

REPORT
of the
SUPERINTENDENT
of the
STATE LAND SURVEY
of the
STATE OF NEW YORK
for the Year 1896

Edited and with Introduction by
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Putting together a volume such as this requires a combination of the talents of a number of individuals. And, many times the role of the editor in the process is the least important of all. Such is certainly the case in this instance.

The original manuscript from which we began was a combination of typed and handwritten pages with a great number of deletions and inserts throughout. The writing was not all done by one individual and some of it was most difficult to interpret. Added to that is the fact that it was written some eighty-five years ago and included words, spellings and syntax that are obscure today. It is only because of the patience and skills of the four typists who became involved that a complete and comprehensive second draft of the manuscript was produced. Much credit and thanks is due to Efrosina Atanasov, Jeanne Bowen, Gail Lawrence, and Janet Moen.

The entire text was edited by Eleanor Brown and Edie Pilcher, my colleagues at the Adirondack Research Center. If all of the sentences in these pages are of proper construction, if the punctuation is correct, if words are not omitted and if the style is clear and consistent throughout, the credit goes to them. If any flaws remain, I am to blame.

I have a major obligation to Joseph Jillisky. As I was compiling material for that part of the Introduction that presents a biography of Verplanck Colvin, I learned that Jillisky had just completed a full-length volume detailing Colvin's life and work. I was fortunate in making his acquaintance and he kindly provided me with a copy of the manuscript of his monumental work--What the Rocks and Mountains Tell Me, subtitled "Verplanck Colvin and the exploration of the Adirondack Mountains." Jillisky's book provided the basis for my short biographical work and also served as the standard against which I was able to confirm other data I had at hand.

Finally, mention must be made of Verplanck Colvin himself and his intrepid band of surveyors. This "Annual Report" was the last one they produced. However, it is only one volume in a long series of reports they prepared over a period of nearly thirty years in the closing decades of the 1800's. These have become the cornerstone of a massive literature of and about the Adirondack Mountains of New York State. We of the present generations, must extend an even greater appreciation to Colvin. He played a major part in the drama of events that led to the creation of the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserve and the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Bringing this Annual Report to publication represents only a partial repayment of the debt we owe him for that.

N.J.V.V.

INTRODUCTION

Verplanck Colvin's surveys have earned him a firm place in history, yet the man himself and to some degree his work remain obscure. Few who travel Colvin Avenue in the northwest part of the City of Albany know why or for whom this street was named. Probably a greater percentage of those who reach the 4057-foot summit of Mt. Colvin on the easterly side of Lower Ausable Lake in Essex County know that the peak is named for the same man. Not even all of those, however, understand the significance of the name of the companion peak, the 3960-foot Blake Mountain, to the south.

Most of those who stand on the summit rock of many Adirondack mountains wonder at the tarnished bolt set in a drill hole at the highest point. Who put it there, and why? They are even less sure of the purpose of the three shallow drill holes encircling the bolt. Those who know the reason for them can picture the transit that once stood there, its three legs firmly set, one in each of the holes, and they can almost see the man looking through the transit's scope centered exactly over the bolt, peering at some signal on a distant peak. Even some who understand the science of surveying will scoff at this surveyor's accuracy and the significance of his years in the field, recalling the criticism leveled at Colvin's work by the State Engineer in the late 1800's. A few even yet defame his character by suggesting that Colvin's life-long relationship with his fellow bachelor, Mills Blake, was more than just friendship. But modern-day land surveyors who have followed Colvin's "tracks" through the woods, up the mountains and across the ranges know the high order of his work. They vouch for its correctness and are puzzled at that earlier criticism. And, those who know the story of how Colvin and Blake first met and of their association and mutual devotion over the years, know also that the character of each was beyond reproach.

Many who are knowledgeable about the beginnings of the Adirondack Forest Preserve and the Adirondack Park credit Colvin with being the one person responsible for these monumental early events in the history of forest and wilderness preservation. Some others say he was not a preservationist at all-- that wilderness did not mean the same thing then as it does today. They maintain that Colvin should be given no credit for "fathering" something that didn't exist for another half century or more. Others recognize him for being one of a number of players in the events of the time and applaud his persistence, because without it neither the Preserve nor the Park would be there today.

So, the image of Colvin that emerges depends upon whom you talk to or whose writings you read.

Verplanck Colvin was born on January 4, 1847, at the Colvin family home on Western Avenue in the City of Albany. His father was Andrew James Colvin, then district attorney for Albany County and later (1859) State senator representing the 13th District or the whole of Albany County. Andrew J. Colvin's lineage included some of the prominent early Hudson River Valley families. His grandfather, John Colvin, reached America from Scotland in 1772 and, following his marriage to Sarah Fuller (who was descended from one of the Pilgrims who sailed on the Mayflower) moved to Coeymans Landing on the west shore of the Hudson just south of Albany. It was here that their son, James, met and married Catherine Verplanck, who was descended from the Coeymans family. Thus, Verplanck Colvin's given name and surname are both derived from his ancestry.

Verplanck's mother was Margaret Crane Alling of Newark, New Jersey. She was, however, Andrew Colvin's second wife and the sister of his first wife, Rosina Alling. Andrew and Rosina had married (in about 1836) and two sons were born to them, James A. in 1837 and Norwood. Rosina died in 1843 at the early age of thirty-three. ^{used to visit Rosina's family in Newark} ~~Andrew continued of that marriage~~ Following her death and two years later, on September 2, 1845, he married Margaret. Verplanck was the only child of that marriage.

James A. Colvin followed his father in the legal profession, graduating from the Albany Law School and thereafter entering his father's law office. In 1858, he was elected clerk of the Board of Supervisors of Albany County. However, it was in the military that he left his mark in history and most influenced his younger half-brother, Verplanck. He served three months as a private in the New York Militia in mid-1861 and re-enlisted a year later when it became obvious that the War Between the States was going to be bloodier and longer than most northerners had supposed. James Colvin was a captain at Charleston Harbor and Fort Sumter in 1863; a major with the Army of the James at the Battle of Richmond in 1864; a lieutenant-colonel at the battle of Fort Fisher near Wilmington, North Carolina, in early 1865; was given a brevet promotion to colonel for his valor at Fort Fisher; and served as aide-de-camp to General William Tecumseh Sherman at war's end. At the age of sixty, he re-enlisted during the Spanish-American War and died of pneumonia in 1899 at Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Georgia, while serving as assistant adjutant general. In the intervening years, he had lived in Harlem, New York, where he

was active in local politics and served as the managing editor of Lockwood Press while continuing the practice of law.

Much less is known about Verplanck Colvin's other half-brother, Norwood. Like James and Verplanck, he attended the Albany Academy for Boys and entered his father's law office. He, too, enlisted in the Army and served during the Civil War. By 1869, he had his own law office in Albany, but later became a bookkeeper. The dates of his birth and death are uncertain.

Young Verplanck's education began at home, under the direction of a private tutor. He followed his half-brothers to the Albany Academy for Boys, where he also was prepared for a legal career. Early on, however, he became more interested in geography and mathematics and displayed a talent for sketching and map-making. He also gave an early indication of his literary and artistic abilities when, at the age of ten, he wrote and illustrated a book. Unfortunately, this never progressed beyond manuscript form and is lost to history, its subject unknown.

At the age of fifteen, enthused with his half-brother James' military career, Verplanck sought to enlist in the Army. He was dissuaded by his mother and, as a substitute, daily plotted the progress of the Civil War and its battles and James' participation in them on campaign and battle maps. By the age of seventeen, he was convinced that he wanted a military life and asked that he be entered in the Military Academy at West Point. His mother remained protective and, with the support of Andrew—who did not want to see his third

and last son exposed to the dangers of war--Verplanck was again discouraged. Instead, he continued his legal studies at his father's law office.

In 1861, Andrew moved his family across the Hudson River to the hamlet of Nassau. Here, in the rural environment of southern Rensselaer County, Verplanck was able to expand his interest in geography and natural things as he wandered the woods and the hills, afterward drawing maps that traced his routes of travel and the ridges and streams he crossed. The move to Nassau was fortuitous in another way. One of Verplanck's fellow students in the Nassau Academy where he had been enrolled was Mills Blake. Blake had been born in Albany on January 24, 1848, and met early tragedy when he was orphaned at the age of twelve. He was left with his two sisters, both of whom soon married, one moving to Nebraska and the other settling in Albany. Blake was sent to a guardian in Nassau, where he lived across the street from the Colvin home and was enrolled in the Nassau Academy. Verplanck and Blake had the same interest in the out-of-doors and they quickly became friends, tramping the fields and exploring the forests of the rolling hills around Nassau. Together they followed the daily battles of the Civil War and worked at plotting them on Verplanck's maps. It was the beginning of a devoted friendship that lasted until Colvin's death some fifty-seven years later.

Some time in 1864, the Colvin family moved back to Albany and Verplanck resumed his studies in his father's law office. A few months later, at the request of Verplanck, Mills Blake was hired on as a clerk in the office. By this time, Andrew Colvin and his partner, Anson Bingham, had been involved for

over ten years in the so-called Anti-Rent Wars, representing numerous landowners in their struggles to get "out from under" the terms of the leases that encumbered the lands they occupied and thought they owned. Many of the skirmishes of the "Wars" took place in the Helderbergs, the craggy escarpment of hills rising to the southwest of Albany. On occasion, Verplanck accompanied his father to the Helderbergs, assisting in the representation of the landowners by the law office. As time went on, Verplanck made these journeys alone or in company with Mills Blake. The two of them soon became interested in locating the boundary lines of the lands claimed by Andrew Colvin's clients, thus laying the foundation for the life's work they would pursue in the greater hills to the north, the Adirondack Mountains.

Verplanck had already become interested in the Adirondacks while digging into old records of land patents and surveys in the various State offices of record in Albany, in pursuit of his interests in geography and other natural sciences. He had even corresponded with Charles Fenno Hoffman and the Reverend Joel T. Headley, two of the earliest of the Adirondack writers. In the course of the research, he ran into Alfred Billings Street, then chief librarian of the New York State Law Library and the author of Woods and Waters, an account of a summer vacation in the country of the Raquette River and the Saranac Lakes. The book included a description of his ascent of Whiteface Mountain.

All these factors only contributed to the mysteries of the Adirondacks as far as Verplanck was concerned. He was drawn, more and more, to the north. In

May of 1865, he journeyed to Sturgess (now Speculator) and Sageville (now Lake Pleasant), seeking out these villages because they were located near the westerly and southerly lines of the great Totten and Crossfield's Purchase, which encompassed most of the southeasterly quarter of the area of the Adirondack Mountains. Colvin had found that many of the lines of the early patents seemed to overlap, as the first surveyors had been concerned only in the patent or township they were surveying and had little interest in what another surveyor had done in a patent or township adjoining. Clearly, the situation called for a land surveyor who could sort it all out and produce a grand map of the Adirondacks, correctly orienting the patent, township, tract and lot lines with the streams, mountains, lakes and the land itself. In the end, the project became a crusade and Verplanck appointed himself its leader. That event, however, was yet to come. Colvin's first trip north only confirmed the shortcomings of the original surveys and the Adirondacks' complete attraction for him.

Throughout the later 1860's, Verplanck and Mills Blake continued to be involved in the work of the law office and the "Wars" in the Helderbergs. Verplanck's interest in these hills had been enhanced by his growing association with a group of scientists who together constituted the Albany Institute, an old and respected literary and scientific society. Verplanck was elected a member of the Institute in 1869 and continued a staunch member of it until it consolidated with the Albany Historical and Art Society to become The Albany Institute and Historical Society in 1900. In fact, Verplanck was the last president of the Institute, serving in that office from 1895 until the consolidation.

It was this association that rekindled Verplanck's interest in geology and drew him and Mills Blake back to the Helderbergs in 1869 to conduct a geographical and geological survey. Their study resulted in a 16-page article published by Harper's New Monthly Magazine in its October, 1869, issue, which presented a preview of the vivid and fanciful writing that would characterize Colvin's later Adirondack survey reports. His opinion of the article was also characteristic--he felt that it "excited much attention" and raised him to "a high position in American literature."

