



February Meeting

~J. B. Sanders

I regret to inform you of the recent passing of Galway Preservation Society Vice President Dr. Michael C. Yager. He was a history enthusiast and loved showing his collection of tools at our community activities. He will be missed.

I would like to thank Lauren Roberts for her excellent presentation on the Saratoga County Poor House. It was her done to her usual excellent standard.

Our next meeting will be held at 7 pm on February 6, 2023 at the Galway Town Hall. No refreshments will be provided and social time will be limited. A presentation will be made by Paul Perrault, Malta Town Historian, on the Ice Harvesting in Saratoga County.



CLIFTON PARK EARLY 20TH. CENTURY

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We are working to jointly present the program live at the Galway Town Hall and via Zoom for those who may wish to view the program remotely. The Zoom meeting number is 294 161 5132. In case of inclement weather, the presentation will be only on Zoom.

What's Happening at the Archives

~Pat Sanders

Last year was a busy year of accessioning items and reorganizing files. The archives committee accessioned 26 collections consisting of more than 400 items. After many hours, Phyllis Sleeper has finished reorganizing the surname files and history files. Bonnie Donnan is currently accessioning the Yorkers Club collection of Jeanne Schwarz. Margie Prasek indexed the Quinby Notes on buildings in Galway Village, ca. 1800 – 1920s. Her current project is an index for GPS Journals. Bruce Sanders is entering and maintaining our computer database for our collections. Of special note is the Mildred Hathaway photographic slide collection of buildings in the Town of Galway, taken by her in 1984. Bruce has scanned and downloaded the collection onto a thumb drive for storage. Co-chair Arlene Rhodes and I continue to work on maintaining the archives, making decisions on various issues and accessioning donated items. The committee meets once a week at the Galway Public Library where our archives are housed.

the cost of a kiss from The Maiden of Galway

by Dave Waite

In 1887, eighteen-year-old seamstress Frances Ada Pettit caught the eye of James Tittlemore, a merchant and wagon maker from Galway. James, who had emigrated from Quebec, Canada around the time of Frances' birth, was thirty-one, thirteen years her senior. The Pettit family had been in Galway for four generations, with Frances' Grandfather Thomas having come to the town from Claverack, Columbia County, New York in 1787.

Her father, Leonard Herbert Pettit, up to this time a farmer and carpenter, by 1860 turned to making his living as a speculator and stock dealer, successful enough to advertise his services in the 1871 Child's Saratoga County business directory. It was also in 1871 that Leonard & his wife Sarah had their third child and the subject of this story, Frances. It is possible that she was an unexpected blessing to the family, as her parents were both forty-seven years old with nineteen years having passed since their last child.

By 1880 Leonard had returned to farming, likely working either as a day laborer for his wife's family or renting a farm in the area. After another twelve years of farming, the 68-year-old Leonard moved his family to the village of Galway, where they took up residence on the 2nd floor of a recently built store. Still living with Leonard and his wife Sarah at this time was their twenty-two-year-old daughter Frances, who by now had been in a relationship with James Tittlemore for five years. James had come to Galway sometime before 1880, and met Frances in the summer of 1887, though having earlier that year married and then separated from a young woman in Williamstown, Massachusetts who was reported to have been only fourteen years old.

Two years after their move into the village, on July 4, 1894, Leonard Pettit passed away, leaving his 70-year-old wife Sarah, and their daughter Frances to support themselves. For the next ten years, Sarah and her daughter lived together, and James continued to court Frances, both visiting her in her home and taking her for rides in his automobile.

Finally, this thirty-two-year-old maiden had enough of waiting for her 45-year-old suitor. On May 8, 1903, they faced each other before Justice John M. Kellogg and a jury in the Ballston Spa Courthouse, not to tie the knot but to settle a lawsuit France had brought for breach of promise. Newspapers from across the state had a field day reporting all the details that came to light as their day in court unfolded. One of the best was the May 11, 1903, *Gloversville Daily Leader* that was headlined at the top center of page five with “Courtied for Fourteen Years, Galway Maiden of Thirty was Blacksmith’s Sweetheart Until He Balked”

With the lawsuit of five thousand dollars against Tittlemore on the line, Miss Pettit took the witness chair that day. Her embarrassment from being required to reveal the intimate details of their relationship brought a blush to her cheeks and so much confusion that she was unable to speak. To save her further distress, Justice Kellogg came to her rescue and addressed the jury, saying “I guess you gentlemen understand that part of the case very well. I don’t believe we will ask the lady to tell us about it.” In expressing her relief, Miss Pettit let out a breath that was reported to be so strong it was as if a gust of wind had passed through the courtroom.

At the end of that week, the May 16th edition of the *Mechanicville Mercury* took a more light-hearted look at the trial in an article titled “\$3,000 Awarded for 1,236 Kisses.” It is here that we learn of the detailed diary kept by Frances Pettit where she recorded every kiss that ever had passed between her and James Tittlemore. To support her case, Frances even read these diary entries:

Mr. Tittlemore came to see me tonight, he is a nice fellow, but he is married and I guess mother won’t like to have him come....James was here tonight. He kissed me. It was the first time I ever was kissed by a man. James was here. Ma was in the parlor and James and I stayed in the kitchen. Kissed me eight times.

During her testimony, it was revealed that Frances had been living rent-free in a house owned by her suitor for nine years and that when she confronted him about his spending time with another woman, he demanded she pays for her time living there. As she had meticulous notes of their times together, she countered with a bill for all the dinners she had served that more than covered the rental fee.

RECOVERED \$2.43 PER KISS.

Osculation in Galway Comes High--Sweet-heart Kept Record of Kisses.

Miss Frances Pettit, of Galway, who sued sixty-year-old blacksmith James P. Tittlemore for \$5,000 for alleged breach of promise to marry her after fourteen years' attention and secured \$3,000, was evidently full of ideas. When Tittlemore began his attentions he was a married man, but he promised to get a divorce from his wife and marry Miss Pettit. The promised bride-to-be showed more than usual business acumen, for upon each occasion of her meeting with the blacksmith she made an entry in her diary

The court case was concluded in the late afternoon, with the jury deliberating for several hours before returning a sealed verdict to Justice Kellogg. The next morning the results were revealed, with Miss Pettit being awarded three thousand dollars to cover the damage caused to her by Tittlemore. Frances Pettit would never collect the full amount of the verdict, though some justice may have been served when the automobile that James used to court her was taken to cover part of the debt.

Both parties in this suit soon married, Frances to widower Gordon W. Steadman, a Corinth resident with three boys ages 5, 11, and 13. Frances made news one last time when in 1905 her stepson Lawrence left his home in Corinth and presented himself to the Saratoga Police reporting that he had been compelled to leave his home because of severe treatment from his stepmother. Of course, the news report noted that she was already well known from the “famous Pettit-Tittlemore kissing case.” The marriage between Gordon and Frances lasted forty-seven years, with Frances passing away in 1950 and Gordon following her four years later.

In December 1903, it was reported that James Tittmore married Mary J. Lovelace of Atlantic City, New Jersey. In the 1910 Galway census, it is noted that he had been married twice, but at that time no spouse is listed. Mrs. Lovelace passed away in 1921 in Albany, New York. Seventy-one-year-old James Tittmore fell while he was attempting to cut dead limbs from a tree in his backyard in 1929, died from his injuries, and was buried in the Galway Village Cemetery. His obituary makes no mention of a spouse.

Sources for this article include online newspaper archives at *fultonhistory.com* and *nyhistoricnewspapers.org* as well as genealogy data from *ancestry.com*.