year, things began to happen at the West Point Foundry. Gouverneur Kemble went to Washington for four years as Congressman from his district. In a short time, Parrott was transferred to the West Point Foundry to supervise ordnance manufacture. But in a few months, he resigned his commission in the army to become Superintendent of the Foundry. Three years later, he married Miss Mary Kemble, sister of Gouverneur Kemble. During these three years, the finishing branch of the Foundry was moved from New York to Cold Spring.

For the next thirty years, Parrott gave his energies to improving ordnance. The cliffs across the Hudson River became the target for testing his experiments. By the year before the Civil War, Parrott had produced a cannon made of cast iron which was to revolutionize artillery. The government had some of these when the War began.

These cannons were of two types; those suitable for operation in mobile conflict and heavier guns for siege purposes.

At the first Battle of Bull Run, the North lost a third of their artillery to the South. In addition to the ten-pound shot, three inch bore field guns, a thirty-pound Parrott siege gun was lost. At the Battle of Gettysburg, General Warren, a native of Cold Spring, helped lay out the line of battle. He saved the North's left flank.
by diverting infantry and artillery to Little Round Top. The hill was too steep for horses, but the men dragged these 900 pound Parrott Cannon to the hill top. These field guns were accurate for more than a mile.

The larger seige guns ranged up to more than ten inches in diameter. At the Seige of Charleston, a heavy gun was needed to fire from a swamp. A West Pointer was called upon. He facetiously asked for men eighteen feet tall. Serrell's volunteers were called in and sunk piles sixteen feet into the swamp for a platform. The "Swamp Angel" as the mounted Parrott gun was called, began bombarding the defenses of the city. This gun shot accurately six miles. When the muzzle was blown off, it still operated accurately. When Richmond and Petersburg were under seige, a seige "train" with many heavy Parrott guns were brought to bear on the fortifications. Washington was surrounded by 900 cannon for defense. Many were Parrotts.

More than 3000 guns and three million projectiles were produced at Cold Spring during the war. Not only were the Parrott guns most accurate but the munitions which were supplied were superior to those put out by the South.

In the spring of 1864, the new seven-shot repeating carbine was being made at the foundry. The growing power of the northern cavalry was greatly augmented by this new weapon.

After the War, The Parrott cannon was in demand in foreign countries. Parrott also invented a better fired life line for saving those in danger on the seas.

During the Panic of 1873, the Foundry was in trouble. The change of administration affected contracts. Parrott had died. The rich iron ore deposits in the west were superior to those near the Foundry and the more distant ores in Pennsylvania which were the Foundry's source of supply.

At times, as many as 1000 men were employed. This along with other industrial enterprises in the County increased the County's population a third during the war years. But by 1886, the population of Cold Spring had declined to what it had been fifty years before. In 1911 the Foundry was closed, after almost one hundred years of successful operation.
Lincoln at Cold Spring 1862

While McClellan was retreating in the Peninsular Campaign and Pope, an untried General was in Western Virginia, President Lincoln, unobserved, visited General Scott at West Point. Col. D. C. McCullum, Military Director of Railroads, and Lincoln's body guard accompanied him. President Samuel Sloan of the Hudson River Railroad (now the New York Central) and General Scott met them at Garrison at 3 AM June 24, 1862. They crossed to West Point on Belcher's Ferry and took carriage to the new Cozzen's Hotel.

After a 7 o'clock breakfast, Lincoln and Scott discussed military affairs for several hours. Then joined by Col. Bowen and Mr. Sloan, they visited West Point for some time. Ferrying to Cold Spring, they observed the testing of heavy Parrott Guns at the West Point Foundry. A 100 pound shell was fired 15 times and a 200 pound shell was fired 5 times. Tradition says trouble developed in firing. Finally Lincoln said, "I believe it will fire, let's eat."

Returning at 9 pm to the hotel, a levee was held. The President adroitly parried ill-advised questions and suggestive sentences. Autographs were freely dispensed. At midnight the Academy band serenaded the sleeping President.

After breakfast the next morning, a small levee and a drive Mr. Belcher suggested a ferry trip up the River. The Parrott gun target across the River was examined. As they came to the railroad tunnel north of Cold Spring, which was being double-tracked, Lincoln called it, "one of your rat holes."

COMING EVENTS

May 18 Carl Carmer will speak at the Peekskill Military Academy. This will be worth hearing.

Boscobel holds its opening, May 21. Governor Nelson Rockefeller is guest of honor. This promises to be a national shrine.