His interests were, indeed, many. All except chemistry were associated with the outdoors, and his chemical studies were somewhat shortlived when he blew up his homemade laboratory while conducting an experiment. It was land surveying and the Adirondacks that finally took up most of his time. On his fourth trip to the Adirondacks, in October of 1868, he later claimed that he delivered a speech at the (then) Lake Pleasant Post Office and was there the first to call for the establishment of a State Park and a Forest Preserve in the Adirondacks. Actually, he wasn't the first. Samuel H. Hammond, writing in his 1857 Wild Northern Scenes; or Sporting Adventures with the Rifle and Rod proposed marking "out a circle of a hundred miles in diameter" in the Adirondacks and throwing "around it the protecting aegis of the constitution" in order to "consecrate these old forests, these rivers and lakes, these mountains and valleys...." And, an August 9, 1864, editorial of The New York Times called for "our citizens" to "form combinations, and, seizing upon the choicest of the Adirondack Mountains, before they are despoiled of their forests, make of them grand parks, owned in common...." Colvin's claim was not all hollow, however; the writers of those passages would not again set their pens (or voices) to those pleas and Colvin would.

In August of 1869, Verplanck made his first trip to the so-called High Peaks of the Adirondacks, the region of 4,000-foot summits in northwesterly Essex County and southeasterly Franklin County, for the purpose of "geologizing." While there, he made his first climb to the summit of Mount Marcy, New York State's highest peak. He returned that December to spend his first winter in the Adirondacks. The highlight for him on this trip was shooting his first bear. After an extended hunt on snowshoes, he fired the fatal shot at "about quarter past one, January 1st, 1870." It was a grand event, and Colvin presented his "Narrative of a Bear Hunt in the Adirondacks" to the January 18, 1870, meeting of the Albany Institute.

In contrast to that cold journey, on February 4 Colvin headed south, accompanied by his grandmother, his Aunt Mary, Uncle James and cousin Tom. They traveled by train through Philadelphia and Baltimore to Washington and continuing by boat and train they visited Richmond, Wilmington and Charleston and the sites of the battles where Verplanck's brother James had fought during the Civil War. The party spent some time with Uncle James' son, Joe Meeker, in Florida. They continued by train, eventually reaching New Orleans on February 24. They traveled up the Mississippi by steamboat to Cairo, Illinois, and then by train to Chicago where they visited other relatives. Finally, they returned to Albany by train, arriving on March 13.

The "Southern Trip," chronicled in one of Colvin's journals, seemed to clear the way for what was to become his first step into the official State records of the Adirondacks. In late September of 1870, he headed north again with his "main object" being the "barometric measurement of Mt. Seward, a lofty peak, of the ascent of which there is no record, and the height of which

remained in doubt." He did reach the summit (although some question remains whether or not his party was the first to do so) on October 15 and he did complete his "hypsometric observations" to determine the peak to be "4,462 feet above tide-level, or the sea." However, the importance of the journey did not rest with the measurement of the peak.

On his return to Albany, Colvin wrote a report of the expedition and his measurement of the mountain and submitted it (under date of December 16, 1870) to the secretary of the Board of Regents of the State of New York. He also read his paper to the Albany Institute. Its publication by the Regents in the 24th Annual Report on the New York State Museum of Natural History and its transmittal to the Legislature on April 18, 1871, remains the cornerstone in Adirondack history. The first nine and one-half pages of the report (including Colvin's full page sketch of "Mount Seward from Lake Incapahcho or Long Lake") describe the trip from Albany, the climb to the summit (where "the view hence was magnificent"), the measurements, the descent and the return trip to Albany. In the last page and one-half, Colvin called "attention to a subject of much importance." That, he said, was the "...Adirondack wilderness [which] contains the springs which are the sources of our principal rivers, and the feeders of the canals...." These will not long last, he warned, if we continue "...the chopping and burning off of vast tracts of forest in the wilderness...."

Colvin closed his report--which became, in effect, a report to the Legislature--by proposing a remedy, "...the creation of an ADIRONDACK PARK or timber preserve..." and making the plea "...that these forests should be

preserved; and for posterity should be set aside, this Adirondack region, as a park for New York, as is the Yosemite for California and the Pacific States...." There it was--Colvin's first "report," and the first official publication by State government of a recommendation for what finally became the Adirondack Forest Preserve and the Adirondack Park and, even, the Catskill Forest Preserve and the Catskill Park.

Colvin made his annual trip to the Adirondacks in the late summer of 1871. The local (Keeseville) press reported that the "scientific expedition" was to last six weeks and was "...with the intention of making an accurate survey of the less-known and remote portions of the wilderness...." The "expedition," which included the State Botanist, traveled throughout the High Peaks country, ascended Mt. Marcy, went through Panther Gorge and Indian Pass, visited the iron works at Tahawus, paddled down Long Lake and the Raquette River, went to Big Tupper Lake, explored the Bog River and spent the last night of the trip at Paul Smith's hotel before returning to Albany by train. Through it all, Colvin spent his time "...correcting the map of this region and ascertaining the relative height of all the principal mountains...."

Later in the year, he journeyed to a more distant mountain range. He left Albany by train in early October and passed through Chicago the day before Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over the lantern in the barn, on his way to the gold-mining territory around Denver, Colorado. He climbed Gray's Peak, a mountain of over 14,000 feet near the silver-mining town of Georgetown. Colvin's article on this "western trip" was carried in the December 1872 issue of Harper's New Monthly Magazine under the title of "The Dome of the Continent."

By this time, others had picked up on Colvin's idea that cutting of the forests of the Adirondacks had to be controlled if the flow of the waters from those mountains was to continue. In particular, the effects of a long drought had had a serious effect on the water supply of the City of Albany; some were suggesting that the water of the Hudson River, polluted though it was, be used as an alternate water source.

Many of the discussions on this subject were held in the meetings of the Albany Institute. In fact, Colvin's paper on the ascent of Mount Seward had served as a point of beginning for those discussions. Franklin B. Hough, a country doctor from Lowville, on the western fringe of the Adirondacks, was a corresponding member of the Institute and attended its April 2, 1872, meeting, where the subject of the evening was "The Water Supply of Albany."

Hough seems to have had little time for doctoring. He was the writer of separate histories of the Counties of Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence and, in 1873, wrote a Gazetteer of the State of New York. He supervised the State census in 1865 and the Federal census in 1870. In 1873, he was invited to attend the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Portland, Maine, and gave an address entitled "On the Duty of Governments in the Preservation of Forests." Its concluding line suggested "...That this Association might properly take measures for bringing to the notice of our several State Governments, and Congress with respect to the Territories, the subject of protection to the forests, their cultivation, regulation, and encouragement...." The Association accepted the suggestion and appointed a committee, with Hough as Chairman, to publicize the idea of protection of the forests.

The committee, with Hough providing most of the effort, worked its way through the Congress and President Grant. It succeeded in obtaining approval for an 1876 appropriation of \$2,000 to the Commissioner of Agriculture to employ a forestry agent. Hough was appointed to the new post on August 30, 1876, and remained in it until 1883. This office became the Division of Forestry in 1886, the Bureau of Forestry in 1901 and the United States Forest Service in 1905.

These events on the national level, however, followed the crossing of the paths of Colvin and Hough in early 1872. Significantly, all this discussion about New York State water-supply problems and the Adirondacks as a possible source was going on while the Legislature was in town. The upshot of the discussion was Chapter 848 of the Laws of 1872, passed on May 23, which established "A commission of State parks for the State of New York" and charged it with the duty "...to inquire into the expediency of providing for vesting in the State the title to the timbered regions lying within the counties of Lewis, Essex, Clinton, Franklin, St. Lawrence, Herkimer and Hamilton, and converting the same into a public park...." Seven commissioners were appointed, "...to hold office for two years, to act without compensation...." They included a former governor of the State, Horatio Seymour; a former State engineer, William B. Taylor; a future vice-president of the United States, William A. Wheeler; Franklin Hough; and Verplanck Colvin, who was promptly chosen as secretary.

The First Annual Report of this commission (and the only one) was completed and submitted on May 15, 1873. Colvin was the author and saw to it that his arguments for protecting the forests of the Adirondacks as a means of assuring the continuation of the waters flowing from the mountains were included. The

commissioners were "...of opinion that the protection of a great portion of that forest from wanton destruction is absolutely and immediately required...." They did "...not favor the creation of an expensive and exclusive park for mere purposes of recreation, but, condemning such suggestions, recommend[ed] the simple preservation of the timber as a measure of political economy...." They concluded "...that the permanent preservation of a large portion of this forest is necessary..." and recommended "...that the wild lands now owned and held by the State be retained...."

The commissioners held strongly to their view, so much so that they asked Colvin to personally visit Governor John A. Dix and "...urge him to recommend to the Legislature, in his annual message, the great State Park...." Colvin did, indeed, "call upon" the governor and found him "reading the proof-sheets of his message." Dix was not in full agreement with the commission or Colvin but, in the end he "...clipped the proof-sheets... and inserted the recommendation I desired...." It all came to nothing, however; the report received little attention at the time, was received, filed and forgotten.

Colvin may not have minded. By then, he had been charged with a greater work. Since his first interest in the Adirondacks and their topography and in the lines of the land patents, he had continued to collect maps of the mountains and had, on an annual basis, explored through the mountains attempting to reconcile the differences he found. It was a life's work, he thought, and he had accomplished it thus far on his own time and with his own money. He would carry on, but "...to thus continue this great work at his own expense his friends protested... It was then suggested that this was a work of a public

character which the State should have executed, and if done by private enterprise it should at least receive the aid of the State as a work of public benefit. Application was accordingly made to the Legislature and a small appropriation--less than was asked for--was granted...."

The Legislature's "less than was asked for" response was Chapter 733 of the Laws of 1872. This was one of the usual "supply" or "appropriation" bills and it included the specification: "...For Verplanck Colvin, of Albany, N.Y., ten hundred dollars, to aid in completing a survey of the Adirondack wilderness of New York, and a map thereof; and he shall render to the Legislature, within thirty days after the opening of the next annual session thereof, a full report of his explorations and survey...." The bill was passed on May 15 and, after some delay, Colvin headed north. However meager he may have thought the funding to be, he was given a forum through which to agitate for more money, for continuation of his work and, ultimately, for an Adirondack Park. He would use the requirement of a "full report" to good advantage.



[founded
1922]

It would seem that both Colvin's personal and professional lives between the years 1872 and 1900 were devoted entirely to his survey work of the Adirondacks. For the most part this is true, although he found time for a full involvement in the interests of the Albany Institute and was a member of many other organizations such as the Adirondack Guides Association, [the Adirondack Mountain Club,] the Sierra Club, the National Geographic Society, the Sons of the Revolution, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Institute of Mining Engineers, the Adirondack Club, the Club Alpine Francais of Paris. At one time he was President of the Albany Chamber of Commerce.

As with the Survey, however, his personal life seemed to be beset by disappointment. His father, Andrew James Colvin, became stricken with paralysis in the later years of his life, which partially disabled him until his death on July 8, 1889. Verplanck was called from his work on the Herkimer-Oneida County line to be present at his father's death.

Verplanck never married, but he was once in love. The object of his affections was Harriet Langdon Pruyn of a prominent Albany family. Harriet was a daughter of John V.L. Pruyn, president of the Albany Institute at the time Colvin became a member. It appears that Colvin first visited the Pruyn household as the guest of Harriet's brother Jack. He was a frequent caller there in the late 1880's, and reports go that he would stay for hours, generally silent except when he recounted the events of his shooting of the last panther to roam the Adirondacks in 1877. The telling of this tale was rendered with rifle in hand and an acting out of the hunt.

He was truly infatuated with Hattie Pruyn, even though she was some twenty years his junior. He wrote her poetry and, once, joined in the music and singing at the house when Hattie was ill and all were trying to make her day more pleasant. It all came to sadness in 1891 when Hattie became engaged to William G. Rice, who had been secretary to Governors Grover Cleveland and David Hill. Colvin never again fell in love.

The most devastating year for Colvin was 1900. The problems of funding the Survey became more acute in the late 1890's, as the United States Geological Survey took over the topographic survey of the Adirondacks (along with the survey of the rest of the State) and his long-standing disputes with the State Engineer became more pronounced. Governor Theodore Roosevelt, in his annual message given on January 3, 1900, noted that the Legislature had not funded the State Land Survey in the previous year and recommended that it be placed within the Office of the State Engineer and Surveyor and that all its records be transferred there as well. The end was coming and Colvin could not stop it. It arrived on April 25, 1900, when Governor Roosevelt signed into law Chapter 661 of the Laws of 1900. The wording of that law left no doubt:

"Section 1. The office of the superintendent of the state land survey is hereby abolished.

