

The Building of the “Legend”

Frank Matty’s Birthday Newspaper Interviews

Revised: September 6, 2013

Starting in 1930 and in every subsequent year through 1938, one of the Syracuse newspapers, usually the Herald, would run an annual article on Frank Matty, on or near his birthday. They are reproduced here for historical purposes with the addition of comments and corrections to avoid the further propagation of the distorted history found in these articles. Matty, like any very active public figure, had his fans and his enemies. While his detractors might be overly harsh in their comments, Matty’s fans, which included some of the newspapers of the day, had a tendency to over inflate his motivations and accomplishments. As he aged, his memory began to fade and as a result, dates and sometimes events suffered in accuracy. The comments added after the articles, in this document, are meant to straighten out these inaccuracies in dates, locations and events.

In these articles Frank Matty is variously referred to as a Czar, patriarch, founder, pioneer and even unofficial “Mayor,” although his only official titles were those of School Trustee and later, President of the School Board. The 1931 article correctly describes Matty as the developer of the section called Mattydale that was part of his farm. Later articles gave him credit for developing all the area that today is known collectively as Mattydale, more for the lack of a better name for the area, than because of any official proclamation. In his 3rd wife’s 1937 obituary, which Frank probably wrote himself, it said: “Long active in Mattydale social affairs during her 24 years of residence in the settlement literally built up by her husband, ..”¹ Frank was beginning to believe his publicity and was even using his own wife’s obituary to polish his legend.

In sharp contrast, only three articles were found that celebrated Matty’s birthdays between 1920 and 1929. The tone of the articles from the ’20s was far more conservative than those from the ’30s. In these earlier articles there was no mention of Frank Matty as a pioneer, which he certainly wasn’t, nor was there any mention of community building. During the ’20s, the articles described a retired politician celebrating his birthdays with friends, as they gathered to reminisce about their past glories. The articles published during the ’30s make the growth of School District No. 3 seem like the result of a Frank Matty plan that he began executing as soon as he settled in the town of Salina. Matty became very possessive of the district school and everything associated with it. In several of the ’30’s articles Matty referred to the district teachers as “my teachers.”²

The person who wasn’t mentioned in all this was Miss Kathie Malloy. Her grandfather, Patrick Malloy, in the 1860’s, had owned about 500 acres at the end of Molloy Road at Townline Road along the eastern boundary of the town of Salina. This land had been in Malloy hands since at least 1860, which makes the Malloy family true pioneers. Kathie was living with her father, James Malloy, and sister, Mary Malloy, in their old stone family homestead.

Matty and Malloy lived on opposite ends of East Molloy Road, with the District No. 3 school between them. According to the 1930 census the James Malloy homestead was valued at \$30,000³ and Matty's home was valued at \$18,000.⁴ The value of the houses of the new residents was typically \$2500. The Malloy farm was then about 250 acres in size and for some reason Kathie's father never opened up any of his farmland for residential development.

In 1917, at the age of 29, Kathie was first elected a trustee of School District No. 3. At the same time Frank Matty was raising hogs on his farm and trying to secure a position with the NYS Canal System. Kathie Malloy was re-elected in 1920 and again in 1923.

A Matty-centric article, published in 1930, just before the first Union Free School ballot, incorrectly credited Matty with winning "the fight for the bonding for the present school (four room brick building) after a bitter battle."⁵ Ironically, it was Kathie Malloy who did the bulk of the work getting the bond issue passed for the new brick school building. Going from a one room wooden schoolhouse to a brick building took a lot of selling to the taxpayers of the district.⁶ And that was contained in a quote from Matty himself. "...the election of Miss Malloy, who did the greater part of the work in obtaining the new \$40,000 school, is a tribute to industry that should be rewarded."⁷

In 1925 Frank Matty was elected a school trustee for the first time, however, there were charges of ballot box stuffing.⁸ Instead of building the community, Matty was very interested in having the city of Syracuse annex the small hamlet that people had started referring to as Mattydale. Perhaps he saw this as a way to get back into city politics once again. By the late '20s there were 11 subdivisions filling up with families and the number of pupils in District No. 3 was approaching 1000. Up until this point, students from the district would attend a high school in the city of Syracuse after finishing eighth grade at Mattydale School. Frank Matty wanted to maintain this status quo, since the state would reimburse the district for most of the tuition charged by the city high schools for accepting the District No. 3 students. Kathie Malloy and her followers wanted to add a high school and that meant changing the organization of the district to a Union Free School District. The New York State Regents tightly manage the requirements for establishing and operating a Union Free School, through the state legislature, as they have since the earliest years of the state's existence and as they still do up to the present day.

The Union Free School debate raged on into the 1930's, even as the Great Depression brought the former explosive population growth to a trickle. Malloy, being a teacher herself, wanted the Union Free School for the district. Matty, ever the politician, wanted to keep the costs and therefore the district taxes down. The dismal economic situation in the country sided with the frugal logic of Matty and his status quo supporters.⁹ After the 1930 vote went against the Union Free School, Kathie Malloy just seemed to fade away, but the supporters of the Union Free School movement carried on under the leadership of Frank Houghton.

Under Houghton the Union Free School movement focused not so much on the ability to add a high school to the district, but on the expanded method of governing the district. A one or three member Board of Trustees would govern a Common School District. A three to nine member Board of Education would govern The Union Free School District. The high school issue had morphed into one dedicated to wresting power from Frank Matty.

These articles covered his 68th through his 88th birthday. The birthday articles of the 1930s gave Matty credit for much of what the Kathie Malloy led school board had earlier accomplished. One article even went so far as to say that Frank had been the President of the school board since the district was first formed, which in reality was probably before Matty was born, thus totally wiping out Malloy's time in office and all those before her.

Former Alderman Matty Host at Birthday Party

Old-Time Democratic Leader, Hale and
Hearty at 68. Living on Farm.

Frank Matty, one-time power in Syracuse Democratic circles and now retired to his farm on the Cicero road, yesterday celebrated his 68th birthday by entertaining a number of his cronies of the old days.

Mr. Matty, still hale and hearty, has not lost interest in politics, even though he has retired from active participation in his party's campaigns.

GUESTS FORMER DEMOCRATIC CRONIES.

Whether or not the observance of his birthday yesterday took on the form of a celebration of the recent Democratic victory, Mr. Matty would not say, but present were a number of men who back in the old days were powers in the Democratic party and who are still active in politics.

Elected to the Common Council in 1899 as alderman of the Seventh ward, Mr. Matty continued for many years, as a member of that body, overseeing organized campaigns to defeat him time and again. In 1897 he was president of the Common Council and again in 1901.

Took Nomination From Kirk in 1907.

Perhaps the most spectacular period of his career occurred shortly before his retirement, when at the now historic Democratic convention held in Syracuse October 8, 1907, he belted the party leaders, James K. McGuire and William F. Raftery, then Democratic State committeeman, who had offered William B. Kirk as their candidate for mayor. On the convention floor Mr. Matty offered himself as a candidate and carried the convention in his favor, but met defeat on election day at the hands of the Republican candidate, Alan Tobes.