May 30 the Putnam County Historical Society plans an auction of antiques. Tours are planned in June and July. Their exhibit will be opened this summer in their new home.

The Mahopac-Carmel Rotary Club will man the Inspiration Point Information Service. They are asking Service Clubs to contribute literature that will publicize our County.

The Enoch Crosby DAR expect to soon announce the date of the erection of the Statue of Sybil Ludington's Ride on Carmel's lake front.

This edition has many contributors.

The 59th Regiment photo of Captain Adam Wattle and news from the Dean Boys was given by Mrs. Addison Hopkins. Alfred D. Voree, Jr. has Charles Voree letter.

"Lincoln at Cold Spring" is a digest of a New York Times article
loaned by Mrs. Marguerite Rogers, granddaughter of Railroad President Samuel Sloan. Lincoln's quips are traditions in the Kemble-Parrot family by Mrs. Beata Porter, and in the Belcher family by Col. Taylor Belcher.

Col. N. B. Wilson of West Point Military Academy gave us Major-General Warren's biography. The accompanying photo is of the statue which stands on Little Round Top, Gettysburg.

The Highland Chemical Works photo was loaned by Mrs. Henry Bellefeuille of Peekskill and Mrs. Charles Felton of Ossining, daughters of Mr. Ed Nation, part owner and operator of the plant for over 40 years. We particularly thank Miss Henrietta Gerwig for her research and write up.

TYING OFF


Fourth Heavy Artillery, Company A Veterans from Putnam County, missing from our Honor Roll: George Benedict, Mitchell W. Brooks, Amos Butler, William J. Corbon, Josiah Davis, Oliver Davis, John K. Farrington, Ferdinand Lebanon, Charles Morgan, Bernard McNally, David Parker, Henry Rusco, David A. Shears, James H. Still.

SPORTSMAN SHOW

We thank the sponsors of the Sportsman Show for the opportunity of meeting so many people interested in our County's historic backgrounds some old-some new.

These people gave of their time in manning the Civil War Display: Mrs. William Miller, Mrs. Walter Bellinger, Mrs. Charles Bloomer, Mrs. Evelyn Agor, Mrs. George Crosswell, Nicholas Smith, John Madden, George Buechel, Fred Haida.

Fred DeWitt's "$100,000 Reward" caught the eye. Nicholas Smith, Librarian of the Field Library in Peekskill, loaned samples of the most extensive Civil War collection in Westchester County, among them the 60 volume sets on the Army and Navy. Erling Abel, Mrs. Evelyn Agor, Mrs. Frank Lloyd loaned books. Mrs. George Crosswell and Fred Haida gave books to our sizable county library on the Civil War. Joseph Schächinger and Walter Held added to our genealogical materials. Thanks to all these friends and to the Sportsmen magazine for their history write-up.

You who examined our display of Civil War sketches will be interested to see some of them reproduced in the National Geographic of April.

WANTED BY JULY

Putnam County Civil War veteran photos or tintypes. The original and a copy will be returned to you.

Some one to edit Pelletrau's veteran list of the Sixth Heavy Artillery.

MORE VETERANS FOR OUR HONOR ROLL

We thank Miss Jean Saunders for help in locating about forty more Civil War Veterans. When sifted down we hope to add 150 men to our Honor Roll.
President Lincoln's first call for 75,000 volunteers from the nation soon brought more than 360,000 men of which 40,000 were from New York State.

The 59th Infantry Regiment had almost the only men from Putnam County when the Battle of Bull Run was fought. These were enlisted by Gerald Brown of Croton Falls.

With their defeat at Bull Run, a call for 500,000 three year volunteers went out. This great army was assembled, drilled, equipped over a period of nine months. We have followed the enlistment of Company I of the Fourth Heavy Artillery. Thomas Sears of Patterson, having enlisted the men, was elected Captain.

Until then, everything was done haphazardly. In order to bring order out of chaos, beginning September 7, the Governor's OK was required of any one seeking to enlist volunteers. Abel W. Mattice presented his certificate at Carmel on that day and began enlisting. (The above photo of Captain Mattice was taken shortly after encampment at Washington.) Cornelius Price of Mahopac was chosen First Lieutenant. Ten more veterans in this Company will be added to our County Honor Roll.

John Dean, from Horse Pound Road, north of Carmel, described their experiences after arriving at Washington. "We have plenty to eat and drink and too much to wear at present, though we may need it by and by. The weather here is cool and pleasant, the ground is frozen about an inch deep. We have bread and butter, pork, beef, beans, fish, coffee and water to eat and drink. We have a tent and stove and plenty of wood of which we make fire. We have leaves and cornstalks for a bed upon which we put a blanket, lay down and cover up with 2 or 3 others." (John and his brother William had their pictures taken and will appear in a later edition.) An epidemic of measles caused John's death. It occurred just when all leaves were cancelled and no one was allowed to escort his body home. John "was the first casualty from Carmel and a great fuss was made with a flag draped casket and a military funeral in the Baptist Church."