"§2. All of chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, entitled 'An act making an appropriation for the state land survey,' except section five thereof, and all acts amendatory thereof or supplemental thereto are hereby repealed.

§3. This act shall take effect immediately."

Just two months later, on June 25, Colvin's mother died. The two most important parts of his life came to an end within a span of sixty days.

Over the next few years, Colvin and Mills Blake returned to the Adirondacks at times, involved in some sort of surveys and magnetic observations. Colvin became involved in garnet mining, actually purchasing land for that purpose in the garnet country at Gore Mountain in northwest Warren County and seeing to the operation of the mines between 1903 and 1915.

The biggest project of his later life was his involvement with a railroad that was to run through the Adirondack Mountains, in contradiction to his pleas for protection of the area during the years of the Survey. Colvin had been connected with a number of railroad projects as a consulting engineer and in other capacities in the 1880's and 1890's and had been president of the Schenectady and Albany Railroad, which never progressed beyond the planning stage. The rights to this short line were acquired in 1890 along with other lines by what eventually evolved into the New York Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1905. The idea behind that consolidation was a grand railroad that would run from New York City through the Adirondacks to Ogdensburg on the St. Lawrence River and the Canadian border. Colvin became president of New York Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1905, the year of consolidation. He tried mightily to fund the railroad, but that effort was even less successful than funding the Adirondack Survey. The railroad never progressed beyond the paper stage and faded away completely about 1911.

In the winter of 1916-1917, Colvin slipped on the ice while running for a trolley in Albany and fell, striking his head a hard blow on the pavement. He never recovered from the concussion he suffered and, over the next two years,

deteriorated both physically and mentally. He became a semi-invalid, cared for by Mills Blake. The two of them were the only residents of the big Colvin house. On January 30, 1919, he was examined by one Dr. Mosher, who had been Colvin's friend for a number of years, and was found to be incapable of caring for himself. He was sent to the mental ward of the Albany Hospital.

At a hearing held at the Albany County Courthouse in early February, Verplanck Colvin was declared to be a lunatic. On February 22, 1919, he was transferred to the Marshall Infirmary in Troy. There, confined away from the mountains and the woods and the rocks and the streams and his beloved Adirondack Mountains, he faded more rapidly. He died at the Infirmary on May 28, 1920.

Colvin is buried in the family plot on the easterly side of the Coeymans Cemetery on a bluff overlooking the Hudson River as it flows south to the sea from its source, the "summit water" on the upper slopes of Mt. Marcy--Lake Tear of the Clouds. Colvin's grave is one of four, all facing the river and all marked by identical stones. The first in line (from the north) reads:

Margaret C.A. Colvin
Wife of
Andrew James Colvin
March 19, 1812
June 25, 1900

The second stone reads:

Andrew James Colvin
Husband of
Margaret C.A. Colvin
April 30, 1808
July 8, 1889

The third stone reads:

Verplanck Colvin
son of A.J. and
Margaret C.A. Colvin
Born in Albany, N.Y.
January 4, 1847
May 28, 1920

The fourth stone is blank. The story has it that this was to be for Mills Blake. He, however, spent the last years of his life with Clara and Frank Dennis, neighbors of Colvin who had helped Blake care for him before Colvin's committal to the Marshall Infirmary. When Blake died on March 4, 1930, he was buried in the Dennis family plot in the Chestnut Lawn Cemetery at New Baltimore.

Colvin was, indeed, an extraordinary individual. The people of New York State, and beyond, owe much to his dogged persistence. He spent his family fortune, modest though it was, in pursuit of a cause he believed in, even while being criticized. He carried on in the face of blizzards and storms, some arising in the field and others in the halls of government. He left behind, in his annual reports, a literary record that is unmatched anywhere.

THE ANNUAL REPORTS

If Verplanck Colvin is remembered for nothing else, his reports to the Legislature have stood the test of time and remain a basic literature of the Adirondack Mountains. Colvin's survey, under one name or another, continued for nearly thirty years. Funding was a constant problem; he always got "less than was asked for"; and he never stopped complaining about the delay in publication of his annual reports. Over the years, researchers have also complained about

the missing years in the run of the reports and the combining of more than one year in the various volumes that resulted--anomalies that make it difficult to sort out information from the survey and keep it in some kind of chronological order. A summary of Colvin's "annual" reports is presented below as a means toward a better understanding of Colvin's life and his Adirondack work.

ake

1. Report for the year 1872 - Report on a Topographical Survey of the Adirondack Wilderness of New York submitted on March 10, 1873; published as Document No. 53 in Volume 3 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, Ninety-Sixth Session - 1873 and as a separate volume by The Argus Company, Printers, Albany, 1873. 43 pages, frontispiece, 2 fold-out maps.

This, the first of the annual reports, remains a classic for a number of reasons. First, and obviously, because it was the first; second, because in it Colvin described his discovery of "...the summit water of the State, and the loftiest known and true high source of the Hudson river..." which, in his report for the following year, he named Lake Tear-of-the-clouds; third, because he was still filled with hope that those who controlled the purse-strings of the State budget would recognize the importance of his work and provide sufficient funding to carry it through (the bitterness and frustrations of later years were yet to come) and, finally, because he realized that, in its pages, he had a ready-made forum from which to speak for preservation of the Adirondacks. In this report, he continued the argument first raised in his report to the Board of Regents of his 1870 ascent to the summit of Mt. Seward. That argument had to do

with water supply. Its thesis was: "...the cold, healthful, living waters of the wilderness... will be required for the domestic water supply of the cities of the Hudson River valley...."

Colvin was not, however, a preservationist in the present-day sense of the word. While calling for preservation of the forests of the Adirondacks, he went on to say that they should be considered as "... a forest-farm and source of timber supply for our buildings and our ships. The deprivation of a State of its timber is a grave error in political economy...."

The report describes the work of the year accomplished by "...More than twenty experienced woodmen, or guides....," one of whom was his good friend, Mills Blake. It was in this year that he began to place the distinctive bolts "...of pure, soft copper... with the words 'Adirondack Survey,' etc., in sunken letters... cut in the flattened heads of the bolts, together with the number of the station... to show the position of the theodolite..." on the summits of the mountains he visited in the course of the triangulation work. Bolt No. 1 was set, appropriately, "...in the summit of Mt. Marcy...."

Not all was positive, however. Even though his funding bill had been signed into law in May, it took some time for the money to be made available. Accordingly, the field work did not begin until late July, although Colvin and Blake had spent some time in getting together the necessary instruments, equipment and supplies. The \$1,000 did not go far in that respect, as he found it necessary to borrow "...the very superior theodolite made by Troughton & Simms, of London..." from the Albany Academy. Similarly, "...The sextant was an instrument of my own..." and "...The large, compensated aneroid barometer was also my own...." Even with these travails, however, the beginnings of the survey were full of promise.

The report's frontispiece, captioned "Station on Bald Peak," was drawn by Colvin, as were the two fold-out maps. The first, and the smallest of the two, was entitled "Specimen of Portion of a Reconnaissance Map" and depicted the topography and physical features of "... a mountainous region in Warren county...." The second was entitled "Sketch Showing the Primary Triangulation Together with the Divide between the streams flowing to the Hudson and St. Lawrence Rivers." These were, however, only two of the ninety-eight "...reconnaissance maps of topography, made during the season...."

2. Report for the year 1873 - Report on the Topographical Survey of the Adirondack Wilderness of New York submitted on April 21, 1874; published as Document No. 98 in Volume 5 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, Ninety-Seventh Session - 1874 and as a separate volume by Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, Albany, 1874. 306 pages, 20 plates including fold-out maps, index.

The work of the first year of the survey had evidently impressed someone because the funding bill for 1873 (Chapter 760, Laws of 1873) provided \$4,250 to Colvin for his work. He was grateful that the survey had become "...connected with the state government..." but was quick to point out that originally it had been "...undertaken and carried on at my own expense...." The funding was still short, it would seem, because he had to again borrow the Troughton & Simms theodolite from the Albany Academy and he again took his own sextant and aneroid barometer, "...which was unfortunately broken by an assistant...."

Nevertheless, Colvin was able to expand his work force. A total of fifty-one "...generally skillful hunters and trappers... were employed during the season as guides and packmen..." and five assistants were put in charge of "...different parties at distant stations...." Mills Blake was one of these, and he "...continued his services throughout the whole season, and in charge of the advance parties, near Long Lake, at Blue Mountain, etc., successfully prepared the way for the survey party...."

The field work for 1873 was broken down into three divisions with one of the assistants being in charge of each, although Colvin never seemed to let them get out of sight. The First Division was involved, beginning on July 12, in "...Trigonometrical work along Lake Champlain and its vicinity...." The Second Division had the more arduous task, leaving Albany on August 11 on the "...First Expedition into the Wilderness of this Season...", and spent most of its time in the High Peaks country of Essex County. It was the guides of this division who named one of the summits on the southerly side of Lower Ausable Lake as Mount Colvin and measured it "...to be 4,142 feet above tide level...." The Third Division headed out in the first week of October "...to cover the final measurements from one or two light-houses on Lake Champlain, at Crown Point, and also at Plattsburgh...." This division was also to extend the survey into "...the Saranac and Tupper lake regions, with the exploration of the remote section lying beyond the sources of Bog River, where arose the mingled affluents of the Oswegatchie and Beaver rivers...." Not to be outdone, one of the guides of this division, taking the "discoverer's privilege," named a lake southeasterly from Cranberry Lake as Lake Colvin.

The first 72 pages of this report describe, in detail, the preparations for the work of the year, and follows, almost step by step, the travels and tasks of the three divisions. The remainder of the report is given over to summaries, sections and tables on "Hypsometry," "Mountain Passes Available for Railroads," "Hydrography," "Newly Mapped Lakes," "Boundaries," "Triangulation," "Reconnaissance Maps," "Geology" and four appendices.

Appendix A gives a narrative description of each one of the twenty illustrations and maps (all drawn by Colvin) scattered throughout the report. Appendix B contains extensive tables of the leveling work that determined the elevations of the numerous lakes, ponds and mountains visited during the year. Appendix C includes descriptions of some of the original land patents in the Adirondacks and tables listing all of them. Appendix D consists of "...extracts from the report for 1872...."

It will be remembered that on May 15, 1873, Colvin had completed his writing of the First Annual Report of the Commission of State Parks for the State of New York, having served as Secretary with that commission. He did not forget the recommendations in that report or the recommendations he had made himself to the Board of Regents in 1871.

He thought--presumptively, as it turned out--that the "...popular demand...for more complete and accurate information in regard to this wonderful wilderness region, probably owes its origin to the general enthusiasm for the proposed state or Adirondack park...." He included a two-page section entitled "Adirondack Park" and therein gave his recommendation for a "...proposed park

or state forest reserve and the area or portion advisable to be taken for that purpose...." He thought it should include "...the heart of the Adirondack ...Mt. Marcy and all the great peaks of 4,000 and 5,000 feet altitude...not far from 600 square miles or 384,000 acres...."

In the end, he concluded that the survey should be continued. In justification, he pointed out that the report from the previous year had gained great attention, "...Acknowledgements have been already received, some from China, some from Russia, all showing an appreciation of this survey...."

3. Report for the years 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877 and 1878 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack Survey submitted on March 7, 1879; published as Document No. 87 in Volume 6 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Second Session. - 1879. 64 pages. Published as a separate volume entitled, Seventh Annual Report on the Progress of the Topographical Survey of the Adirondack Region of New York, to the Year 1879 by Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, Albany, 1880. 536 pages with the first 64 pages being the same as those in Assembly Document No. 87 above, 32 plates, 7 fold-out maps, index.

This report, containing as it does a report for five years instead of one, is the first tangible evidence of the problems Colvin was encountering in obtaining funding from a reluctant Legislature for the field work of the survey and the printing of annual reports. In fact, it appears that Colvin paid for the printing of the 536-page volume himself, as the copyright was issued in his name. This first 64 pages, which were published in Documents of the Assembly, are filled with undisguised rebukes to the Legislature for not providing sufficient money to carry on the work.