In 1905, Alderman Matty was succeeded by Michael Glendon, who, in turn, at the 1910 election, gave way to

Dennis M. Foley, who has represented that ward ever since.

Always a power in politics, Mr. Matty's advice was much sought by Democratic leaders and he established an enviable reputation among his colleagues. After the Republicans had come into power and given every evidence of retaining their control of the city, a control which they did maintain until the recent election, the veteran leader about 10 years ago retired to his farm, where he has lived ever since. Even in these days, however, the power of Frank Matty is still evident, for the Matty farm on the Cicero road is often the haunt of politicians seeking his advice.

Picturesque Figure in Council.

During his political career he was a picturesque figure in the Common Council. For years he was proprietor of the old Alderman cafe at Warren and Fayette streets, an enthusiastic horseman with a big string of trotters and pacers which he entered on the Grand Circuit and in many of the half-mile meets at county fairs throughout the country.

Sixty-eight finds him feeling "good for 45 years more," he declares, and as each birthday rolls around his only desire as an observance of the day is to collect around him his coterie of the old days and again talk over the political history of the city in which he once was a leader.

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY,
November 20, 1925

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR FRANK MATTY

It was Frank Matty's birthday yesterday, and 40 friends and neighbors of Mattydale surprised him with a party at his home last night. He received a telephone call from North Syracuse early in the evening, and reluctantly he left his comfortable chair. When he returned an hour or so later he found the house decorated from cellar to garret.

The Syracuse Journal,
Syracuse, NY,
Monday, November 22, 1926

THREE SCORE AND SIX

Frank Matty of Mattydale celebrated his seventy-sixth birthday Friday evening. A birthday surprise was tendered him by Mrs. Matty when friends walked in, led by Rev. A. A. Holzwarth, pastor of the Calvary Evangelical Church of Mattydale.

The guests included: Mr. and Mrs. Carle Agne and daughters, Henrietta and June; Mr. and Mrs. Frank Knickerbocker, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Kinne, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Major, Rev. Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Holzwarth, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Covey, Mr. and Mrs. A. Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Downing and daughter, Ruth; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Thompson, Mrs. Floyd Van Valkenburg, Mrs. Cora Palmer, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Davison and daughters, Eleanor and Marion; James Maloney, Mrs. John Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. William Putvin and son, James; Mr. and Mrs. George Becker, and sons. A large birthday cake made by Mrs. Matty was placed in the center of the room, on it were 76 candles for Mr. Matty to blow out at one time which was accomplished. Music, games and dancing was enjoyed.

It will be noted that none of the Malloy family members attended Frank Matty's birthday party. According to the article there were 76 candles on Frank's cake. I don't think I've ever seen that many candles on any cake. Is it even possible to light that many candles before the ones that were lit first have totally melted away? A quick experiment showed that the typical birthday candle will burn for about 16 minutes and then it starts to melt the plastic holder, unless the AC comes on first and blows it out.

As for a 76 year old man, even Frank Matty, blowing all the candles out at one time...

The Syracuse Journal,
Syracuse, NY,
Thursday, November 20, 1930



The Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY, Thursday, November 20, 1930

Mattydale Czar, 80, Feted by 900 School Pupils

"Philosophy in life? Huh, I don't know what that is, but if you mean why I can be so happy on my eightieth birthday, the answer is simple.

"All you have to do is work hard and play hard and to remember, above all things, to work and play fair and square."

So quoth Frank Matty, the czar of Mattydale, sportsman and politician of a decade long passed, who marked his eightieth birthday with a daylong celebration at his home in the nearby suburb yesterday.

It was a special occasion in the life of Mr. Matty. The children of Mattydale school, to whom he is patriarch and who are his vital interest in life, were giving him a surprise party. A coterie of cronies whom he has known for a half a century were to be guests at his home last night. He didn't have much time for philosophy yesterday.

But he paused for a few minutes

to reminisce, with just the faintest semblance of a tear glistening in his eyes, of the day when Frank Matty worked hard and played hard and earned himself the status in life which allows him to wax complacently philosophical on each successive birthday.

He doesn't look the part of an octogenarian. Neither does he play the role. In the 900 children who attend the Mattydale school of which he is trustee, Frank Matty had 900 reasons for being young.

He remembers the days when he owned the Manhattan Stables and sold 500 Western horses every three months. And he remembers the days when his farm at the intersection of the Brewerton and Malloy rds. boasted a fine private track and his stables were lined with trotters and pacers.

For instance, there was Coleridge.

(Continued on Page 20, Column 6.)

'CZAR' FETED IN MATTYDALE

(Continued from Page 19.)

2:05, whose picture still graces the living room of his home. Now there was a horse. He never ran second. There was nothing like getting up in the sulky behind him and giving him his head.

There were other horses whom Frank Matty sent around the Grand Circuit tracks and through whose agency he met and made friends with almost every blue-blooded sportsman between Boston and Chicago.

DAYS OF POLITICS.

Then there was politics in the days when Alderman Matty dominated the Third Ward for 23 years, when in impassioned bursts of oratory he hurled anathema on the Republicans.

There was the campaign of 1908 when he climaxed his political career as Democratic candidate for mayor and the terrific campaign in which he was nosed out by Alan C. Fobes.

Those were the days before Frank Matty became the uncrowned czar of Mattydale, but they were days which are written large in the annals of his life.

Not that Mr. Matty has lost his gift of oratory, his flaming enthusiasm in a political fight. Let anyone imperil his position in the Mattydale school and the young old man, like a fire horse stamping at the sound of the alarm, is back in the political arena, giving better than he receives.

Sixteen years ago, in honor of his parents, who formerly resided on the

farm there, Frank Matty moved out to the home he now occupies. There were 70 residents in the community then, but because he could not toss aside all the ambition and energy which had driven him for so long, Mr. Matty began to build up the community.

It spread beyond his fondest dreams. Then came the problem of the children.

SCHOOL HIS MONUMENT.

With the slogan, "A seat in school for every child," Frank Matty began to battle for a building which would house the 900 children in Mattydale. The structure which now stands on the Malloy rd. is a monument to his energies.

It's no wonder that the pupils of the school, under the direction of Miss Bessie Riordan, undertook their surprise party for him with energy.

They lured Mr. Matty to the school under the pretense of an appointment with an Albany official. Forgotten were thoughts of his eightieth birthday as Mr. Matty prepared to battle for the best interests of the school.

Harassed and worried, he rushed into the school. Teachers rushed him into the darkened auditorium. When they turned up the lights, Mr. Matty found himself in the midst of 900 cheering children.

They sang for him, danced for him, recited for him. They outdid themselves and Frank Matty couldn't restrain the tears. After the entertainment by the children he was guest of honor at a party arranged by the teachers. There was a husky birthday cake, floral tributes and other presents.

