

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

RECORDS SELECTED:

The Town of Red Hook received a 7th grant in 1998 from the State Education Department (SED) under the State Archives and Records Administration's (SARA) Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF). A previous grant filmed the Town Minutes (1813-1993). The Red Hook Public Library was found to have two books of great historical interest that would supplement the Town Minutes. They were Old Rhinebeck (1748-1880) and Old Red Hook (1813-1865) by the Rev. Charles S. Champlin. (Red Hook was part of Rhinebeck until 1812. The Albany Legislature broke-up areas based on populations over 5000 so the public would have better representation at government meetings. It would take a horse a day to travel about 8 miles.) Permission was granted from the library's board to film the books for which they and SARA would receive a complimentary diazo microfilm copy.

VOLUMES DESCRIBED:

The two selected volumes contain hand typed pages which were bound into a hard cover. A title in gold letters appears only on the red colored front cover of each book. They both measure 8"x 11"x 1". Volume I's binding has separated from the bound pages which are coming loose with use. Volume II is in better overall condition but will probably experience the same condition with extensive use. Volume I was taken from The Horse and Buggy Age of the Old Town As Told in its Records Compiled by Helen Reed Delaporte, Rhinebeck, New York. Surnames are listed and indexed. There are some references to Negroes and freed slaves (ie: pages 50,53,54). Volume II will provide a typed rendition of the Town Minutes providing the public an interpretive reference tool for the handwritten archived documents. The microfilm will protect these one-of-a-kind books, increase public accessibility and reduce overall research time. The original source material can then be checked to verify the information.

REV. CHARLES S. CHAMPLIN:

He was about 80 years old when he came to Red Hook. He substituted as a minister for the Red Hook Christ Church occasionally (Margaret E. Doty, Town of Red Hook Clerk, August 25, 1998). Champlin transcribed and copied several volumes of historical information for the Red Hook Public Library. His noteworthy efforts are recognized by a bronze plaque located in the entrance foyer to the library. Hopefully the remaining volumes by him and other volumes by Francis Couse will be microfilmed by the library and the volumes retired to off-site storage in the near future.

Written by Linda J. Keeling
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