Colvin thought "...The progress of the work...has been extremely satisfactory...notwithstanding the limited means at command...." He reminded the Legislature that the "...Adirondack Survey has now been in progress under the authority of the State government for seven years...with the smallest of appropriations...its work has been steadily advanced as far as the means admitted...." Even though "...Five years have elapsed since the Legislature has required a report from this department...", he had persevered "...despite the smallness of appropriations...." He did acknowledge that he had received appropriations for 1874 through 1877 "...but from motives of economy, the publication of the annual reports was not then provided for...." Worst of all, he called "...the attention of the present Legislature to the fact that the appropriation made by the Legislature of 1874, for salary for 1872 and 1873, amounting to the sum of five thousand dollars, has never been paid...." He was late in starting work in 1876 because "...The appropriation was not available until late in the spring...." He seemed better off in 1878, that being "...the first appropriation even approximately adequate to the great work to be accomplished, and thus relieving my private purse from large expenditures on account of the survey...." These were bad times, indeed, and a lesser man would have given up in disgust.

The first 37 pages of the report (in both volumes) were used to provide short summaries of the work done in the first four years of the total five years covered. The remainder of the 64 pages in the Documents of the Assembly (and repeated in the larger volume) were used to describe the work of the 1878 season. As long as he had "approximately adequate" funding, he expanded his staff to six divisions, each assigned a specific function or geographical area

of the Adirondacks. Mills Blake was put in charge of the Division of Levels and "...superb results were obtained...." Seneca Ray Stoddard, the renowned photographer and guidebook author from Glens Falls, was in charge of the Photographic Division.

The remainder of the larger volume was divided into sections on a "Résumé of Adirondack History," "Instruments," "Triangulation," "Magnetic Variation," "Hydrography," "River Surveys," "Altitudes," "Leveling," "Barometric Hypsometry and Meteorology," "Temperatures," "Rain-fall," "Boundaries," "Photographic Division," "Personnel," "Comments" (from around the World) on the earlier reports, "Publications Received," "Acknowledgments," an article by Colvin on "The Winter Fauna of Mount Marcy," an article by J.A. Lintner on "Lepidoptera of the Adirondack Region," an article by Charles H. Peck (the State Botanist) on "Plants of the Summit of Mount Marcy," an article by George Chahoon on "Iron Deposits in the North Eastern Division," the "Manual of the Adirondack Survey" and numerous and lengthy tables in some sections.

Some 140 pages, however, were given over to an expanded narrative "...condensed from the journals and unpublished reports of the survey since 1874, [which] completes the history of the field-work down to the close of the year 1878...." This section took the diary form of the two earlier reports. Colvin duly noted, however, that "...The reduction of appropriations in 1874 rendered it impossible to carry on any field-work, and made it necessary to discharge nearly all of the assistants, the work during the season being confined to the duties of the office...."

Colvin was the artist of all 32 plates, four of which were in color. He also drew five of the seven maps. Of the other two, one was drawn by "F. Tweedy, C.E. Assistant in charge of the Beaver River Division" and the other was drawn by Mills Blake.

4. Report for the year 1879 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack Survey submitted on March 5, 1880; published as Document No. 77 in Volume 6 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Third Session, 1880. 8 pages.

Colvin began this, the first of many short reports, with a fiscal accounting of the expenditures of the Survey for the year. He spent more than was appropriated and the account ended with the notation "Balance due superintendent..... \$1,503.15." The fiscal problems had been such that he found it necessary to acknowledge "...the faithfulness and devotion of all the assistants, aids and employees of the survey, who, aware that their salaries could not be paid until fall, nevertheless, one and all, worked steadily on...."

"The organization of the survey was continued nearly the same as during the last season...;" that is, the three divisions--(1) Primary Triangulation, Astronomical Observations, (2) Division of Levels and (3) Signal Division--were in the field and were involved in seven different areas of responsibility: (1) Southwestern Division, (2) Mid. Western Division, (3) North Western Division, (4) South Eastern Division, (5) Mid. Eastern Division, (6) North Eastern Division and (7) Meteorological. The Photographic Division "was discontinued."

The remaining four pages of the report recounted the field work for the year. While the report may have been brief, the field work began on June 21 and lasted into November. Some problems were encountered "...Owing to the intense smoke, caused by forest fires, and a heated atmosphere...." But, Colvin reported that "...results have been obtained which were even greater than anticipated..." even "...in the face of numerous obstacles...."

The original report included twenty-five "...illustrations, maps, photographs, etc. ...and with the several memoranda relative to phenomena and scientific notes will be found in the appendix...." However, the appendix was not printed.

5. Report for the year 1880 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack Survey submitted on March 1, 1881; published as Document No. 61 in Volume 4 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Fourth Session, 1881. 25 pages, 1 fold-out map.

This was the second of the shortened reports which had "...been made as brief as practicable...." Although Colvin did propose "...to collect the results of work in two volumes...", these never appeared, and the 25 pages of this report were not included in any of the larger popular versions that were printed in later years.

Nevertheless, although brief, this report described the work of the year in some detail. "...[T]he field work of the survey was extended over different sections of the counties of Essex, Warren, Hamilton, Herkimer and Franklin...", Colvin reported. Even with the "...exceedingly limited...means afforded for the accomplishment of this great work...", he had been able to organize the work into six departments: "(1) Triangulation," "(2) Leveling," "(3) Plane-Table mapping," "(4) River, Route and Lake surveys," "(5) Land-line surveys and Magnetic observations" and "(6) Meteorological work." Four divisions were put in the field: "(1) Division of Levels," "(2) North-Eastern Division," "(3) Mid-Eastern Division" and "(4) Mid-Western Division." The report included a summary, in some detail, of the accomplishments and travels of each division

and in each department. Colvin himself personally directed the triangulation and plane-table work. Mills Blake continued in charge of the Division of Levels and provided "...the same efficient management, the work designed for the season being carried forward to completion in the face of many obstacles...."

It was a hard year. The field work was started in June and "...was carried on continuously, except when interrupted by storms or cloudy weather, or the more exasperating delays occasioned by forest fires and an atmosphere dense with smoke...." It was not until December that "...the head-quarters were transferred from the tent of the superintendent on the snow-covered summit of Mt. Bluebeard or Pharoah, to the survey office in Albany...."

The single map, 32 by 40 inches, was drawn by Colvin and depicted the triangulation network put in during the year.

6. Report for the year 1881 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack Survey submitted on March 1, 1882; published as Document No. 57 in Volume 3 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Fifth Session, 1882. 5 pages.

This was one of the shortest reports. Although the pages were five in number, the text covered less than three pages. However, that may have been because Colvin "...thought best to reduce and arrange this data in as brief

space as may be possible, to avoid unnecessary expense [his?] in publication..., so great has been the amount of work, and so large the number of field maps completed...."

"...The work of the season...has been most fatiguing and arduous....," he wrote—and indeed it was. Work had been carried on in a number of divisions or departments: "(1) Triangulation," "(2) Leveling," "(3) River Surveys," "(4) Patent lines and Magnetic Declination Studies" and "(5) Meteorology." A paragraph or two, with the briefest of detail, was all that was used to describe the accomplishments for the year in each of these departments. The field work had begun in early March and was continued until late December.

7. For the year 1882 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack Survey submitted on February 28, 1883; published as Document No. 177 in Volume 7 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Sixth Session, 1883. 29 pages.

It appears that these 29 pages of text were intended to constitute the written report for the work of 1882. However, the text was not the whole of the report as it included a "...case of maps and portfolio of plates and photographs..." which were "...intended as illustrations of the work...." It also included a number of appendices. However, none of these were printed with the narrative. Nevertheless, the written report is complete and, although concise, gives some detail of what was accomplished during the year.

The field work began early with guides being "...sent out on snow-shoes to examine and report upon the availability of certain mountains in the Moose river region as signal stations..." and was not concluded until "...late in the autumn...on account of a heavy fall of snow..." although one party remained "...in the field until January, 1883...." The work was arranged into a number of departments: "(1) Primary Triangulation and Astronomical," "(2) Secondary Triangulation," "(3) Tertiary Triangulation" and "(4) Transit and Traverse Lines;" and was carried out by a number of divisions: "(1) North-Western Division," "(2) Middle-Eastern Division," "(3) South-Western Division," "(4) Middle-Western Division," "(5) Leveling Division," "(6) Signal Division" and "(7) Meteorological Division." Fourteen survey and signal parties had been sent to the field to work in eight counties: Warren, Essex, Hamilton, Herkimer, Franklin, St. Lawrence, Lewis and Clinton. Colvin had been ill in the spring but personally directed the primary triangulation and astronomical work. Mills Blake was moved from leveling to direct the secondary triangulation.

It was another hard year. Colvin's camp was attacked by bears in early July, resulting in "...the destruction of the tents and baggage...." Wolves and panthers were reported and, although none were shot, Colvin told that one of his guides had killed three panthers and two large wolves in the previous year.

It was a hard year in terms of funding, too. The Legislature, said Colvin, had failed "...to pass any resolution for the printing of copies of the report for distribution...." However, "...the publication of the detailed report should be deferred until the following year... and added to those of preceding years - [to] form a more complete volume, and one of greater value...."

In the closing paragraphs, Colvin got around to the need for some action by the State to protect the forest of the Adirondacks. It was, he said, "...one vast cathedral, not made of hands of men, but fashioned by Omnipotence for His own majestic home...." However, it possessed, "...in addition to its wild grandeur and healthfulness the greatest material importance to every citizen of New York and...under more economical and systematic management, will yield a noble income to the State...." Colvin was not yet a preservationist.

8. For the year 1883 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack and State Land Surveys submitted on February 28, 1884; published as Document No. 126 in Volume 8 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Seventh Session, 1884 and as a separate volume entitled, Report on the Adirondack and State Land Surveys to the Year 1884 by Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, Albany, 1884. 343 pages, 18 plates, 18 maps and diagrams, 6 appendices, index.

Chapter 499 of the Laws of 1883 expanded the work of Colvin and the Adirondack Survey. Heretofore, he had been charged with "...the topographical survey and exploration of the Adirondack wilderness....," called in some funding bills simply "the Adirondack survey." The 1883 law directed Colvin "...to make surveys showing the location and area of the detached portions of state lands in the counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Saratoga, St. Lawrence and Warren, and to connect the same with the surveys of the interior...." This came to be known as the State Land Survey.

The genesis of this new assignment was probably Colvin himself. He had been recommending for some time in the pages of his reports (and otherwise) that the State should undertake the management of the extensive lands it held in the Adirondacks. In his report for the year 1882, he had gone so far as to list the total State land acreage in each of eleven Adirondack counties (including Oneida County, in addition to the ten listed in Chapter 499). He had also obtained, from the State comptroller, "...a complete statement of the lands owned by the State in the Adirondack region, giving in detail the locations, by county, township and lot..." and had included that listing as one of the appendices to the 1882 report (the appendices were not printed). Early in the Legislative session (on February 6), Chapter 13 of the Laws of 1883 had been passed to prohibit sales of any lands belonging to the State in these same ten counties.

Colvin quickly concluded that this new charge did not signal the discontinuance of the earlier and ongoing Adirondack Survey. The requirement that the new work was "...to connect...with the surveys of the interior..." meant, he felt, that both were to go forward. The new bill carried a money appropriation of \$15,000, and it seemed that perhaps he could finally break even in the way of funding. The new bill was passed on June 2, and on June 4 Colvin "...commenced on...the organization of the Survey parties...."

In the end, "...Thirteen survey and signal parties were placed in the field...." These included three to handle the departments of, "(1) Primary Triangulation," "(2) Secondary Triangulation" and "(3) Signal Work" for the continuing Adirondack Survey, and ten field parties to handle the boundary-line work in the ten counties named in the new law.

After the opening pages, which described the organization and personnel and a general summary of the work, the report went into detail of the surveys in the various counties and specifically covered the lines of some of the patents and of the State ownerships in them. One of these sections included the first listing of the islands in Lake George. In addition, the usual sections reporting on "Triangulation," "Elevations" and "Rainfall" (or meteorology) were included. Colvin continued to direct the primary triangulation and Mills Blake was again in charge of the secondary triangulation.

The remainder of the report was set out in appendices. The first four of these (Appendices A-D) listed the State lands, by lot and with the acreages in each, in the ten counties of the 1883 laws. This was the list that Colvin had sent to accompany the 1882 report but had not been printed. Appendix E was a reprinting of the "Laws Relating to the Adirondack Region Passed During 1883." Appendix F was a table setting out observations from a number of stations of the "Declination of the Magnetic Needle."