And when it was all over Mr. Matty was more certain than ever that the way to happiness is to work hard and to play hard but to work and play on the square.

Mattydale Czar Feted by 900 School Pupils

The Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY, Thursday, November 20, 1930

The campaign in which Frank Matty ran for Mayor of Syracuse and lost was conducted in 1907 NOT 1908.

Matty moved from Syracuse to his Salina farm in late 1913 or early 1914. His parents had never resided on his Salina farm. Matty bought what was known as the Zimmer farm in June 1900, at a foreclosure sale. Frank's father, Victor Francis Matty died in Utica, NY on November 22, 1883, seventeen years before Matty bought the farm. Frank's mother Louise C. Matty died on August 25, 1904 at 205 Pond St. at the home of her daughter Mrs. Louise C. Kappesser. Mothers tend to live with one of their daughters and they want to be close to the grandchildren. They don't usually live on a farm belonging to a single son, who himself is not even living on the farm.

"Mr. Matty began to build up the community."

Matty moved to the farm because he could no longer afford to live in the city of Syracuse. He sold his interest in the Manhattan Stables, behind the Manhattan Hotel on East Fayette St., across from his former Alderman's Café. At about the same time, he started another livery stable at 801 Wolf St., which was located closer to his Salina farm. In March 1915 Frank Matty declared personal bankruptcy in Utica, NY.

No real community building began until 1920 when the Hinsdale Farms and Syracuse Villas residential developments opened up. Home Gardens opened in the 1921 season, followed by Frank Matty's Mattydale development in 1922. Matty's contributions to community building would include the use of his double barn for meetings and dances and also housing the fire department equipment. He donated the land for the new school and also the Calvary Evangelical Church and sold land to the town for the new firehouse.

Frank participated in the school board meetings and elections, hosting them in his double barn, and sometimes chairing a meeting, but he didn't run for Trustee until 1925 and he won that election. In 1922 Frank had donated land for the new school, opened a portion of his farm for residential development and made a proposal to the city of Syracuse for disposing of their garbage. The plan was to build a huge hog farm on his remaining farm land and have city workers haul ALL the city garbage out to his farm for his hogs to eat. Fortunately the city turned him down. I doubt if the first settlers of Matty's lots had any idea he was planning a huge garbage dump / pig farm next door. It is difficult to reconcile Matty's business interests with the label of Community Builder that his supporters so quickly apply to his motivations and activities.

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, Friday, November 20, 1931

Mattydale Gives Loving Cup to Mayor Matty At Party Marking Pioneer's 81st Birthday



Friends of Frank Matty gathered about him at his 81st birthday surprise party last night as he cut his birthday cake. Below, Gerald Case, representing the Mattydale Veterans Association, presents a loving cup to Mr. Matty.

The Syracuse Herald,
Syracuse, NY,
Friday, November 20, 1931

Former Alderman Tries to Celebrate Quietly but Friends Alter Plans

Frank Matty, "the Mayor of Mattydale," was honored on his 81st birthday at a surprise party last night in Matty's Hall, where 86 residents of the community gathered for dinner, speaking and dancing.

The former Syracuse alderman, who developed the section known as Mattydale, just north of Syracuse on the Brewerton Road, had planned to pass his birthday quietly without celebration but his friends would not allow the event to pass without surprising him as in former years.

Mr. Matty, a member of the board of school trustees of Mattydale and

an honorary member of the Mattydale fire department, received a loving cup at the affair. Gerald Case represented the Mattydale Veterans' Association in presenting the silver trophy to the political leader.

Mattydale residents who planned the party were Mrs. Joseph Viro, Mrs. Albert Schinke, Mrs. Harry De Mars, Mrs. Ray Mooney, Mrs. Ray Kinnie and Mrs. Albert Hess.

Mr. and Mrs. Matty were seated at the head of a long table in Matty's Hall, where covers were laid for the 86 persons present. Harry De Mars acted as toastmaster.

Among the speakers were Fred Root, chairman of the fire commission of Mattydale; Ray Mooney and Clifford Keefer, both members of the fire commission; Fire Chief Adam Group, Frank Knickerbocker, school trustee; Mrs. Viro and Mr. Case.

Mattydale Gives Loving Cup to Mayor Matty At Party Marking Pioneer's 81st Birthday

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The only exaggerations here are the unofficial Mayor title and the "pioneer" label. Although Frank bought his Salina farm in June 1900, he never moved to Salina until late 1913 or early 1914. Of all the farming and dairying settlers, Frank Matty was the last one in - hardly a pioneer.

Frank Matty, Always Politician, Still Follows 50-Year Philosophy Of 'To the Victor Belong the Spoils'

**Veteran Syracuse Alder-
man Takes Great Pride
in School 'Monument'**

**At 82, Traces the Past
Hopes Al Smith Will Be
Chosen to Help Re-
store Nation**

The philosophy of 50 years in practical politics, Frank Matty, "Mayor of Mattydale," summed up in an interview on his 82d birthday anniversary yesterday, in the traditional terms of practical politicians of several generations back:

"To the victor belong the spoils!"

"Yes, sir, 82 years old at 4 o'clock this morning," he said. "I voted for my 15th President this year and my man won."

"Now if President Roosevelt will have Al Smith there with him, and reorganize the Federal government, we'll be in as safe hands at Washington as we have been for a good many years."

"Democrats have been hungry now for 12 years and it looked for a while as if we were all going to be hungry. I'm for jobs."

"Think of it, every Congressman with the right to appoint 12 men at \$3,000 a year, just to help him to carry the next election in his home district. Multiply that by 447 and see what I mean, and it goes for Democratic Congressmen as well as Republicans!"

"I don't know what you think of Al Smith, but I think they ought to make a place for him down there to reorganize the government and stop this pouring out of money millions

In Politics as Long as He Lives



Characteristic pose of Frank Matty, 82, "Mayor of Mattydale," in politics, as long as he lives, he says, and intending to live as long as he can.

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this pouring out of money millions at a time.

"We want Democratic postmasters. That's one thing I always gave the Republicans. When they go in they turn the others out. 'To the victor belong the spoils!'

"I've believed in that for more than 50 years and I'll believe in it as long as I live, and I want to go on living as long as I can."

The man who passed through some of the bitterest political campaigns in Syracuse history and has gone on battling successfully in Town of Salina politics as trustee of School District 3, showed no signs of weakening as he sat in his farmhouse at Molloy Road on the Cicero Road, amid the settlement of several thousand voters who have grown up around him in the last 25 years.

"I want to show you what came from my teachers," he said directly, at the beginning. He led the way into the dining room. A big basket of golden chrysanthemums stood on the table, with envelope and greeting card attached. He viewed it proudly.

"We have the best district school in the State," he said, "have letters from the State Board of Regents about it, passing 100 per cent of our pupils now three years running.

"We started seven years ago with one room and 18 pupils and we have 24 rooms, 548 pupils and an auditorium seating 524 people.