It was just a year after enlistment began of this Company in Putnam County before they were in battle. The regiment left New York in November. This 59th Regiment was a mixture of small units. While they were in camp, they were reorganized. A group from Cortlandt under Capt. James L. Paulding, a few from White Plains and from Rockland County were consolidated to make a full company. The Putnam County group were half the Company. Capt. Paulding resigned and Mattice became Captain of Company I.

The failure of Gen. McClellan in the Peninsula Campaign and of Gen. Pope at the Second Battle of Bull Run took place while the 59th Regiment's final preparations were going on. Gen. Lee determined on a bold stroke, to invade the north, to wrest the State of Maryland from the North and to possibly capture Washington. Maryland's enlistments were few. As Lee marched North, an army was detached against Harper's Ferry. Over 11,000 Union soldiers were captured. But the delay kept Lee's army apart long enough to endanger Lee's plans.

General McClellan had been recalled to command the Army of the Potomac. He joined battle with Lee at Antietam September 17, about
40 miles northwest of Washington. This was the bloodiest one day of battle of the war. Each side lost about 13,000 men killed and wounded.

Under Gen. Sedgwick, later one of Grant's three major corps leaders, the 59th Regiment experienced their first battle. A bulge had been made in the South's left center. The first corps was withdrawn and Sedgwick went in. A sharp wedge was driven into the Southern line. But a heavy counterattack wrought havoc on the 59th. This was to be their worst battle. A fourth of the 59th was killed or wounded. Putnam County lost half their enlistment.

William Dean was shot through the jaw and his back was injured. A buddy dragged him off the field. He was never able to use his jaw. "Speech was difficult at first and he could only eat finely chopped food which he put into his mouth through the hole in his jaw. His back injury "curved more and more until he was bent nearly double but he lived to be 70 and became an expert fruit-grower."

At the close of the day, Lee had lost a-third of his fighting force. During the night, the North received as many fresh troops as all of Lee's exhausted army. It is generally conceded that if McClellan had forced battle the next day, Lee's army would have been pushed into the Potomac River. During this day of inaction, the two armies faced each other. That night Lee crossed the Potomac.

Though the issue of Union or States Rights was the major motive which divided the nation, the problem of slavery was always present.

As only ten per cent of the South held slaves, in time it was thought the South would free the slaves. Be that as it may, the thrust of slavery brought forth the proposal to buy the freedom of all slaves. Coming during the fever of war, it proved unacceptable.

As areas of the South came under Northern domination, the mass attachment of colored people to the Army became a problem. The general sentiment of the Northern soldier became more favorable to freedom as the colored man proved himself serviceable to the army in a multitude of ways.

After the Battle of Antietam, the growing attitude in the Army and at home found expression in President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. But Charles Vores found himself encamped in Virginia two weeks after colored freedom began. Great numbers of colored people were filtering through the army on their way to Washington. He wrote home in a bitter strain of the colored man's exuberant spirit of freedom and the northern soldier's grim prospect before him.

To return to the 59th Regiment after Antietam. Within a month there was a shake up. Captain A. Mattice resigned. Edward F. Richards of Southeast became Captain of Company D and was later made major by brevet. Major Richard's name is missing from our County's Honor Roll.

From then to the close of the war, the 59th was in every important battle of the Army of the Potomac. While sharply engaged and losses were experienced in every engagement, it was under Grant that another fourth of the Regiment was lost in the four months from the Wilderness to the heavy battles of Petersburg and of Ream's Station. They were present at Lee's surrender at Appomattox.
MAJOR GENERAL GOVERNEUR KEMBLE WARREN

HIS MONUMENT STANDS ON LITTLE ROUND TOP, GETTYSBURG

Gouverneur was born in Cold Spring in 1830. He was a student at Kingsley's Classical and Mathematical School when he received his appointment to West Point. He graduated in 1850.

For four years he surveyed the Mississippi delta. In 1854 he was sent west of the Mississippi to survey and to evaluate three possible railroad routes to the Pacific. His explorations passed through areas where Indians and Whites were at war. In 1859 Warren was ordered to West Point.