Colvin did not forget to argue for protection of the Adirondack lands and forests, saying, "...The sentiment of the people of this State, is evidently against the further sale of these State lands. The destruction of the forests; the disenchantment of the lake shores by settlements; the defilement of the pure waters by sewage; the reduction of this wonderful region to an arid waste by fires, has been generally and wisely opposed, throughout the State, by all classes of citizens...."

Although it had been a banner year, he was still beset by funding problems. As usual, "...The limited appropriation for that survey was exhausted...and the

appropriations made for these surveys have been altogether too limited for the work proposed to be done...." The funding was so short that "...it became necessary for the Superintendent to carry on the work of both the Adirondack and State land surveys without compensation...."

The shortage of funding was reflected in the report itself. The first thirteen plates were meant to be photographs, all taken by Colvin. However, these were not printed, although a page was included for each, with a caption and a blank space where the photograph was to be. The remaining plates, five fold-out "crayon sketches" drawn by Colvin, were included. The maps and diagrams, except for those small ones in the text, were also missing.

9. For the year 1884 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack State Land Surveys submitted on February 20, 1885; published as Document No. 79 in Volume 6 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Eighth Session, 1885. 8 pages.

The report for the year 1884 differs from all the other annual reports in that it was not, for the most part, devoted to the accomplishments of the Survey for the year covered. Instead, it was a defense of the Survey and the work it had done against criticisms brought by State Engineer and Surveyor Silas Seymour. In order to understand the situation, it is necessary to look at some of the annual reports of that office and other papers of the time.

However long the State Engineer and Surveyor had resented Verplanck Colvin and the Adirondack surveys, the dissatisfaction surfaced in somewhat veiled language in Seymour's pamphlet entitled "The Department of State Engineer and Surveyor - Shall it be Abolished?," under date of February 28, 1883. In that pamphlet, which had "...an extended circulation, both among members of the Legislature, and the newspaper press throughout the State....," Seymour pointed out that his office was established by the Constitution of New York State and was charged by law with the duty and responsibility "...to superintend the surveys and sales of lands belonging to the people of this State...." In direct contradiction to those legal constraints, said Seymour, "...The Legislature has...created independent offices...and made large appropriations for the performance of work...." Seymour especially resented placing this work "...in the hands of private individuals, who act independently of each other, and who are in no way responsible to, and hold no communication whatever, with this department...."

Seymour, in those statements, was alluding not only to Colvin and his Adirondack Survey, since other work, which Seymour felt belonged with the State Engineer and Surveyor, had been reassigned as well. Seymour gained an ally in Governor Grover Cleveland--or so it seemed.

In a message dated April 16, 1883, accompanying an appropriation bill, Cleveland left no doubt as to his personal feelings about Colvin and the Adirondack Survey. The bill had asked for \$1,300 "...for establishing reference points by which to locate bulkhead lines and grants of land under water...." Cleveland would not approve that request because that duty, he said,

"...properly belongs to the State Engineer and Surveyor... My convictions against inaugurating a work of this character ... are strengthened by the experience of the State in the matters of the State survey and the Adirondack survey...." The State Survey had started in 1876 with a special appropriation for the purpose of "...making an accurate trigonometric and topographical survey of the State for the determination of State and county lines...." It was still going on; it was not under the jurisdiction of the State Engineer and Surveyor; and the costs continued to mount.

Cleveland did, however, approve the \$2,500 appropriation to the Adirondack Survey in the same bill, but only because "...by law that work must terminate the next fiscal year...." Cleveland regretted that the Legislature had provided for the printing of Colvin's reports, saying "...The cost of printing the reports of these surveys has been scandalously large... It is for the people to judge whether any public good has been served by this expenditure...." Less than two months later, Cleveland signed the bill that expanded the scope of Colvin's work to include the survey of the State land in the Adirondacks and provided \$15,000 to fund it.

Silas Seymour, the State Engineer and Surveyor, in his annual report for the year ending September 30, 1883, devoted some pages to "The Adirondack Region as a Source of Water Supply." He recognized that the Adirondack Region "...can be made to accomplish at least one of the main purposes for which it was evidently designed by nature, of furnishing, at all times and seasons, an abundant supply of pure and wholesome water...." However, he didn't think it made any sense to pursue "...An idea [that] seems to have found a lodgment in

the public, that the preservation of the forests in the Adirondack Region is the only means by which an adequate supply of water ... can be secured...." He thought "...it would be very unwise and impolitic to prohibit entirely the removal of the soft or merchantable timber...." The most foolish thing was to suggest that the State acquire the private lands in the Adirondacks, he thought, as the cost of that "...will undoubtedly aggregate from THIRTY TO FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS...." In the worst cut of all, Seymour deplored "...the creation of parasitic bureaus or organizations, known as the 'State Survey,' and the 'Adirondack Survey;' and of making large appropriations for their maintenance and support...."

Seymour's successor, Elnathan Sweet, picked up where Seymour left off. An 1884 law had established what came to be known as the "Sargent Commission" to "...investigate and report a system of forest preservation...." In the annual report of the State Engineer and Surveyor for the year ending September 30, 1884, Sweet reported that, at the request of that Commission, his office had "...caused a map of all the public lands in the Adirondacks region to be compiled from the records in his office and the office of the Comptroller...." After all, "...Such a map seemed to be necessary to enable those Commissioners to even begin their labors...." It was deplorable, thought Sweet, that even though over the past twelve years the State had "...appropriated over \$100,000 for the ostensible purpose of securing accurate surveys and maps of this Adirondack wilderness, no map of any value..." had ever been produced.

It was in rebuttal to this criticism that Colvin directed the bulk of his report for the year 1884. The statements of the State Engineer were, he said, unfounded and an insult. He didn't understand how Sweet and his predecessor could say his maps and surveys were of no value, because "...the State Engineer has not personally made any examination of the maps on file in this office...." He went on to say that the map that had been prepared by the State Engineer and Surveyor for the Sargent Commission was full of "glaring inaccuracies." Nearly all of this annual report was taken up with the rebuttal, and little was said about the work of the Adirondack Survey for the year. Colvin did report, however, that his "...appropriation was insufficient...and the Superintendent has been compelled to conduct the work at his own expense for a long period...."

In the end, the dispute was settled with the intervention of a special committee appointed by the Assembly, which decided that Colvin's work was of a high order and supported his continuation of the Adirondack work. The State Engineer and Surveyor did not admit defeat easily. In both of his following two annual reports (for the year ending September 30, 1885, and for the year ending September 30, 1886), Sweet called for "...the preservation in this office of the notes, maps, records and other results of the defunct ... Adirondack survey..." and recommended "...that the records and property of the Adirondack Survey be also deposited in this office in order that the notes and results may be put in intelligible form...." Colvin, of course, didn't send his records and materials to Sweet.

The conflict had two other results, however. First, in 1891, Colvin ran for the office of State Engineer and Surveyor and lost. While other factors

were certainly involved, Elnathan Sweet was used by the opposition in the campaign and raised again the issues that all thought had been laid to rest with the conclusions of the Assembly's special committee. Second, a principal Adirondack historian, Alfred L. Donaldson, relied on research with the State Engineer and Surveyor's office to compile his information about Colvin. Thus, his picture of Colvin was warped and left a negative impression with the many who read (and still read) his two-volume, A History of the Adirondacks (1924).

10. For the year 1885 - Report of the Superintendent of State Land Survey submitted on March 5, 1886; published as Document No. 80 in Volume 7 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Ninth Session, 1886. 100 pages, 2 fold-out maps, 6 appendices. Published as the first part of a separate volume and entitled therein, Report on the Progress of the Adirondack State Land Survey to the Year 1886 by Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, Albany, 1886.

Colvin wasted no time in pleading for more money. In the third paragraph of the report for the year 1885, he said that the \$15,000 provided to him had "...proved to be inadequate for the accomplishment of all the work desired...." Later on he said that throughout the years of his work, "...when the appropriations of the State were insufficient the Superintendent--the writer, Verplanck Colvin, who has had charge of the work since its inception--has laid out his own means and has carried forward the work at his own expense...." Nevertheless, the work of the year had "gone forward."

Very little of this annual report is devoted to what was actually accomplished during the year. Instead, its pages are devoted to a recapitulation or summary of what had been done in previous years, with the characterization that this work was preliminary to or a getting ready for the greater project of determining the boundaries of the nearly 750,000 acres of State-owned lands in the Adirondacks. Colvin recounted his researches into the original patents, tracts, grants and allotments and the records of the "ancient" surveys. The men engaged in the survey during 1885 had spent a great deal of time in the field searching out and identifying "important corners" and the "true location" of the boundary lines. He mentioned in passing, but without a direct reference to the dispute with the State Engineer and Surveyor, that a critical examination of his work had been made by "...professional experts from Columbia College and Union College, selected by the Legislature of 1885...." However, the only way he could get the work done was with "...An appropriation of \$50,000 per annum for ten years...."

Appendix A was a proposed budget (in the amount of \$28,850) for the year 1887. Appendix B was "An Historical Sketch of the Origin and Present Condition of the New York State Land Surveys" written by Colvin and running some 34 pages. Appendix C was a summary of "Maps Ready for Publication." Appendix D was a short discussion of the various monuments used to delineate the surveys. Appendix E was a lengthy table of altitudes determined by the leveling work of the survey over the years. Appendix F was a summary of corrections to the land list which had been published in the report for the year 1883.

The first map was included as a frontispiece. It depicted, in color, the

land patents of the Adirondacks, and was drawn by Colvin. The second map was "Photo-Lithographed from Ancient Map" and was included as an example of the earlier surveys on which Colvin proposed to base his State Land Survey.

Curiously, Colvin did not mention the 1885 law (Chapter 283) that had created the Forest Preserve from the lands owned by the State in eleven Adirondack and three Catskill counties. The law required that such lands "...be forever kept as wild forest lands..." and that they "...not be sold, nor shall they be leased or taken by any person or corporation, public or private...."

Another curiosity was the second part of the separate volume printed by Weed, Parsons and Company. It was a reprinting of the 343-page report for the year 1883. However, it differed from the two earlier printings--Document No. 126 of Volume 8 of Documents of the Assembly of 1884 and the Weed, Parsons 1884 publication--in that it included the thirteen missing photographs and the missing maps. So, the report for the year 1883 actually had three separate printings, the last of which was the only complete one.

11. For the year 1886 - Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Adirondack State Land Survey. Document No. 74 in Volume 9 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Tenth Session, 1887 dated March 3, 1887.

Document No. 74 includes only the note "(Directed not to be printed.)" No other record of a report for the year 1886 has been found.

12. For the year 1887 - Report of the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on February 28, 1888; published as Document No. 58 in Volume 7 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York. One Hundred and Eleventh Session, 1888. 8 pages. Published as Appendix A in a separate volume entitled, Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer, Albany, 1894.

and as a separate volume by The Troy Press Company, Printers, 1888.

This short report (the text covers only four pages) begins with the usual reiteration of the problem of funding. Colvin says, in the first sentence, that the surveys "...have been greatly impeded during the past year by the deficiency in means; the appropriation made by the last Legislature for the work having been vetoed by the Governor...." This governor (David B. Hill) felt no more kindly toward the Adirondack Survey than had the previous one, Grover Cleveland. In fact, Governor Hill perpetuated the dispute involving the State Engineer and Surveyor. Colvin pointed out that "...the executive has expressed a personal desire that the laws should be so changed that the engineering department should have the control and direction of the scientific, topographic and land-surveys of the State...."

However, "...the survey has been carried forward by the superintendent..." and he reported on his progress by giving a summary in four areas. The "Survey Work" was limited "...to the filling in of details of topography and the determination of stations, locating points on patent and township lines... A few trigonometrical stations were occupied...." Some "Computations" had been done, but these were "...delayed by lack of the additional measurements required...." Not much had been done in preparing "Maps" for the same lack of field data. And the continuing funding problem was holding up "Publications" where the

"...greatest difficulties have been encountered in the attempt to secure the publication of the last annual report...."

All in all, it was a dejected Colvin who made this "brief report." But he closed with hope, "...In the trust and belief that this important survey, now hindered and delayed in its completion, will soon be extended...."

