

# ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## RECALLING THE TEMPERANCE ERA IN FRANKLINVILLE FROM THE FRANKLINVILLE CHRONICLE -- MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 1893

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1865, the first refusal of licenses for the sale of liquor in town commenced the temperance era in Franklinville. At that time, instead of having a local excise board as at the present, applications for licenses were made to a Board of County Commissioners who sat the first Monday in May of each year at Little Valley the county seat at that time. Franklinville had always been strongly in favor of license and whiskey was free as water. The temperance that was continually indulged in set the better class of people of the town to thinking, and as a result a strong pro-license sentiment was rapidly developing. The people at that time were not allowed to express their wishes in this matter by ballot, their only way of strong objection was by petition, and their only hope of crushing out the liquor business was by bringing their greatest influence to bear upon the County Commissioners, who were given arbitrary power in the matter.

The Lines Hotel had then been newly built, and some of the leading citizens of the town in favor of a license for it, were working to accomplish such an end, and appeared before the commissioners with their petitions signed by the required number of free-holders. In the meantime, the aged veteran, Marvin Older, who was then a strong oppose to license, circulated a strong objection among the townspeople protesting against any license being granted by the commissioners. He had secured two-thirds of the taxpayers and voters at that time. The license men, armed as above appeared before the commissioners and pleading their case had no foreboding of opposition and left the county commissioners in high hopes of getting their wish for a license. They didn't, however. Mr. Older had walked from Franklinville to Little Valley the day before, bearing the strong objection against the granting of the licenses to the applicants, and finding Hon. William G. Laidlaw, armed him with the paper and sent him to plead the causes of the people. The result was the beginning of the temperance era in Franklinville, and those who were active in bringing it about, have much cause for gratification when looking over the prosperous years of this village since that time, nearly all of which is directly attributable to the earnest efforts of these temperance reformers.

Submitted by: William Watkins, Machias Deputy Town Historian