When the Civil War began, Warren became Lt. Colonel of the Fifth New York Volunteers. His regiment with their brilliant Zouave uniforms was under General Butler at Fortress Monroe. They fought at Big Bethel on June 10. In August he commanded the regiment. He was transferred to Washington to aid in building its defenses.

His regiment was in the Peninsula Campaign where he was commended for bravery at Gaines Mill.

Transferred to Pope's Command, his regiment lost more than half their men at the Second Battle of Bull Run. In September he was made Brigadier General. He participated in the Battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. On June 8 he was appointed Chief Engineer of the Army of the Potomac.

Hooker's resignation three days before Gettysburg caused Meade to miss the first day of battle. Meade, Hancock and Warren laid out the line of battle. The next day Hood attacked the Union's left flank. Warren diverted men and artillery to the top of Little Round Top just in the nick of time. His monument which you see here stands on Little Round Top for saving "the key of the Union position".

On August 9 he was appointed Major General in command of the Second Corps. In October at the Battle of Centerville, his corps held the line against great odds.

When Grant came East, Warren commanded the Fifth Corps. During the Campaign from the Wilderness to Petersburg, his corps suffered heavily due to "trench" warfare.

The Battle of Five Forks was the beginning of Lee's last retreat. Grant had given Sheridan command of the left flank. After the battle, Sheridan relieved Warren of his command and was left in defense of Petersburg. When transferred to Mississippi, he resigned. He asked for a trial but it was not granted until after his death. The trial exonerated him.

At his death at 52, he refused the honors usually accorded our Nation's heroes because his name was still under shadow.

For 17 years following the War, he distinguished himself as one of the best engineers in the nation.
Manitou in the southwestern corner of Putnam County was once a thriving industrial area marked for rapid growth.

The story begins in 1863 in the midst of the Civil War when the Hudson River Copper Company, precursor of the Highland Chemical Co., obtained a lease of 300 acres on Manitou Mountain, "for getting minerals of all kinds," from William H. Denning, an heir of the William Denning who had bought up as a speculation so much of the land confiscated in Revolutionary times from the Tory Beverly Robinson and his wife Susanah. Five years later, the Company secured an additional lease, this time from Catherine and Pierre VanCortlandt, giving the right to operate mines on Anthony's Nose, over the Putnam-Westchester border for no one could accurately locate the county line, marked by an old cedar tree—in the early nineteen hundreds Frederick Gore King, owner of the mine property, was still looking for that tree.

Be that as it may, everyone in Manitou today knows the Old Copper Mine Road, knows too how dangerous it is to explore the unprotected openings of the mine's twin shafts or the dark, slimy pits, terrifying with the memory of the geology instructor's accidental plunge to death in 1921 while his class of teen-age boys looked on aghast. Everyone knows of the unsightly old mine dumps and how they give their bitter flavor to Copper Mine Brook. But not everyone knows, or at least I did not, that the ore from the mine was hauled out by team and wagon down along the then existing roads—South Mountain pass Road, Beverly Lane, which is now 9D, below Col. Taylor Belcher's where it was loaded on scows. There was at first no direct road from the mine down to the river.

Copper was what the Hudson River Copper Company had hoped to find but it was iron sulphide which was really mined in greatest abundance. And so the idea of a Chemical Company was born. In January 1873, the newly organized Highland Chemical and Mining Company secured "a piece of land, marsh and islands," near the railroad station stop of the Highland, as Manitou was then called. Here docks were built at which the ore-bearing scows could land and also a big wooden shell of a plant enclosing vats and other equipment to process the ore. By 1877, "some 80 men were employed at the works and 180 more at the mines." Reid's county map of this period shows the mines very clearly and also an "Engine House" and "Mine Boarding House" up next to the mines. In 1877 August, according to an old newspaper clipping, the plant was producing 200 carboys or 52,000 pounds of sulphuric acid every 24 hours—"oil of vitrol," they then called this "most useful chemical ever made," which could be utilized in the production of nitric, muriatic and many less important acids, super phosphates, gum cotton, disinfectants, bleaches, purified kerosene, rust removers, acid drinks, shoe blackening and medical appetizers! The plant sent its fumes far out on the river but towers were being built to recover the gases and as a safety measure, a new platinum substitute for the breakable glass retort had been introduced at a cost of $17,000.
"The buildings of this Company," says William Pelletreau in his County History of 1886, "present a very conspicuous appearance on the banks of the river and the works gave employment to a large number of hands." But by 1886 the Company had stopped using local ores, which "had proved to be not so rich as had been supposed" and was instead importing sulphur from Italy. In 1889 fire destroyed the plant. Mr. Thomas Torpey of Manitou, then five years old, still remembers the horror of that Saturday night. He remembers too how quickly the plant was rebuilt by the Fort Montgomery contractor Aaron Clark. Tom Torpey went to work at odd jobs around the plant in 1900 for 83 cents a day, $5.00 a week, or half what a man could earn. He was number 71 on a payroll of 150 or so which included he says, not only Irish, English and Scotch but Swedes, Danes, Germans and even a Turk! He was to work at the plant until its final day - its last foreman.