Colvin's response to the fact that he had not been able "to secure the publication of the last annual report" was the separate volume of the current report published by The Troy Press Company. It appears that Colvin himself provided the funds for this publication and the similar paper-bound printings of the short reports for the years 1888, 1889, 1891, 1892 and 1894. 13. For the year 1888 - Report on the Progress of

the State Land Survey submitted on February 27, 1889; published as Document No. 65 in Volume 9 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Twelfth Session, 1889 18 pages, 1 map. Published as Appendix B in a separate volume entitled, Report of the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer, Albany, 1894.

and as a separate volume by The Troy Press Company, Printers, 1889.

Again, the first sentence reported that "...some important surveys have been made notwithstanding the lack of appropriations...." Indeed, some important work had been accomplished and the report went into some detail in describing it.

Field work began in January "...upon the ice of Lake Pleasant and of Sacondaga lake..." where base lines were laid down, "...but the setting in of the very severe snow storms of the winter..." had forced everyone into the office.

In May, "...at the request of the board of supervisors of Herkimer County...", Colvin looked into the question of the location of the line between that county and Oneida County to the west. Field work on that project began in June. The next eight pages of the report covered the familiar daily-diary summary of Colvin's reconnaissance of the county line from June 5 through June 14. The single map, of one-page size, is a sketch of the land patents through which the line passed.

From June 15 through October 25, "...the survey work was transferred to the heart of Hamilton county where important sections of the State lands remained to be separated, by survey, from private property...." This work ranged all across the northern part of Hamilton County and resulted in laying in a further triangulation network and "...in the restoration and resurvey of the ancient boundary line between townships...."

In December, Colvin "...began an examination of the boundary lines of townships 12 and 24, near the town of North Creek in Warren county...." Finally, "...the snow and unfavorable weather.." closed down the field work and "...Office work was then resumed...."

14. For the year 1889 - Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on March 3, 1890; published as Document No. 95 in Volume 14 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Thirteenth Session, 1890. 32 pages, frontispiece, 5 illustrations. Published as Appendix C in a separate volume entitled, Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer, Albany, 1894.

and as a separate volume by James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1890

It appeared, at least for the year 1889, that Colvin had found a solution to his funding problems. The work of the year was spent entirely on the survey of the line between Herkimer and Oneida Counties that had been the subject of the reconnaissance of the previous year. Colvin had deferred further work in 1888 "...as too extensive and costly to be undertaken without special appropriation...." With the report of the 1888 reconnaissance in hand, the Herkimer County Board of Supervisors, early in 1889, made an application "...for an exact and systematic survey, and estimates asked for the expense of the work...."

Colvin's estimate for the work of restoring the county line was \$6,000. A joint committee "...representing the boards of the respective counties..." reviewed the proposal, including the specifications for the monuments to be set to mark the final line, and gave approval to go ahead.

The early part of the year was spent on research into the old records of the land patents and early surveys, and it was not until May 20 that the field work began, when "...the survey party was assembled at Utica, N.Y...." The

remainder of the report is a detailed description, some on a daily-diary basis, of the work of the survey and of the 27 monuments set along the line. The field work continued through October 5, when "...the preparation of the records and maps of the survey, was commenced...."

The five illustrations (or "figures" as they were captioned) are drawings of five of the monuments that were set on the county line. The frontispiece is from a photograph taken by Colvin showing the setting of the "Monument at North Line of Bayard's Patent."

15. For the year 1890 - Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on February 27, 1891; published as Document No. 48 in Volume 5 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York at their One Hundred and Fourteenth Session, 1891. 306 pages, frontispiece photograph and 10 other illustrations including photographs, 11 appendices, index. Published as Appendix D through Appendix N in a separate volume entitled, Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer, Albany, 1894.

The report for the year 1890 is truly a jumble. It seems as if Colvin was determined to issue a bulky report and was willing to sacrifice quality for quantity. Nevertheless, some good material is included.

The first part begins with the (by now) usual statement that "...The work of the year has been restricted, owing to the lack of appropriations...." Colvin had, early on, some hope that he might be able to continue the funding strategy

of the previous year because he had received applications "...on behalf of residents of the counties of Franklin, St. Lawrence and Hamilton for the settlement of disputed boundary lines adjacent to State Lands...." Accordingly, he "took up" some of this work.

The Franklin County work involved a township line beginning in the Village of Saranac Lake. The St. Lawrence County work was "...Near the new town of 'Tupper's Lake'...." In late summer, the survey moved to Saratoga, Fulton and Herkimer counties, where "...an examination was made of the southern escarpment of the Adirondack mountain region...." Some lake levels were determined in Fulton and Hamilton counties in the same late summer period. In the late fall, some work was done on the north boundary of Hamilton County. Colvin included an "Extract from Journal of 1890" covering a period in late October "...as an example of the experiences encountered...", and this is pleasant and interesting reading. Colvin closed the main body of the annual report with a recognition of the "...gratifying growth of a public sentiment in favor of the preservation of the Adirondack forests as a great public domain ... which I was the first to suggest..." and a short summary of the yearly "Office Work."

The remainder of the report is broken down into a number of appendices. Appendix E is a budgetary estimate for the next year. Appendix F is in two parts--the first is a copy of the address given by Colvin on December 11, 1890, "Before the New York Farmers" and the second is a copy of a "Letter Published in the Essex County Republican, December 12, 1889, Containing Extracts from Former Reports Referred to in the Foregoing Address." These two documents are vital from an historical perspective. It is in them that Colvin recounts his work

with the 1872 Commission of State Parks, including his carrying of the Commission report to Governor Dix. It is here also that he says, "...I favor the preservation of the Adirondack forests. I seek the creation of the Adirondack park--a project which I have urged in writing for more than twenty years, and by speech for a much longer period...." He then included the contradictory statement that "...the cost of maintenance of the Adirondack park should be met or paid from the sales of surplus timber; aged trees that have reached maturity and which should not be allowed to go to waste...." Whatever the conclusion from this, the statements contribute to the confusing picture that most people have of Colvin. Was he a preservationist or wasn't he? The answer is that he was, in the sense of the word in 1890, but not in the sense of the word today.

Appendix G is a paper by S. Von Dorrien entitled "Inspection of Forests, their Management in Germany with a Short Review of the Historical Development in Germany." Appendix H is a paper by George Chahoon entitled "Report on the Iron Deposits of the Northeastern Portion of the Adirondack Region; with Industrial Memoranda" and is the same paper that appeared in the report for the years 1874 through 1878. Appendix I is a paper by Fred Mather entitled "Adirondack Fishes with Descriptions of New Species, from Researches Made in 1882." Appendix J is a paper by Charles H. Peck entitled "Plants of the Summit of Mt. Marcy," and is the same paper that appeared in the report for the years 1874 through 1878. Appendix K and Appendix L had also appeared in that earlier report and were the paper by J. A. Lintner entitled "Lepidoptera of the Adirondack Region" and the paper by Colvin entitled "The Winter Fauna of Mt. Marcy." Appendix M was a "Table of Altitudes in the Adirondack Region," and is the same table that appeared in the report for the year 1885. Appendix N was a listing of the maps that had appeared in earlier reports and would appear in following reports.

The second part of Appendix N was a description of seventeen illustrations that were said to appear in the report. The frontispiece and nine of these were photographs taken by Colvin. One was a plate accompanying the Mather article on fishes. All of these did appear in the report. However, the other six listed were the six illustrations that were in the report for the year 1889.

16. For the year 1891 - Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on February 29 1892; published as Document No. 35 in Volume 4 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Fifteenth Session, 1892 17 pages. Published as Appendix O in a separate volume entitled, Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer, Albany, 1894.

and as a separate
Volume by James
B. Lyon, State
Printer, 1892.

Colvin had given up, it seems, on the matter of funding, as he did not mention the lack of it as he began the report of the year 1891. He did, however, mention "...the plan for the creation of a great forest preserve which, under the name of an 'Adirondack Park,' was first suggested by the writer, many years since in State publications, [and] has now attained such a degree of popularity that it may be reasonably hoped that these great public works may soon be perfected...."

The field work of the year was all in the vicinity of the Village of Saranac Lake. Specifically, the line involved was the division line between Townships 21 and 24 of Great Tract 1 of Macomb's Purchase in Franklin County and was one of the lines where reconnaissance work had been done the year before.

Work began in March and was carried on through early August. By then the survey and monumentation of the township line and of a portion of the line between Franklin and Essex Counties (the easterly line of the two townships) were completed. To close out the field work, "...Examinations of lands were also made at the St. Regis lakes, at Paul Smith's and Tupper lake, and lines of levels obtained in other localities...." Then, "...office work resumed in order to place the field notes upon maps...."

17. For the year 1892 - Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on February 28, 1893; published as Document No. 32 in Volume 4 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Sixteenth Session, 1893. 14 pages. Published as Appendix P in a separate volume entitled, Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer, Albany, 1894.

and as a separate volume by James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1893.

The field work for the year 1892 was far ranging, with most of it "...either to prevent trespass or the destruction of boundaries...." Colvin and his crew, for this year at least, could be characterized as firemen heading out to suppress conflagrations as the reports of them were received.

Colvin reported that in "...the middle of March information was given that unauthorized persons were trespassing on the State Lands, in Ponds Survey of the 14th township of Totten and Crossfield's purchase...." This was in the northwest corner of Warren County, and Colvin headed out even though the "...snow was exceeding deep and all traveling of our survey parties was upon snow-shoes...." That work lasted through March 30 when they went to Raquette Lake, "...a dispute having arisen as to the true location of the center line of Township No. 35, in Totten and Crossfield's Purchase...." That held them until

April 14, when they went back to the Township 14 problem. On May 4, they headed back to Raquette Lake. Then, on June 3, they returned to Township 14. This succession of back-and-forth trips and hurried visits to other locations went on throughout the year until the end of September, when Colvin returned to Albany. There "...the reduction of the observations taken in the field were proceeded with, and the personal observations of the Superintendent of Magnetic Declination at Albany were made ready for publication...."

Even though this report was abbreviated, it is curious that Colvin made no mention of Chapter 707 of the Laws of 1892. This was the law that created the Adirondack Park of "...All lands now owned, or which may hereafter be acquired by the state..." within certain specified towns within the counties of Hamilton, Essex, Franklin, Herkimer, St. Lawrence and Warren. The purpose of the Park, as stated in the law, was to forever reserve the "...forest lands necessary to the preservation of the headwaters of the chief rivers of the state, and a future timber supply...." These were Colvin's reasons for an Adirondack Park and the ones he had enunciated a number of times, both in the pages of his earlier reports and elsewhere. But, now that it had finally happened, he was, uncharacteristically, silent.

18. For the year 1893 - Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on February 28, 1894; published as Document No. 84 in Volume 9 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Seventeenth Session, 1894. 406 pages, 17 appendices including the entire of the reports for the years 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891 and 1892, index. The Report for the year 1893 actually consists of pages 5 through 12 in the above volume and in a separate volume entitled, Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey by James B. Lyon, State Printer,

Albany, 1894, together with Appendix Q in both volumes which is a two-part paper, with tables, written by Colvin and entitled, "Magnetic Observations at and near Albany, N.Y., between the years 1686 and 1894."

Both of the volumes embodying this report include the index that covers the entire group of reports for the years 1887 through 1893. The compilation of all of these reports in a single volume straightens out the confusion of the listings of illustrations and maps in the report for the year 1890, as such listings were intended to cover the entire period through 1893. However, four of the maps are not included in the Senate document and are included only in the Lyon printing in a pocket attached to the back cover.

The narrative report (pages 5 through 12) is the by-now concise description of the survey work accomplished, most of which was in Township 14 of Totten and Crossfield's Purchase, the same area of survey work as in the previous two years. A short section entitled "Mines on State Lands" was included, as was a section entitled "Magnetic Variation," which actually introduced the paper by Colvin included as Appendix Q.

19. For the year 1894 - Report on the Progress of the State Land Survey submitted on March 1, 1895; published as Document No. 65 in Volume 14 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York at their One Hundred and Eighteenth Session, 1895 7 pages.

and as a separate volume by James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1895.

The page numbers of this report are misleading. Instead of seven pages of narrative report, the first four are cover pages and the obligatory transmittal information. The actual report is only three pages in length, beginning on page 5.