"And I've got a fight on my hands against a union free school, to bend us for \$140,000 next spring. They can bring it up every year and we have to lick them. We've bought 14 lots the other side of the road for a new grade school site, against the time of need, but what do we want a union free school for when it costs us \$12.50 apiece for our pupils going into Syracuse vocational or whatever high school they need. It costs \$150, but State aid return comes to \$137.50, leaving the cost \$12.50. The cheapest we could get out of chemistry alone in a union free school here would be \$20,000.

"Why do they bring it up? That's easy. They object to 'one-man' power, they say, there are three trustees. The other two are Matty trustees; there's no secret about that, but we're our own people. With a union free school they'd have more trustees. It's all party politics.

"There's poison in politics. When it comes to election, I say, use all the poison you've got. You know the other fellow is going to use his.

"If they told me I had to have rattlesnake poison to win and it was the hottest day in August and the only way to win was to do it, I'd go into Cicero swamp with that overscut there—no, it isn't big enough, but with a good big overscut and I'd come out with every pocket stuffed full of rattlesnakes.

"Politics is politics 365 days a year and the time to play politics is all the time. I've done it all my life, kept thinking every waking minute

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ties, as long as he lives, he says, and

how I could make a friend in politics.

"No, I didn't have much schooling. I went to work when I was 11, in a livery stable. My father was just about house-crazy.

"We moved to the city when I was six or seven years old, from the farm. The earliest I remember, and I often think of it when I'm just sitting, is when I was no more than a little shaver up to the arm of my mother's chair.

"She was sitting there; you've seen your own mother do it. She had been sewing. She had the needle up to her mouth. I asked her what she was doing. She was so quiet. Then I asked her again and finally she looked at me and just said:

"What? Oh, what am I doing? Why, nothing!"

"She was just thinking, but strangely I always remember her so, sitting thinking, looking out the window. She was a wonderful mother, never did me anything but good.

"As I told a crowd when I was lampooned as a gambler and a drinker, I was glad she never lived to see that. I was the only son.

"And I'll say now, I'll give \$5,000 to any man who will say truthfully he ever saw Frank Mally take a drink of liquor!

"Also, as I told the crowd that same night, I wouldn't know in a gambling house whether I was winning or losing. I've played poker all my life, but with friends.

"When I was 17, I guess no older, I owned my first horse. Always around horses, knowing the game, I always knew that the gamblers got the money and I never went into it.

"We lived one house off Salina Street, in old Noxon Street (now

"We lived one house off Salina Street, in old Noxon Street (now Herald Place) in a brick house, next to the old Amos Hotel. The place was sold later to the city for six times what my sisters got out of it, which was \$5,000. The city paid \$30,000.

"Until I was 26 I worked in my father's business, a coal and wood yard, where the new postoffice stands now. It was Richey's open hitching yard.

"Syracuse had eight wards when I was elected alderman of the old Third Ward in 1882, by seven votes. The last time I was elected, 23 years later, it was by 726 votes. The ward at first was north of the Erie Canal to the lake, and west of the Oswego Canal to Geddes Street.

"I was nominated on Saturday and elected the following Tuesday. You had your own ballots printed in those days and passed them in to the election clerk through a window.

"Politics is always the same. People don't change much. Those days you took the list of voters and you canvassed. A fellow would tell you he thought you were a pretty good fellow and would make a good alderman. You told him that didn't tell whether he was going to vote for you. If he said he hadn't made up his mind, you could put him down 'I' for Independent. If he told you he would vote for you, you could put him down Democrat, and if he wouldn't vote for you and said so, you could put him down 'R' for Republican.

"Going back then you'd check down

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Intending to give a long run to the

the list and find you were 40 votes short of enough to win, but there were 100 marked down there as independent. So you went out and made some night calls with the family. You talked with the mother considerable and if she was for you, you could pretty well count on those votes. They voted straight tickets. Mayor Burns carried the Third by seven votes that first time I won as alderman, and I carried it by seven.

"The same thing goes today. If a man tells you he'll vote for you, he will. Maybe I shouldn't say it myself, but again why shouldn't I? I never broke my word to a man in my life.

"More than that I'll say I never did anything but protect the interests of the City of Syracuse in public office there. There was plenty said and plenty printed in those days unlike what's printed now.

"Why when the Auburn road was coming in and they were talking three-cent fare, I fought it and beat it. The Rapid Transit was broke, and if they couldn't make money on a nickel, how could they last on three cents.

"I never saw such a jam in City Hall as at that time and one fellow got talking hot about bribery. It was then I said nobody had ever been able to buy me, that I always had enough money for myself. That was what they twisted around into saying that I said I could never be accused of selling out cheap.

"Only one man ever tried to bribe

me. He told me there was \$10,000 in it for me, individually, to unload a dead elephant, you might call it, on the city. I told him nobody ever bought me yet and that he'd better pick his man if he was passing around talk like that, as he was opening himself up to 16 years in Auburn.

"The only money ever offered to me was a \$5 gold piece, by a good old fashioned fellow who ran a saloon on the North Side. He had a well there, a little out over the line. They tried to fill it up. I fought it and beat it. The well was a great accommodation to people.

"He came down to my place afterward and gave me the gold piece. I asked him what for, and he said:

"Aw, you know, Frank."

"Well, I laughed, and told him I did that because I liked his place and his wine and him, and that was that. He meant no harm.

"I said I never broke my word. Irving Van Wle, who had a factory where the Chilled Flow works is, came to me and told me he objected to a switch in the street there, which the railway wanted to put in. I told him I'd already told the railway people I'd vote with them on it.

"Howard Lincoln, who was a friend of mine, and voted with me, came and told me it would cost him his political life if we didn't beat that switch. I told him I'd passed my word on it. I was in a pinch.

"I went to Connette (E. G. Connette, general manager of the railway interests), and explained to him and asked him to let me off. He said no. I told him all right. With a

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"I went to Connette (E. G. Connette, general manager of the railway interests), and explained to him and asked him to let me off. He said no. I told him all right. With a couple of other fellows I went up into the next block, beyond Van Wic's, and with some money got the signature of every property holder necessary to approve that location. Then I went back to Connette and told him. He was stubborn.

"I told him I enjoyed my political life and intended to go on with it. I told him I'd be here after he was gone.

"You're going to get your switch, but it's going to be in the next block," I told him, and finally he gave me back my word, but it taught me a lesson. I've never since given my word on a thing like that.

"Just say 'I'll look into the matter,' that's all. You can't even say, 'I'll see what I can do,' for they may take that as a promise.

"As I said, I never had much schooling, but I studied some nights. And I always read the dispatches from Albany and Washington. I've been a subscriber to The Herald for more than 30 years, since they were next to the Jerry Weaver block.

"About reading the Albany and

Washington dispatches though, I'll tell you, I used to figure how I'd vote if I was in those fellows' places down there.

"There doesn't seem to be that kind of interest in politics now, but maybe it will come again. I'll say that up to a few years ago I could certainly have called the names of more United States Senators than any man in Mattydale.

