

Forward, into the Past

Taylor & Haight's Calendar Annual

by Marion M. Dumond

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In 1869, Sylvester M. Taylor and A.V. Haight, who had formed a partnership the year before as publishers of the *Ellenville Journal*, released an interesting little pamphlet of historical sketches with the title *Taylor & Haight's Calendar Annual for 1869*. As was the writing style in the mid-nineteenth century, the title continued: *Embracing Local Historical Sketches, and a Variety of Statistical Information*.

The booklet measured slightly more than 6" high x 3.5" wide (see photo, right, actual size) and contained 64 pages. The preface (Taylor and Haight called it "Advertisement") stated, "The earlier pages of this little volume were printed with the design of bringing it out on the first of January. Other engagements compelled delay in its publication, and also prevented us from carrying out the original design, which was to present a statement – full and complete as possible – of the Business of the Town, with some account of the origin and growth of various public enterprises."

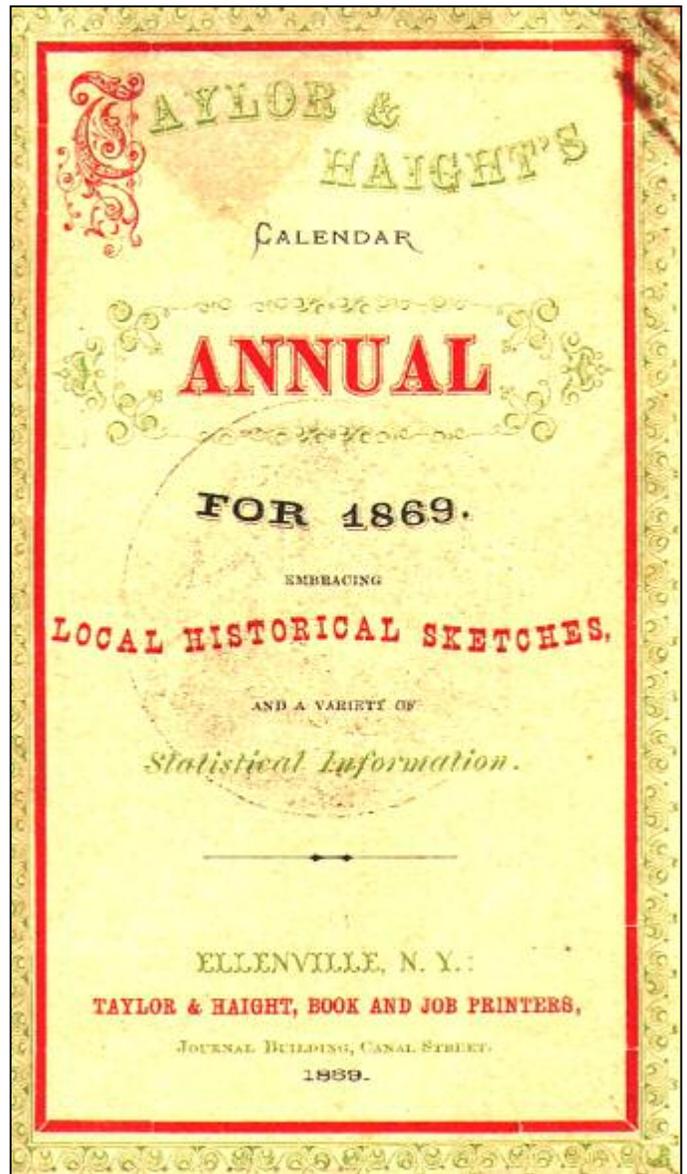
They announced that they planned to produce another issue in December as the Annual for 1870. Whether that ever happened is not sure. The firm disbanded only a few years later when Mr. Haight left and, in 1874, Mr. Taylor again left the *Journal*. (For more details about the *Journal*, and Mr. Taylor, see Issue #13 of *Wawarsing.Net* for December 2003.)

The first "historical sketch" is of Ellenville, a fairly lengthy article of some eight pages, marred by several errors in dates, later identified and corrected by his son, Ben M. Taylor, in subsequent writings. It alerts the reader to enjoy the stories told, but to verify dates and events before accepting them as accurate.

The writing is flowery, as the following account of the naming of Ellenville illustrates: "The place was still without post office facilities, and had no name. The enterprising denizens of the "city" and its suburbs, feeling that such a state of things was no longer tolerable, assembled by appointment at the store one evening to deliberate and devise measures for relief. The question of a name for the burgh came up, and as frequently happens in such cases there were various opinions about the matter, and the assembled worthies found themselves unable to agree. In this dilemma they had recourse to the ladies of Mr. HOORNBECK'S household, CHARLES

HARTSHORN being deputed to lay the subject before them with the understanding that from their decision there was to be no appeal. Among the ladies whose assistance had been invoked was Miss ELLEN SNYDER, a sister-in-law of HOORNBECK. Miss SNYDER determined at once to confer a pretty name upon the infant city, and at the same time immortalize her own: She proposed to call it ELLENVILLE. The proposition was duly reported to the council at the store, where it was unanimously adopted." (Punctuation and capitalization have been copied exactly from the original.)

The *Annual* includes many



lists of elected officials on the State and District levels, as well as the Ulster County Board of Supervisors, and County Officers, from Sheriff to the Printers of Laws.

Banking associations are enumerated, with the amount of their capital and their officers. *The First National Bank of Ellenville* is the only local bank mentioned, which is correct since the *Savings Bank* did not open until later in 1869. (See issue #19, June 2004, for details about the history of banking in Ellenville.)

The county's divisions of the organization called Sons of Temperance are listed; Ellenville's Iris No. 57 met Thursdays. Five Masonic Lodges are listed, but only Wawarsing Lodge No. 582, which met Saturday evenings, had a full listing of officers and committees.

Historical sketches of the *Journal*, *First National Bank*, *Ulster Female Seminary*, and Napanoch (more errors) continue.

A listing of the Supervisors of the Town of Wawarsing is preceded by a brief history of the township, beginning with its first meeting on April 1, 1806, at which various town officers were chosen, including three Assessors, three Commissioners of Highways, two Overseers of the Poor, two Fence Viewers (more about them shortly), nine Highway Overseers and one Pound Master. In 1810, it was voted that "Hogs shall be free commoners, provided they shall be well yoked and ↗