Funding continued to be Colvin's major problem and plea. He reported that "...The work of this department, during the year 1894, has been limited, owing to insufficient appropriations...." Nevertheless, he had gotten around the financing problem under a procedure whereby, "...At the request of the Comptroller, the Superintendent of this survey selected competent men, and the necessary surveys were made...the expense being paid from the regular appropriation for the Care of State Lands...." The survey work of the year was mostly in response to reports of trespass on the State lands and was "...chiefly in the border region of the Adirondack forest and principally in the sections adjacent to settlement...."

However, the most significant work of the year occurred in late August when Colvin guided the Committee on Public Lands and Forestry of the Assembly on its investigation of "...the condition of the State lands and forests in the northern counties of the State...." The significance of this tour was the fact that a Constitutional Convention was meeting in Albany at the time. On August 1, a Committee on Forest Preserves had been appointed and was holding a number of public hearings to look into the question of the future of the forests of the Adirondacks.

Colvin took the Committee to "...several of the counties of northern New York in which the Forest Preserve is located, and especially...The remote forests at the sources of the Hudson and Ausable rivers...." The Committee returned to Albany "...decidedly of the opinion that the forest of the high, cold uplands should not in any way be devastated...." Influenced, at least in part, by the report of the Committee, the Convention approved a new section in the Constitution to provide protection "forever" to the Forest Preserve. This

section was included as a part of the new Constitution which was approved by the voters at the 1894 general election. The Constitution and the ironclad protection of the Forest Preserve became effective on January 1, 1895.

Now, said Colvin, in concluding his report, if these lands were to be protected from "...despoilment, it will be necessary to survey all of the several sections of allotments held by the State in proximity to the lands of private owners...." His office was certainly the one to be assigned that task, and "...The sum of not less than \$50,000 per annum should be appropriated to meet the expense of such a survey of the State...."

20. For the year 1895 - Report of the Superintendent of State Land Survey submitted on March 2, 1896; published as Document No. 48 in Volume 7 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Nineteenth Session, 1896. 24 pages. Under the same title and date; published as Document No. 42 in Volume 9 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Twentieth Session, 1897. 405 pages including the 24 pages above, frontispiece photograph and 26 other photographs, 26 single-page maps, 6 appendices, index. The 405-page document was published as a separate volume entitled, Report of the Superintendent of the State Land Survey of the State of New York by Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co., State Printers, New York and Albany, 1896.

Colvin got his money. After years of working out of his own bank account and making annual pleas for funding, the State finally heard his call and, in a bill signed into law on May 9, 1895, provided \$50,000 for the State Land Survey. Colvin's salary was even set out in the law at "...five thousand

dollars per annum, payable quarterly...." The proverbial ship had come in and the report for that year reflected it.

The first 24 pages of the annual report, published in the three separate forms as above noted, outlined the generalities of the survey work and laid out the seven areas where Colvin and his crews concentrated their efforts. He was pleased to report that "...all of the surveys proposed were successfully accomplished;...755 stone monuments and marks in stone have been set..." and 149,800 acres of State land had been "...removed from among those classified as having uncertain and conflicting boundaries...."

Following the first 24 pages in the longer reports, Colvin included a detailed financial report showing the expenditure of the \$50,000, beginning with its appropriation in May of 1895 and carrying through April 1896. He had spent it all. The remainder of the report was presented in six appendices.

Appendix A provided the detail of the work in the familiar diary form. Colvin had begun in May "...as quickly as the appropriation was available...." The first month or so was spent in researching the ancient records and in securing and inspecting equipment. It was not until June 17 that he "...sent Assistant M. Blake forward to the Upper Hudson District with a leveling party...." Colvin followed two days later with a larger crew of assistants and local surveyors. Colvin himself returned to Albany a number of times during the year but did not stay long, each time returning to the field to be with one or another of the crews that were scattered about among the seven areas, pursuing

the work that had been assigned. It was not until December 11 that the last crew, that of Mills Blake, closed down and returned to begin "...the equally toilsome work of computation...."

Appendix B is a short discourse on the problems of triangulation brought on primarily by the use of basic data provided by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey which contained errors "...first found by Superintendent Colvin, while personally conducting the triangulation of the Adirondack district of New York...."

Appendix C contains the 26 single-page maps. These are in color with contour lines in red, water courses in blue, roads in brown, edge of woods in green, and with black lettering and lines depicting various transit stations and lines and the surrounding geography in the survey of Township 1 of Totten and Crossfield's Purchase in southeast Hamilton County. The maps are followed by many pages of tables of survey computations "...to give an idea of the amount of care and study, necessary in testing the external lines of a single township...."

Appendix D and Appendix E, each a single page long, are sample pages of stadia and trigonometrical leveling computations. Appendix F is a compilation of the "Laws Relating to the Boundaries of Counties in the Colony and State of New York, 1683 to 1799."

It is, however, the diary narrative--Appendix A--that is the main appeal of this, perhaps the most competent and professional of the annual reports. The photographs are scattered throughout this section of the report and depict the men at work and in camp, as well as scenic views of rivers and mountains encountered during the year. No credits are given to indicate the name of the photographer.

21. For the year*1896 - Report of the Superintendent of State Land Survey submitted on March 9, 1897; published as Document No. 54 in Volume 12 of Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, One Hundred and Twenty-First Session, 1898. 617 pages, frontispiece two-page photograph and 53 other photographs, 32 single page maps, 7 fold-out maps, index. Published as a separate volume entitled, Report of the Superintendent of the State Land Survey of the State of New York by Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co., State Printers, New York and Albany, 1897. This separate printing includes a second volume which consists of a set of fifteen folded maps in a cover of the same size and color as the first volume.

This annual report, half again as large as the one for the year 1895, is set out in the same format as the previous one. The first section provides a general summary of the work of the year and in particular notes that nearly all the assistants and office force had spent the winter and spring putting the data from the great amount of field work of the previous year in shape for the later map work.

This relatively short section is followed by 30 single-page maps depicting the transit stations and surrounding topography in the survey of Township 24 of

Great Lot No. 1 of Macomb's Purchase in southeastern Franklin County. These maps are in the same style and colors as those in the report of the previous year.

The next section expanded on the general work of the year. In closing this section, Colvin pointed out that he had encountered many difficulties in unraveling the complexity of the boundary lines of the State lands. He had warned about this problem For twelve years, he said, but "...no means were given this Department to preserve the ancient boundaries protecting the forests upon the public lands... Fortunately, the work was never abandoned; and, during the twelve years mentioned, various surveys were carried forward in these sections by the Superintendent personally...."

There followed the usual detailed financial report showing that Colvin had, again, spent all the funds available to him. He ended the first part of the report with the familiar justification for funding and continuation of the survey.

Appendix A covers nearly 300 pages and is the narrative, some in diary form and some specific to certain locations, of the field work of the various survey crews. The crews were sent to the field on January 11 even though "...the Superintendent could not now find time to go personally to take charge of this section of the work and its execution...." He did, however, accompany all of the crews at one time or another throughout the year. The last of the field work was not closed down until January of 1897.

Appendix A is enhanced by the inclusion of most of the photographs. These are made even more a part of the narrative by the inclusion of a page of text preceding each photograph, which explains the subject of the picture and how it fit into the survey. Many of the photographs show the crews at work or in camp; some are scenic views along the way; and a number are of transit stations and signals on various mountain summits. As in the report of the previous year, the photographer is not named. The fold-out maps are also included in this appendix and serve to explain the work being done and its location.

Appendix B, although not so noted, is an explanation of the "Triangulation and Astronomical Work," "Signal Construction" and "Geographical Positions of Important Triangulation Stations," including a series of plates illustrating and describing a number of the mountaintop signal stations. Included is a one-page notice to the assistants and surveyors reminding them that they were not "...to make decisions purporting to finally fix, determine and establish the boundaries of the State Lands and other boundaries of lands where such boundaries are in dispute; without orders from the Superintendent...."

Appendix C is a summary of "Data and Decisions Affecting the Location of the North Boundary of Totten and Crossfield's Purchase." Appendix D is an article by State Botanist Charles H. Peck entitled "Report on the Character of the Forests and Soil of Certain Tracts of State Lands in the Adirondack Region." Appendix E is a boundary description, drawn from the field work of the Survey, of the "Subdivision of Great Lot 21, Township Sixteen, Totten and Crossfield's Purchase." Appendix F consists of a "Table of Elevations in North-Eastern New York."

Of the fifteen maps in the second volume, one is a "Map of Lake Pleasant"; the second is a "Reproduction of Original Map of Totten and Crossfield's Purchase"; the next six are single sheets which together comprise a "Topographical Map of Township No. 1, Totten and Crossfield's Purchase"; and the final seven are single-sheet "Topographical Maps of Sacondaga River Base-Lines." All but the second are in the same colors used for the single-page maps in this and the previous year's report, and all appear to have been drawn by "C.G. Locke C.E., Assistant State Land Survey" and are of high quality.

For the year 1897 -

No record of any report for the year 1897 is found in either Senate or Assembly Documents.

22. For the year 1898 - Report of the Superintendent of State Land Survey. Document No. 79 in Volume 25 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Twenty-Second Session, 1899.

Document No. 79 includes only the note "Never printed." on the cover page and is followed by 116 blank pages. Colvin's report for the year 1898 may, indeed, never have been printed but the manuscript of it has survived and is the document that follows as the second part of the present volume.

23. For the year 1899 - Report of the State Land Survey. Document No. 94 of Volume 30 of Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, One Hundred and Twenty-Third Session, 1900.

Document No. 94 includes only the note "The latter (the report of the State Land Survey) was not published at all according to Mr. Colvin's statement."

FUNDING FOR THE SURVEY

Colvin's recurring theme throughout all of his annual reports is the lack of funding support and his continuing fight with the Legislature to have monies appropriated to properly carry out the work that had been assigned to him. Inadequate support was a real problem, and the following excerpts from all of the funding bills indicates just how reluctant the Legislature was to finance and support the Colvin surveys.

Chapter 733 of the Laws of 1872 - "For Verplanck Colvin, of Albany, N.Y., ten hundred dollars, to aid in completing a survey of the Adirondack wilderness of New York, and a map thereof; and he shall render to the Legislature, within thirty days after the opening of the next annual session thereof, a full report of his explorations and survey."

Chapter 760 of the Laws of 1873 - "For Verplanck Colvin, to complete the topographical survey and exploration of the Adirondack wilderness, and to render available for mapping the work already done, four thousand two hundred and fifty dollars."

Chapter 323 of the Laws of 1874 - "For Verplanck Colvin, for services in the Adirondack survey during eighteen hundred and seventy-two and eighteen hundred and seventy-three, the sum of five thousand dollars; to be in full of all services, to be paid on the first printing of the map of the survey, and he shall personally superintend the drafting and printing of said map, which shall be accepted and approved by the Comptroller and State Engineer and Surveyor, before any part of such payment is made."

Chapter 541 of the Laws of 1875 - "The Treasurer shall pay on the warrant of the Comptroller the sum of eighteen hundred dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, the same to be audited by the Comptroller, which is hereby appropriated out of the general fund to supply the deficiency in the appropriation made in Assembly bill five hundred and sixty of eighteen hundred and seventy-four (passed by the Assembly but omitted in the Senate), to Verplanck Colvin for expenses of the Adirondack survey, for the assistants and draftsmen employed in the preparation of the map of the wilderness and for contingent expenses of office and field work. The engraving and publication of the said map shall proceed as the drafting is completed."

Chapter 193 of the Laws of 1876 - "For Verplanck Colvin, to complete the topographical survey and exploration of the Adirondack wilderness, the sum of four thousand two hundred and fifty dollars."

Chapter 275 of the Laws of 1877 - "For deficiency in appropriation to complete the topographical survey and exploration of the Adirondack wilderness, the sum of nine hundred and seventy-five dollars."

Chapter 370 of the Laws of 1878 - "Section 1. The time for the completion of the topographical survey and exploration of the Adirondack wilderness region is hereby limited to six years from the passage of this act; and the topographical character of the work shall be complete in all respects throughout the area under survey.

"§2. The annual appropriation for the purposes of the survey shall be ten thousand dollars; and the compensation of the superintendent thereof shall be paid out of this sum at the rate fixed by chapter three hundred and twenty-three of the laws of eighteen hundred and

seventy-four, and the said sum of ten thousand dollars is hereby appropriated, out of any funds in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions hereof for the year eighteen hundred and seventy-eight.

