Valley Routes Traced at Symposium

Van Epps and Elmer Tell of Research That Discovered Colonial Arteries

Percy M. Van Epps, Schenectady county historian, and William E. Elmer, president of the Schenectady County Historical Society, traced old routes followed by primitive redman, trader and colonist in the Mohawk and Hudson valleys last night at a symposium conducted at the Historical society, 13 Union street.

Dr. Dixon Ryan Fox, president of Union college, introduced the speaker. Describing roads as "those arteries of social life," he emphasized their importance to the isolated communities of the past and to the men and women who depended upon them for existence.

Mr. Van Epps traced early paths followed by the Mohawks in their journeys from the beaver country to the trading post at Fort Orange. There were two paths which led from the vicinity of Schenectady to the Dutch settlement, he said.

One of these passed through Niskayuna and ran close to the river for a short distance beyond. Then it cut overland to the fort.

The second important route, one of the oldest known in this area, crossed Mont Pleasant, turned near Crane street and then bore to the south towards the Normanskill. It followed this winding stream to the outskirts of Fort Orange.

Mr. Van Epps also spoke of a third route, much used by the Indians—the river itself. He said the Indians sometimes beached canoes near the Binnekill and portaged overland.

Both Mr. Van Epps and Mr. Elmer described the country through which the paths twisted and coiled and spoke of the history that unrolled along them in the fifth century.

Mr. Elmer read a paper, the result of five years' research, in which he traced in detail the old Kl[illegible] highway between the city and [illegible] bany.

Via the Bush

The Kings highway, cut [illegible] mand and pile plankswing, [illegible] route 20 and the present [illegible] Schenectady road. In early [illegible] was so rutted, he said, the [illegible] er of the period would [illegible] could be transported in [illegible] in winter than in 10 ca[illegible] mer.

He said the road [illegible] the Sandbank, a hill [illegible] a landmark on the [illegible] bany's and present [illegible] Berculoir Sanitarium [illegible] bany." said Mr. [illegible] layers," said the [illegible] about where the [illegible] club course is now [illegible]

The King's Highway [illegible] Schenectady road [illegible] road winding of [illegible] the direction [illegible]

Beyond the [illegible] ancient road side [illegible] house swung to [illegible] then swung [illegible] entered Schenectady [illegible] along the [illegible] Mr. [illegible]

'Paper' Street a Gold Mine for Albany

By JULIUS J. HELLER

One of Albany's phantom streets, Lydius Street, disappeared from the map some time ago. And in ordinary terms, it never existed at all —it was just a "paper street."

The "street" consisted of a right-of-way through what is now State University in Albany.

NOW THE STREET is just a memory and the city of Albany is $27,000 richer, thanks to a Court of Claims decision by Judge Milton Alpert against the State of New York, which took the property—about 8½ acres—when it took over the old Albany County Club site for the university.

The country club had an easement on Lydius Street.

The award made by Judge Alpert is a far cry from the original award of $1 made by Court of Claims Judge Richard S. Heller in the 12-year litigation in that court concerning the city's right to be paid for the "paper street."

The original Court of Claims decision rejected the City of Albany's claim that Lydius Street was actually a street laid out for street purposes by the Dongan Charter of 287 years ago.

THE APPELLATE Division affirmed the Court of Claims but the Court of Appeals reversed both courts, and held that Albany owned the street, that it was an actual street reserved for that purpose and directed the Court of Claims to fix a value which was done.

The city said that the price of $2,000 an acre or total of $17,000 was a "just compensation" and that $10,000 interest on top of that was acceptable also.

It was a long fight by Corporation Counsel John W. Hacker with Raymond E. Marinelli of counsel.

LYDIUS STREET in the Dongan Charter of 1686 was designated on the city map as a street extending from the Hudson River to the present Schenectady County Line. Later the name became Madison Avenue.

But somehow down through the years, after a driving club had used part of the "paper street" extending 3,000 feet between Magazine Street and Fuller Road, and still later the Albany Country Club used it for part of a golf course, the State of New York acquired the country club, paying a substantial price for the club's entire property.

The club relocated in Wormer Road, Voorheesville, and on the former site was built SUNY.

The City of Albany then filed its suit for Lydius Street, which now is only a memory in the city's historical archives.

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