"There are leaders left. If people don't follow them they aren't leaders, that's all. I think the Democratic party has more leaders in the party today, and, hard times apart, people are following them.

"I listened to all the speeches, except Hoover's last speech. I got mad at him and wouldn't listen!

"I've never talked with Governor Roosevelt or shaken hands with him.

but I've watched him since he bucked 'Blue-eyed Billy' Sheehan of Buffalo more than 20 years ago. Sheehan was a great politician, a great team-mate of David B. Hill, the greatest Governor of his times. When they beat Sheehan and sent O'Gorman to the United States Senate, never to be heard of in his six years there, they clinched direct elections of United States Senators and you haven't had the same high caliber of men entering politics since until lately.

"The American people know you have to have good political management to have good government and good business. And it costs money for party organization.

"And you have to play politics every day in the year and fight to win every fight. It took me six weeks to get upon that cornice of our

school the words I wanted there: 'Knowledge is power!'

"But I waited and fought and those are the words up there. What better expresses the whole idea of what it's all about, and what it's all for, than those simple words. Some wanted six or seven words; I don't know why!

"'Knowledge is power!' That hits it; it's knowing what it's about and how to do it."

For 25 years, since his retirement from city politics, in which he served as the veteran of the Common Council, Mr. Matty has been the yeast and the dynamo of Mattydale, with the growing citizenry there getting road improvements, water, electricity, gas, homes and above all, the school of which he is so proud, his finest monument.

Frank Matty, Always Politician, Still Follows 50-Year Philosophy of 'To the Victors Belong the Spoils'

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, November 20, 1932

"We started 7 years ago [in 1925] with one room and 19 pupils."

The students of District #3 moved into the new 4-room brick building on February 19, 1923. At that time there were three teachers and 172 pupils. When they were in the old one-room schoolhouse, on the adjacent lot to the west of the new school building, there were 146 pupils and one teacher.¹⁰

"I went to work when I was 11, in a livery stable. My father was just about horse-crazy."
"We moved to the city when I was six or seven years old, from the farm."

In other versions of his early years, Matty said the family moved from Mexico, NY to Collasse, NY when he was six years old [in 1857]. However the 1860 Federal census has the family living in Mexico at the time of the census. Sometime after the 1860 census the family moved to Syracuse and initially lived on Seymour St. Frank's father, Victor Francis Matty, originally joined the Syracuse police department. He left the police department and opened a wood-yard in Clinton Square where the Post Office is now located. Frank initially went into the business of making barrels for the salt industry. In 1870 he was working as a cooper in nearby Liverpool, NY. Frank and his wife Kitty appeared in the 1870 census twice: once in Liverpool and once in the 4th Ward of Syracuse.

Around 1876 Frank joined his father in the wood business and eventually took over the operation of the business. Shortly thereafter Frank started up an open livery operation just to the west of his father's wood yard on the present location of the Syracuse Board of Education building. According to Frank there wasn't any money in the wood business and he finally closed down the wood operation and expanded his open stable business into a livery stable.

Knowledge Is Power

"And you have to play politics every day in the year and fight to win every fight." It took me six weeks to get upon that cornice of our school the words I wanted there:

"Knowledge is power."

"But I waited and fought and those are the words up there. What better expresses the whole idea of what it's all about, and what it's all for, than those simple words. Some wanted six or seven words; I don't know why."

" 'Knowledge is power!' That hits it; it's knowing what it's about and how to do it."

So far no other mention of the battle for the engraving on the cornice of the new school has surfaced. Since Matty donated the land for the school it seems proper for him to pick the school slogan.

Frank Matty, 83 Tomorrow, Is Ready for "All Comers"

Doughty Mattydale Leader Proved Powers by Democratic Ward Victory Last Week

Frank Matty of Mattydale, known to Syracuse as a veteran of the Common Council, will be 83 tomorrow, at 4 o'clock in the morning, as he says, and up and at 'em as ever!

"The Mayor of Mattydale," as he was called until the recent councilmanic reorganization of town government in Salina, is ready to see "city fellows" as well as his neighbors in the settlement bearing his name, north of the city limits.

His victory in the November elections, when the Democrats carried his ward in Salina, the only one carried by the party, is testimony to his doughty political powers today.

He retired from city politics 25 years ago, after serving with 88 aldermen and under eight mayors, of whom former Mayor Alan C. Pobes is the only one alive.

He is a native of Mexico, Oswego County. In early manhood he worked

in the salt industry, building tubs. His political career in the city and his operation of "The Alderman" cafe at South Warren and East Fayette Streets, made him a conspicuous figure.

Mr. Matty fancied fast harness horses and drove in personal competitions, marked by his strong will to win that meets any challenge today. Many callers have the annual custom of extending personal birthday greetings to "the old timer."

COSTS ACCOUNTANTS MEET

The Syracuse Chapter, National Association of Cost Accountants at its meeting last night heard Philip Goldsmith and Milton Lemieux of Bausch & Lomb Rochester, speak on the subject of Inventory. G. E. Chrismer vice president of the Syracuse chapter, presided at the meeting. H. D. Anderson was the discussion leader for the meeting.

FRANK MATTY, 83 TODAY, STILL 'GOING STRONG'

Hale "Mayor of Mattydale" Can Laugh at Early Predictions of Shortened Days

Today may be just Nov. 19 everywhere else—but out in Mattydale, it is a red-letter spot on the calendar, ranking somewhere below Christmas and the Fourth of July.

For today is Frank Matty's birthday—eighty-third anniversary of that stormy morning up in the little hamlet of Mexico when young Francis Victor Matty made his debut into a wicked world.

For Frank, "Mayor of Mattydale" and back in the "Gay '30's" a more powerful man than the mayor in Syracuse, it is an occasion that brings him considerable gratification. He can recall when a lot of exasperated oldsters, patience worn

to which an extraordinarily active middle-age entitles him.

He hated to take time out yesterday from the most important task which is engaging his attention—the writing of his memoirs for The Journal—to discuss birthdays.

He observed:

"What's a birthday? It just reminds you that you are a little nearer the end of the road. When you get as far along it as I am, that isn't a very welcome reminder."

Asked to sum up, in a few words, the philosophy that a long and spectacular career in public life has given him, he declared:

"I guess I'd say that it's all in doing the best you can and not worrying about whether or

thin by youthful exuberance, told him: "You'll never live to manhood," and every time another birthday rolls around, he sits back in his comfortable rocker and has a good laugh at them all.

Hale and hearty at 83, with a mind as keen as it was in the days when he was outsmarting such astute politicians as Jim Belden, J. K. McGuire, Francis Hendricks, Col. John Gaynor and Billy Kirk, Matty expects to have "a little party" in honor of the event tonight. With "Ma," who has been his loyal comfort and aide for more than 40 years, he will receive the compliments of his faithful followers in the old mansion beside the North Syracuse highway, where he has taken in his last years the comfort

not it is good enough. Have a little fun as you go along, be as tolerant as you can of other people's weakness, and don't be any meaner to anybody than you have to be. As for rules and regulations of life, I don't know enough about 'em to give you any."