"§3. A full report on the progress of the survey shall be annually presented, printed, to the legislature, within sixty days after the meeting thereof."

Chapter 148 of the Laws of 1879 - "For the prosecution of the Adirondack survey, pursuant to chapter three hundred and seventy of the laws of eighteen hundred and seventy-eight, ten thousand dollars."

Chapter 141 of the Laws of 1880 - "For the prosecution of the Adirondack survey, pursuant to chapter three hundred and seventy of the laws of eighteen hundred and seventy-eight, ten thousand dollars."

Chapter 549 of the Laws of 1880 - "For the Adirondack survey, for deficiency of appropriations for the first three-quarters of the calendar year of eighteen hundred and seventy-nine, the sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars."

Chapter 185 of the Laws of 1881 - "For the prosecution of the Adirondack survey, pursuant to chapter three hundred and seventy of the laws of eighteen hundred and seventy-eight, ten thousand dollars."

Chapter 270 of the Laws of 1882 - "For the prosecution of the Adirondack survey, pursuant to chapter three hundred and seventy of the laws of eighteen hundred and seventy-eight, ten thousand dollars."

Chapter 243 of the Laws of 1883 - "For the prosecution of the Adirondack survey, pursuant to chapter three hundred and seventy of the laws of eighteen hundred and seventy-eight, two thousand five hundred dollars."

Chapter 499 of the Laws of 1883 - "Section 1. The superintendent of the Adirondack survey is hereby directed to make surveys showing the location and area of the detached portions of state lands in the counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Saratoga, St. Lawrence and Warren, and to connect the same with the surveys of the interior, and to show upon a map or maps the position of such lands.

"§2. The methods of survey shall be in accordance with those now in use on the Adirondack survey and copies of all maps relating to such state lands shall be filed in the office of the comptroller and state engineer and surveyor, and the said superintendent shall render a report to the legislature of his proceedings and of the results of the work within sixty days after the meeting of the legislature, and the sum of fifteen thousand dollars is hereby appropriated, payable by the state treasurer, on the warrant of the comptroller, out of any moneys not otherwise appropriated, for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this act; which said sum shall be accounted for to the comptroller, with bills of items and vouchers therefor."

Chapter 589 of the Laws of 1895 - "Section 1. The surveys heretofore made under authority of chapter four hundred and ninety-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and eighty-three, are hereby continued and authorized to be extended over all districts in the counties requiring such surveys as may not have been finally surveyed, and these surveys shall be made with such particular attention to the boundaries of townships and to county lines as in the judgment of the superintendent of the survey shall be desirable.

"§2. The superintendent of the State land survey is hereby authorized to make such surveys as the State comptroller and the State forestry commission may need to have made for the settlement of the boundaries of lands, the titles to which are in dispute."

"§3. The direction of the State land survey is hereby continued under the control of Verplanck Colvin, the present superintendent, whose official title shall hereafter be the superintendent of the State land survey, and he shall render an annual report to the legislature of the progress of the survey, with such data relative to the public lands, and other facts, as may be desirable for the information of the legislature.

"§4. The sum of fifty thousand dollars is hereby appropriated to meet the current expenses of this work, and this appropriation shall be paid by the treasurer on the warrant of the comptroller out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, and shall be accounted for to the comptroller with vouchers, and bills of items for all expenditures, and from this said appropriation the superintendent of the State land

survey, by and with the consent of the State engineer and surveyor, is authorized to expend the sum of not more than ten thousand dollars in meeting the field expenses of the topographers or engineers of the United States geological survey, within the district described in chapter four hundred and ninety-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and eighty-three; provided and on condition that the director of the United States geological survey shall enter into a contract in writing with said State engineer and surveyor to expend a like sum of not less than ten thousand dollars upon said work in the said section of the State and agrees in said contract to pay all salaries and other than the field expenses of the said geological survey topographers or engineers thus engaged in this section of the State; and provided, also, that photographic copies of the original topographic map-sheets, and electrotypes of the engraved copper map plates of each and every map made of this section by the said United States geological survey, shall be furnished to the State engineer and surveyor of the State of New York at the expense of the State for use in the reports or other publications of the State, and for preservation by the State.

"§5. All maps or field notes prepared and issued by the superintendent of the State land survey under his certificate, hand and official seal, shall be accepted in the courts of this State as prima facie evidence of the particular boundaries and locations therein shown, when such certified copies have been duly filed in the office of the State engineer and surveyor, or in the office of the comptroller, or in the office of the secretary of State, or in any county clerk's office of this State.

"§6. The salary of the superintendent of the survey shall be five thousand dollars per annum, payable quarterly."

Chapter 948 of the Laws of 1896 - "For the compensation of the superintendent of the state land survey, pursuant to chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, five thousand dollars; and for continuing the work of the state land survey, pursuant to chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, twenty-five thousand dollars, and which shall be immediately available."

Chapter 306 of the Laws of 1897 - "For the compensation of the superintendent of the state land survey, pursuant to chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, five thousand dollars; and for continuing the work of the state land survey, pursuant to chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, twenty-five thousand dollars, and which shall be immediately available."

Chapter 790 of the Laws of 1897 - "For the state land survey, to meet the expenses of work of immediate necessity (in accordance with the requisitions made under authority of law by the state comptroller, and other state officers) and for the location of the boundaries of counties, townships and allotments adjacent thereto, in accordance with

the provisions of chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, ten thousand dollars."

Chapter 593 of the Laws of 1898 - "For the compensation of the superintendent of the state land survey, pursuant to chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, five thousand dollars; and for continuing the work of the state land survey, pursuant to chapter five hundred and eighty-nine of the laws of eighteen hundred and ninety-five, twenty-five thousand dollars and which shall be immediately available."

Chapter 420 of the Laws of 1900 - "For balance of salaries for services rendered upon the New York State land survey during the year eighteen hundred and ninety-nine the sum of three hundred and seventeen dollars, of which said sum there is due Thad L. Wilson one hundred and twelve dollars; J.B. Wood one hundred and thirty dollars; F.S. Hurd seventy-five dollars.

"For payment of the salary of the superintendent of the state land survey from January first eighteen hundred and ninety-nine to April seventh nineteen hundred inclusive, six thousand three hundred and forty-seven dollars and twenty-two cents; to be paid after the delivery by him to the state engineer and surveyor of all instruments, records, maps, papers and property in his possession as superintendent of the state land survey or under his control when his office was abolished and upon the filing with the comptroller of the certificate of the state engineer and surveyor that such delivery has been made, and the receipt of said Colvin in full of all claims by him against the state."

Except for the twelve-year gap between the 1883 and the 1895 laws, it would seem that the funding provided was adequate for the other years of the Survey. However, even though the funding bills became law, passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in each instance, the funds were not always provided to Colvin by the Comptroller. Thus, the monies eventually received by Colvin were far less than those set out in the above funding bills.

However, on the other side of the ledger, it must be pointed out that the cost of printing the annual reports, whether in Assembly or Senate documents or as separate volumes, did not come from these fundings. The reports Colvin made were to the Legislature, and it was up to the Legislature to provide for the

printing. This was done from the regular printing budget available to the Legislature and was usually authorized by a resolution adopted by both houses, as in the following example:

"CONCURRENT RESOLUTION providing for copies of the report on the topographical survey of the Adirondack wilderness for the Legislature of eighteen hundred and seventy-five.

"Resolved (if the Senate concur), That there be printed and bound in cloth, for the use of this Legislature, by the legislative printer, five thousand copies of the report on the topographical survey of the Adirondack wilderness, sent to the Legislature of eighteen hundred and seventy-four, and the expense thereof not to exceed one dollar and fifty cents per copy, to be paid out of the appropriation for legislative printing."

"State of New York,)

In Assembly, February 10th 1875.)

The foregoing resolution was duly passed, a majority of all the members elected to the Assembly voting in favor thereof.

By order of the Assembly.

HIRAM CALKINS, clerk."

"State of New York,)

In Senate, May 18th, 1875.)

The foregoing resolution was duly passed, a majority of all the Senators elected voting in favor thereof.

By order of the Senate.

HENRY A. GLIDDEN, clerk."

The same law that created the Forest Preserve in 1885 also established a Forest Commission to "...have the care, custody, control and superintendence of the forest preserve...." As time went on, and partly as a result of the differences and antagonism between Colvin and the State Engineer and Surveyor, the State Land Survey became more closely aligned with the Forest Commission and its successor agency, the Fisheries, Game and Forest Commission. This change was only natural, recognizing that these Commissions were responsible for administration of the land that Colvin was surveying.

In 1897, responding to repeated urgings from a number of sources (including Colvin), the Legislature passed a law recommended by Governor Frank A. Black that provided \$1 million "...to acquire for the state, by purchase or otherwise, land, structures or waters or such portion thereof in the territory embraced in the Adirondack Park...." The same law (Chapter 220 of the Laws of 1897) also created a Forest Preserve Board to be the agency responsible for selecting and acquiring the lands. The law authorized the new board to call upon "...the state engineer and surveyor, or the superintendent of the State land survey..." for surveys and descriptions necessary to complete the various land acquisitions. This single law brought the State into a major land acquisition program for additions to the Adirondack Forest Preserve, and involved Colvin and his Survey in the process. In effect, it bound together the Forest Preserve Board, the State Land Survey, and the Fisheries, Game and Forest Commission.

At the turn of the century, laws affecting all three of these agencies were enacted. The State Land Survey was abolished in 1900; the Forest Preserve Board was abolished in 1901; and the Fisheries, Game and Forest Commission was

reconstituted as the Forest, Fish and Game Commission in 1900. In time, and with some problems, the files and records of the Survey and the Board found their way to the offices of the new Commission. Within those files was the manuscript of Colvin's 1898 Annual Report.

Over the years, the Forest, Fish and Game Commission went through a number of name and organizational changes to become the Department of Environmental Conservation of today. Similarly, the various units within the Department and its predecessor agencies went through a number of changes, so that the present Bureau of Real Property within the Division of Lands and Forests of the Department now carries on the survey work begun by Colvin. Colvin's notebooks, maps, files and other records now constitute a part of the archives of that Bureau. It was there that the 1898 Report finally came to rest.

However, the manuscript has not been unknown or "lost." Marginal notes and other annotations indicate that it has been used in the researches of various land surveyors of the Bureau and the Division down through the years. These people, having direct day-to-day access to so much original Colvin material, looked upon the manuscript as just one more piece of an existing archive.

In 1980, the manuscript came to the attention of the Adirondack Research Center at Schaffer Library, Union College, in Schenectady, New York. On August 13, 1980, following conversations between the Center and the Department, then Environmental Conservation Commissioner Robert F. Flacke authorized the Center to publish this, the Report of the Superintendent of State Land Survey for the year 1898.

This event of publication is somewhat parallel to the publication of some of Colvin's earlier reports. It has been left for a private entity to fund the publication costs of an official State document. Colvin, we think, would rant and rave at that fact, as he did so many times before. In the end, however, we hope he would be pleased to know that we have thought his work important enough to bring it before the public even after this long delay.

The manuscript from which this volume is derived is the original. It consists of the various sections noted in the table of contents; each was bound separately and then bound in one volume with black, hardboard covers. The original was typed on letter-sized paper. Colvin himself edited it, as his handwritten corrections and amendments are scattered throughout. It appears that it once had photographs, other illustrations and more maps than those now included, since a note appears referring to "...Illustrations and Maps Transmitted in boxes and cases with this report...." No trace of these can be found.

Of other historical interest is the fact that this report includes the record of Colvin's only involvement with the Catskill Forest Preserve. On March 31, 1898, the Senate passed a Resolution (see Appendix O) requesting that Colvin "...make a preliminary examination of the public lands in the counties of Delaware, Greene, Ulster and Sullivan...." He did journey to Delhi and East Branch, both in Delaware County, where he interviewed two local surveyors in September of 1898. One supposes that he intended to return in the next year to undertake the survey of some of the boundary lines of this, the "other" Forest Preserve. It is regrettable that the Survey was abolished before Colvin could leave his mark on the Catskills.

Verplanck Colvin's Annual Report for the year 1898 is presented as it appears in the manuscript except for some minor word, punctuation and spelling corrections. It is hoped that this introduction will provide the background by which the report can be read in the perspective of its time.

Norman J. VanValkenburgh.

Albany, New York

June 30, 1984