

TURNPIKE TALES

by Jim Ford

"TURNPIKE TALES" #37 Part I

(Historical items from the "Madison Bouckville Antique Week" region)

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The Madison-Bouckville area has been rich in history from the arrival of the first settlers to the present day. As an addition to the newsletter, we have decided to share some of that history in order that the patrons who travel to the Madison-Bouckville Show will have a better understanding of our truly unique region.

MOSES MAYNARD AND HIS FAMILY

One of the most influential families in the Town of Madison during the first half of the 1800's was that of Moses Maynard. Their activities were centered in the Town of Madison, but also extended to Madison County, New York State, and even to Europe. We now take a look at this influential Bouckville family and begin our story with Moses Maynard.

Moses Maynard was born on October 10, 1775 at Townsend, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Moses married three times during his lifetime. The first was to Anna Lincoln (1775 to 1807). Following their marriage, the couple moved to Madison Four Corners, as the Village of Madison was called at that time. Moses and Anna had at least two children, but the only name that has come down to us is Arba Maynard. We will detail events in Arba's life in this document.

Anna Maynard died on February 1, 1807 at 32 years of age and was buried in the Center Hill Cemetery in Madison Center. The inscription on her stone reads: "She Sleeps on Center Hill."

Following the death of Anna, Moses Maynard served in the area militia under the leadership of Erastus Cleaveland. He was appointed as Quartermaster in 1808 and Adjutant for the 65th Regiment of Infantry in 1809.

By 1810 Moses had moved to McClure's Settlement. This was the first name given to the community which became Bouckville. The second name for the community was Johnsville. The final name of Bouckville was in honor of William C. Bouck, who had been a canal commissioner during the construction of the Chenango Canal.

Moses married for a second time in 1811. His new wife was Chloe Butler (1777 to 1821). Moses was 36 years old and Chloe was 34. From this marriage there would be five children: Butler Maynard, Edward Maynard, Jane M. Maynard, Mary Ann Maynard, and Dewitt Clinton Maynard.

In 1816 and 1817 Moses was a member of the New York State Assembly and in 1819 and 1820 he was appointed as Sheriff of Madison County. Heartbreak was not far behind when Chloe died in 1821 at 45 years of age. She was buried in the Madison Village Cemetery. The inscription on her stone reads: "The First Deposited in this burial Ground."

With the success of the Erie Canal, other regions of the state desired a canal in order to bring prosperity to their area. The Chenango Valley was one of those areas and a committee was formed to pressure the State of New York for a canal to be built. Moses Maynard was a member of that committee. When the canal project was approved, Maynard purchased a number of lots along the proposed route through Johnsville. Today we would call that "insider trading."

Since the community of Johnsville was now certain to grow, petition was made for a Post Office. The Johnsville name was sent to the government, but was rejected because they said that there were already too many post office names with "John" in them. Moses Maynard suggested that the name Bouckville be given to the community in honor of William C. Bouck, who had been a canal commissioner and had overseen the construction of the Chenango Canal. This was readily accepted by all and Maynard was appointed as postmaster.

Moses Maynard married for the third time c.1835 to Mary Polly Woodhull (4-17-1792 to 10-18-1884). She was very influential in his life and supported his decision to build a hotel and a warehouse along the route of the new canal. The hotel was known for decades as the "White House" and in recent years as the Bouckville Hotel. The warehouse would eventually be the site of the Peet Brothers cider mill.

In 1846, at the urging of Polly, as she was known to all, Moses formed a joint-stock company to build a cobblestone store on a lot that he owned directly across the highway from his hotel. The structure was built between 1847 and 1851. It quickly became known as the "Stone Store" and was the meeting place for citizens.

The building had four distinct sides facing the highway and each contained a different store. Facing the building from the road, left to right, there was a grocery store, a dry goods emporium, flour merchant, and a hardware store. During later years, a shoemaker's shop replaced the hardware store. On the second floor was located a dressmaker's shop, law office, and hops dealer during various years. It was truly and 1850's min-mall.

During the construction of the "Cobblestone Store," Maynard was on a committee for a proposed plank road to be constructed from Rome to Hamilton. This was in 1849 and it was built in 1850. Moses Maynard made sure that it would pass through Bouckville.

Moses Maynard died on May 27, 1853 at 79 years of age. He is buried in the Madison Village Cemetery. As we have seen, Polly died on October 18, 1884 at 93 years of age. She is also buried in the Madison Village Cemetery.

Moses Maynard certainly had an interesting and productive life. In the next "Turnpike Tales" we will highlight the lives of other members of his family.