Matty, after finishing "Matty Memoirs," will turn his attention to the job which he started this fall—cleaning up Manford Greene's Republican machine that rules the town of Salina. He made a dent in it this year by electing one of the four town councilmen, and he hopes to finish the task next year. In the meantime, he will continue to run the Mattydale end of the township, as he has done since he established the thriving suburb.

Frank Matty, 83 Today Still Going Strong

The Syracuse American, Syracuse, NY, November 19, 1933

This birthday article/interview was from one of Syracuse's other newspapers. One statement requires comment, but while it wasn't a quote from Frank Matty himself, it was apparently based on statements made by him.

"With 'Ma,' who has been his loyal comfort and aid for more than 40 years, he will receive the compliments of his faithful followers in the old mansion beside the North Syracuse highway..."

"Ma" refers to Frank Matty's 3rd wife, the former widow, Minnie Earl Mansfield. The "40 years" presents the first problem. "More than 40 years" takes one back to before 1893 and therein lies the problem. In 1893 Frank was still married to his 2nd wife, named Jennie. Frank and Jennie were married on September 8, 1888 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They were living in the 200 block of West Willow St. In early 1894 Jennie filed divorce papers on Frank and listed four or five of his girl friends as co-respondents, but Minnie was not found among those young ladies.

Minnie Mansfield showed up in the 1900 Syracuse Federal census as a 33 year old widow who had never given birth to any children. She was living at 312 E. Fayette St running a "lodging house."¹¹ In the 1910 Federal census the now 40 year old widow was renting a house at 515 E. Jefferson St. and had no occupation. At this time Minnie claimed giving birth to one child who was no longer alive.¹² In the 1917 Onondaga County Directory Minnie Mansfield was listed as the owner of property in the town of Salina and Frank Matty was her tenant. This was Frank's Salina farm that he had purchased in June 1900. It appears that he put the farm in Minnie's name prior to his 1915 bankruptcy to prevent him from losing it to his creditors. In the 1920 Federal census a 49 year old, widowed Minnie Mansfield, was listed as living in Frank Matty's household and her occupation was given as doing "housework" for a "private family."¹³ The tenant had risen to the head of the household and Frank reported that he owned the property. Some time between the 1920 census and May 1923, Minnie Mansfield became the 3rd Mrs. Frank Matty. The 1930 Syracuse Federal census listed 58 year old Minnie as Frank's wife. In this census, information was collected on a person's "Age at first marriage." Frank was first married at 19 and Minnie at 18.¹⁴ These ages did not refer to Minnie and Frank's marriage to each other.

There is some evidence that Frank was living with Minnie Mansfield as early as about 1909 at 352 South Warren St and after 1910 at 515 East Jefferson St. Another curious situation has surfaced recently involving Frank Matty, his patron and friend, Sim Dunfee, and a horse named Minnie Earl. This was Minnie Mansfield's maiden name. A fairly lengthy article, accompanied by a large drawing of the horse, was featured in the Syracuse Herald in August 1896.¹⁵ According to the article, "Minnie Earl is now the property of Alderman Matty, who purchased her from John S. Dunfee during the summer, and naturally prizes his protégé very highly."

There was one other statement that needs some clarification. “In the meantime, he will continue to run the Mattydale end of the township, as he has done since he established the thriving community.”

Frank Matty never “established the thriving suburb,” Prior to the turn of the century the area was established and developed by the original settlers of which Frank Matty was not one. Frank purchased his property in June 1900 but didn’t reside on his Salina farm until late 1913 or early 1914. In 1922 he followed the lead of several other property owners and opened part of his 100-acre farm for residential development. He called his development Mattydale and the name soon came to be applied to all 11 developments in the area, with the exception of Hinsdale. This was the former farm land of Perry Hinsdell, a genuine original settler who had died in 1907, and was the first farm to be turned over to residential development. To this day, Hinsdale still maintains its separate identity from Mattydale.

As for continuing “to run the Mattydale end of the township,” the only official office held by Frank Matty was that of President of the school board for old District No. 3. Prior to 1933 the town of Salina had been comprised of eight districts and was run by a supervisor and five justices of the peace. After the state ordered reorganization in 1933, the eight districts were merged into four wards and they were to be run by a council comprised of the town supervisor and four councilmen, one from each ward. Frank occupied none of those offices and had complained that the Republicans (Matty was a Democrat) had run the town of Salina for the last decade.

The newspapers of the time seemed intent on perpetuating the myth that Frank Matty single-handedly established the area that today carries his name and had “developed it,” according to his plan, from his first presence in the area. The newspapers would state that Matty also “ran” the area, even though he never held an official office in the town of Salina government, other than school board trustee and president of old District No. 3.

In the lead up to the 1933 town elections Matty gave a statement that shows that part of the problem was due to the newspapers themselves. “And, say, I wish you fellows would quit writing stuff that reads as if I was all there was in the Democratic party out our way. These candidates are all good fellows who can stand on their own feet. If I can help ‘em any I’ll do it, but they’re not just dummies. I don’t want folks to get the idea that I’m trying to run everything.”¹⁶

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY,
November 19, 1934

Frank Matty Keeps His 84th Birthday At Mattydale Home

Frank Matty, "mayor of Mattydale," observed his 84th birthday anniversary today, keeping active about his home in the Brewerton Road.

Forty friends anticipated the occasion and agreeably surprised him at his home Saturday night in honor of his anniversary.

The veteran Democratic party worker, still active in politics, appeared well and hearty today, proudest, as always, of the Mattydale school, of which he is trustee. "the best district school in the State," in his opinion.

Frank Matty Paid Tribute By Villagers

Surprise Party Is Held in
Honor of Mattydale
Founder

Marks 85th Birthday
One-time Whip of City
and County Democrats
Is Proud of School

Mattydale paid homage to its beaming founder Tuesday night as residents of the thriving settlement north of the city gathered at the home of Frank Matty for a surprise party marking his 85th birthday.

Horse racing, schools, politics, all were topics for excited conversation as the one-time whip of the city and county Democratic organizations chatted with his neighbors.

Mr. Matty took particular pride in the Mattydale District School which, he said, is the finest in the State.

85, Still Hale



FRANK MATTY

he said, is the finest in the State. "Seven years ago what did we have?" he asked. "Nineteen pupils under one teacher in a little one-room schoolhouse. Today we have 21 teachers, 24 rooms and 1,157 pupils."

He pointed proudly to a basket of chrysanthemums which had been presented to him by the school staff.

He'd like to see President Roosevelt reelected, he said, "providing he'll shape the New Deal to suit the people generally." He scoffed at critics of the President's spending program. "You or I would have to spend money, too, wouldn't we, if we had millions of people on our hands to feed and take care of?"