The end was already foreshadowed for in this same year of 1900 the Company was merged into General Chemical (now a division of Mammoth Allied Chemical and Dye.) Several other merged concerns moved into the plant. General Commercial was an enterprising company. At the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, it took First Prize for its sulphuric acid. But high protective tariffs were by this time making imported sulphur far less economical to use than the ores from western mines, processed in plants farther west by newer methods than those of the increasingly obsolete Highland works.

In 1907 the Company decided to test the ore from the old copper mine. The mine chambers were full of water and had to be pumped out. How I wish I could include here even a bit of the fascinating picture conveyed by young William T. Howell who, on five separate occasions, between May 1906 and November 1908, hiked up the mountain, explored the windy mine shafts, shouted into the echoing caverns, photographed everything he could and even cooked and ate prodigious numbers of lamb chops with horrible mine-water coffee near a chunk of frozen dynamite in the dark watery interior. (It is all related in Ch. 4 Vol II of the Hudson Highlands, together with much factual material about the mines.

The mine ore was analyzed in 1908 and the verdict was in the negative. By 1913 the plant was closed for good. The Junk House Wrecking Company from Long Island City took it down. In 1914 the railroad withdrew its station agent. In 1917 an assessment upon General Chemical property of $225,000 was stricken from the Philipstown taxroll. Only the old foundations, a chimney or two, some pieces of broken carboy, a bit of rotting dock and a big but neglected "For Rent or Sale" sign remained to mark the spot as the weeds and brush took over.

Finally in December 1942, the site was sold and soon afterward were erected the attractive water-front houses which have given it a new kind of life.
PUTNAM COUNTY HISTORIAN
Heraee E. Hillery
Patterson, New York

"PUTNAM COUNTY IN THE CIVIL WAR" - FOURTH EDITION 1961

This fourth edition on "Putnam County in the Civil War" finds the next two editions fully planned. The State program expects to continue the Centennial Commemoration for the next four years. However, our County will emphasize other historic interests next year.

What historic backgrounds would interest you most? Let me know this month. A few ideas are in hand, but they take time to hatch. Mr. and Mrs. H.W. Andrews have given our County a Revolutionary manuscript of captured Americans fleeing their Canadian prison and the incredible hardships experienced before reaching home. This would make a fascinating continued story which has never seen print. Would this interest you?

Would some reproductions of your many gifts to the County whet your appetite?

General Charles G. Stevenson has sent us an additional facet on the personality of Maj. Gen. Daniel Butterfield. His hobby was the composition of Bugle Calls. During the lull in the Civil War Peninsular Campaign of 1862, he became dissatisfied with "Lights Out" as used by the British Army. Calling Oliver W.Norton the Brigade bugler, by trial and error, they arrived at "Taps" as now known.

Whenever we hear "Taps herafter, we will think of Putnam County's adopted son, General Butterfield.

We thank Edward Joyce, author of "Lake Mahopac" and John Gemmill for their part in making the enclosed version possible. Mrs. J.T. Rorer has begun Somer's Record in the Civil War. Our common neighborhood exchanges makes more helpful and complete this area's contributions to this historic epoch in our nation's history. Welcome, Mrs. Rorer!

Lewis Young of Washington, D.C., a relative of Sybil Ludington, has added much to his father's army record from Kent.

Elmer Lee has given us a lift on the Sixth Heavy Artillery. Your Historian is working on this now.

We thank Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schouten for the gift to the County of "The Real America". Edward Markham's 15 volume set.

Mr. and Mrs. H.W. Andrews has added Harper's Civil War records.

Thank you, Mrs. Addison Hopkins, for photos of the Dean boys, Veterans of the 59th Regiment.

We deeply regret losing Robert Weeks and Duncan Campbell who have done so much to make this edition possible.

The Putnam County Information Booth in Inspiration Point needs County boosters to take their turn one or two afternoons during the next six weeks. What can you say heartily about your County? You will meet people from every state in America, and from a score of foreign countries. It's two to one, you will get a real kick out of it. Call Thomas Townsend, Carmel Postmaster, for your date.