But it is Alfred E. Smith, rather than President Roosevelt, who is Mr. Matty's idol. The former Governor, he said, "had to rise from poverty and knows what it means to work for a dollar. Roosevelt wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. It was a gold one and he never had to learn the value of money."

His secret for finding satisfaction in life is simply "stay interested in things." And he said, "I'll stay interested in things as long as I live and live as long as I can."

His eyes beamed as he talked of the old days. He pointed to a picture of Colridge, which he raised. "He went 2:05 1/4 the first time he ever turned around and won 13 out of 14 races in one season."

Frank Matty Paid Tribute By Villagers

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, November 20, 1935

"Mattydale paid homage to its beaming founder Tuesday night as residents of the thriving settlement north of the city gathered at the home of Frank Matty for a surprise party marking his 85th birthday."

" 'Seven years ago [1928] what did we have?' he asked. 'Nineteen pupils under one teacher in a little one-room schoolhouse. Today we have 21 teachers, 24 rooms and 1,157 pupils.' "

Frank was using that same "Seven years ago" story back in his 1932 birthday article. It was wrong then and even more wrong in 1935.

Democratic Leader Vows He Will Stay in Politics "As Long as I Live and I Intend to Live as Long as I Can"

The "honorary mayor of Mattydale" became 85 years old at 4 A. M. Thursday.

Feigning complete ignorance of the "surprise" party his friends and townsmen have arranged for him for Thursday night, Frank Matty, nemesis of the Republicans and champion of the Democrats in more than half a century of political feuds, prepared to observe the occasion "with the quiet and dignity befitting a man of my years."

But when he said it he winked.

"Why don't you drop around—only don't let on I asked you. I'm not supposed to know about it."

Frank Matty, whose pet political formula has always been "politics is politics 365 days of the year and the time to play it is all the time," celebrates this particular birthday recovering from something of a political shock.

"A man is never too old to be disillusioned," he said, referring to Al Smith.

Smith, who took a walk, had been

Frank Matty's political ideal since he first stepped off the East Side sidewalks with a brown derby and a word for the Democrats.

When Smith bolted, the Democratic party "I like to have fainted," Mr. Matty said.

Still rugged, keen-eyed and interested in strenuous outdoor life, the veteran recalled that "Syracuse had eight wards when I was elected alderman in 1882, from the old Third Ward. My majority was seven votes.

"I had 726 extra votes when I was elected the last time"—which was 28 years later. He retired to run for mayor, and lost by 2,200 votes. That was in 1905. From then until he was retired he was a ranking power in the Democratic organization.

Then he went to Mattydale, which he had founded and started an even more hectic political life in the city's suburban gateway.

"Politics is always the same," the veteran says. "People don't change much. It's always been my policy to protect the interests of the city, and I've always believed in the good old motto, 'To the victor belongs the spoils.' That's been my policy, too."

Mr. Matty moved to Syracuse with his parents from a nearby farm when he was 7 years old. "That was back in '49," he recalled.

The family resided in what is now Herald Place. It was Nokon Street

then. His home was "a brick house next to the old Amos Hotel."

He says he has subscribed to The Herald 54 years.

Characteristically he said: "I'll be in politics as long as I live, and I intend to live as long as I can."

Democratic Leader Vows He Will Stay in Politics 'As Long as I Live and I Intend to Live as Long as I Can'

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, November 19, 1936

"He retired to run for mayor, and lost by 2,200 votes. That was in 1905."

Matty didn't retire to run for mayor. He was an Alderman in 1907 when he ran for mayor. His position as Alderman ran out at the end of 1907 but he couldn't run for mayor and Alderman at the same time.

"Mr. Matty moved to Syracuse with his parents from a nearby farm when he was 7 years old. 'That was back in '49.' He recalled."

The nearby farm was in Mexico, NY in Oswego County. The move took place after the 1860 census, when Frank was over ten years old. Back in '49 was a year before Frank was born.

Mattydale's Unofficial Mayor Observes 87th Year Friday

Frank Matty, unofficial mayor of Mattydale and a former Syracuse alderman, will be 87 Friday.

The veteran Democratic leader, who served 23 years in the Syracuse Common Council and came within 2,000 votes of being elected mayor, has played a prominent part in the development of Mattydale, a populous residential suburb just north of Syracuse.

Since moving to the suburb 20 years ago, Mr. Matty's interests have been centered in that community and the school district. He has dominated political affairs in that part of the town of Salina for many years.

One of his few rebuffs came two weeks ago when he was defeated for councilman of the town.

He is intensely proud of Mattydale School. Twelve years ago it had 19 pupils housed in one room. Today it has more than 1,000 pupils, 21 teachers and is rated the largest common school in the State far larger than many schools in high school districts. It is quartered in a modern building.

Mr. Matty has been a school trustee since he became a resident of the district. He has been president of the board for many years.

Mrs. Matty died last summer.

Mattydale's Unofficial Mayor Observes 87th Year Friday

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, November 18, 1937

"Twelve years ago it had 19 pupils housed in one room."

This old story had been updated a bit but it is still off by three years and 127 pupils.

"Mr. Matty has been a school trustee since he became a resident of the district."

Frank moved to the district in late 1913 or early 1914 and wasn't elected to the position of trustee until 1925.

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, November 18, 1938

Frank Matty at 88 Looks Back Over Colorful Career, Refights Political Battles and Takes Pride in Fine School



FRANK MATTY, VETERAN SYRACUSE POLITICIAN, shown at left as he appears today, preparing to celebrate his 88th birthday, and at right as he looked in 1908 when he was Democratic candidate for mayor of Syracuse.

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY,
November 18, 1938

"Old Warrior" Won Alderman's Seat in Old Third Ward in 1881; Lost Mayoralty in 1908; Pleased With Results of Fall Vote

Frank Matty, veteran of veterans in politics in the Syracuse area, will be 88 years of age at 4 A. M. Saturday. The occasion will be observed at his home at Brewerton Road and Malloy Road, Mattydale, which he bought 38 years ago.

Around his he has a community of his own, developed on his farm of 100 acres, with streets named for his family, his mother's and his wife and with "the finest school in the State," he says they tell him.

Mattydale school has grown from one with 11 pupils in winter and 19 in summer to one with 1,100 pupils. Frank Matty is chairman of the school board, has been since the district was founded.

A Democratic committeeman for 50 years, he keeps his promise of earlier years to be "interested in politics as long as I live, and live as long as I can."

He voted first in 1870 for the Mugwump candidate for President, against Horace Greeley, his regular party nominee. The first voted was 21 that year. He had lived in Syracuse 15 years, having come here with his parents when he was six.

He was born Nov. 19, 1850, in a farmhouse at Mexico, in Oswego County. His father and mother were both of French descent. His grandfather was a settler of French Street, Oswego County, which settlement retains today traces of the original

Oswego County. It retains today traces of the original French influence.

In 1881 he was elected alderman of the old Third Ward, comprising an area now included in the Second and Ninth Wards, in the vicinity of the postoffice and West Genesee Street and to the north.

He served 27 years, until 1908 retiring after losing the mayoralty by 1,100 votes in the one of the stiffest political battles of Syracuse history. His political career was high-lighted by battles.

He was elected president of the Common Council in one such fight, winning over the Republican majority on the 72nd ballot.

His wife died a year ago in September and life is not the same to him. He has his fox terrier, "one of the sweetest dogs" he has ever had, and a matched pair of black kirk horses with white markings on their foreheads. They are, he says, the finest team he has ever had.

An enthusiast over horses, he recalls fondly his "Nancy Allen," who beat all comers over the ice, at five miles, leaving them blocks behind and breaking their hearts. He drove the high-wheeled sulky himself and later had his driver.

"I have lived carefully always," he said. "I never had a strong stomach and so ate always in moderation."

14.58 x 21.76 in

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY,
November 18, 1938

There isn't a live the man or woman who can say they ever saw me take a drink, although I was in the tavern trade for years."

Politics still suits him:

"The election was about as perfect as any in years," he said. "The Legislature was elected Republican and the Democratic Governor retained with the power of veto.

"The people voted wisely. The election was not very much against the New Deal. I am a New Dealer. In the New Deal landslide in 1936, they gave us votes not belonging to us.

"We couldn't expect to hold states, governors, legislatures, except in the South. President Roosevelt's popularity was too much for the opposition in '36 and men and women voted for him who wouldn't again. They're merely going back home. McElroy made a great run but the same thing holds true of Onondaga County, just going back home."

Nearing 80 strong, philosophical, eyes measuring the world keenly still from plain spectacles, Frank Matty plays out his part as challenger or champion, in the ring to the finish.

He says flatly that Co. E. Alexander Powell, author of "Gone Are the Days," recently published serially in The Herald, was much mistaken in saying that destinies in Syracuse were decided in the back room of Matty's "Alderman Cafe."

"And that wasn't his only mistake," added the oldtimer. "I have his book here. He called me an Irishman!"

here. He called me an Irishman!"

He knew the late Edward A. Powell and his wife, the author's mother, Mr. Matty said.

"They were in my ward and though Republican his father always supported me," the veteran alderman added.

At peace like some ancient Roman general retired on his farm, he faces another world. He possesses a serenity of old age, untroubled by problems of living which vex some of the elderly.

"When you're 88," he said, "you know truly that your days are numbered, although I may last. It has no concern for me."

In the comfortable farmhouse with its tight, stout stable plant at the rear, the foundation stone of his community, the old warrior contemplates the present scene and looks back, enjoying it all.

"One hundred acres," he said, "3,000 feet along the two roads, and I took \$15,000 cold cash off it in 1917, with 470 hogs and pigs. They came and got them. I didn't even have to deliver them."

He had a half-mile track on the place and drove there but the automobiles son drove horses off "the old Plank Road," as the Brewerton turnpike was known.

"And so goes the glory, and the misery, of the world!"

Frank Matty at 88 Looks Back Over Colorful Career, Refights Political Battles and Takes Pride in Fine School

The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, November 18, 1938

The years mentioned in the headline are both off by one year. Frank Matty was first elected an Alderman in 1882 and ran for Mayor of Syracuse in 1907.

“Frank Matty is chairman of the school board, has been since the district was founded.”

There was a School District #3 in the town of Salina from at least 1874 and the original one room schoolhouse was built in 1853. Matty didn’t become a resident until late 1913 or early 1914 and did not become a board member until 1925.

“He had lived in Syracuse 15 years, having come here with his parents when he was six.”

This was in reference to Matty voting for the first time in 1870. This would imply that the Matty family moved to Syracuse in 1855, when Matty would have only been five years old. In other versions of his early years, Matty claimed the family moved from Mexico, NY to Collasse, NY when he was six years old. However, the 1860 census recorded that the Victor Matty family was still living in Mexico, NY.

SUMMARY

Frank Matty had been quoted often, over his long lifetime, as saying that he fully believed in the saying: “To the victors, go the spoils.” Based on these annual birthday articles, that also included the accomplishments of the vanquished.

Starting with the 1930 edition, the tone of these annual birthday articles shifted from one of simply reporting the events, to one of more legend building. This new tone featured an embellishment of Frank Matty, his history, his accomplishments and his “singular place” of importance in Mattydale. If something had been accomplished in Mattydale, then Frank Matty had planned it, he had driven the execution of it and now it’s very existence stood as a monument to Frank Matty’s greatness. It makes one wonder how a mere 100-acre farm could contain such an ego.¹⁷

Frank Matty was not an evil person, he was generous in his donations to the growing community of Mattydale, he was loyal to his family and friends and he would fight to the death for causes in which he believed. Matty was a larger than life character who had a need and an ability to place himself at the center of many activities. Newspapers love characters because they sell papers and Frank Matty always delivered a story.

FOOTNOTES

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- ¹ *Mrs. Matty, Ill Year, Dies*, The Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY, September 22, 1937.
- ² During the 1970s I became reacquainted with my 1st grade teacher from old Mattydale School, Mrs. Charlotte Bode. She told me about Frank Matty's desire to personally hand the teacher's their paychecks. [Perhaps to reinforce in their minds whose hand was feeding them.] Mrs. Bode said that they would have to walk down East Molloy Road to Frank's double barn to pick up their checks. On some occasions they would have to wait in the smelly old barn while Frank finished shoeing a horse before he would give them their checks.
- ³ 1930 NY Onondaga Salina - T626-1625-94A
- ⁴ 1930 NY Onondaga Salina - T626-1625-91A.
- ⁵ *Battle Looms On School Question*, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY, January 20, 1930.
- ⁶ *School Tangle in Mattydale Stirs District*, Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, May 17, 1923.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ *Matty's Ticket Wins Hot Fight Over Opponents*, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY, May 7, 1925.
- ⁹ *Frank Matty Belligerent Victor at 80, Wins, Three to One*, Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, January 26, 1930.
- ¹⁰ *School Tangle in Mattydale Stirs District*, Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, May 17, 1923.
- ¹¹ 1900 NY Onondaga Syracuse WD15 - T623-1137-210A.
- ¹² 1910 NY Onondaga Syracuse WD15 - T624-1056-149A.
- ¹³ 1920 NY Onondaga Salina - T625-1250-172A.
- ¹⁴ 1930 NY Onondaga Salina - T626-1625-91A.
- ¹⁵ *Minnie Earl, She Is a Handsome and Speedy Young Racing Mare*, The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, August 30, 1896.
- ¹⁶ *Matty Wins in Court - Judge Ousts 'Square Deal' Petitions*, The Syracuse Herald, Syracuse, NY, October 18, 1933.

¹⁷ Actually, at one time, around 1902, Frank had also purchased Benjamin Baum's old Spring Farm (~200 acres) but he sold it to Peter Michels, near the end of 1905, when he lost his free city garbage deliveries to feed his hogs, soon after his friend Sim Dunfee died in December 1904.