

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

November 2002, Issue 136

Slides & Share

A September-ish day and evening greeted the November, and last, meeting of this year. A record high temperature at Albany was broken by several degrees, and 65 still lit the bank's sign. That may have accounted for a better than usual turnout – Mimi Weeks, Kathie Williams, Connie Teator, Harriet and Dave Gumpport, Walt Ingalls, Dot Blenis, Jeanne Bear, Joe Mangold, Barbara Baron, Judy and David Rundell, Stephanie Ingalls, Martha Turon, Edna McAneny, Ron Golden, Phyllis Beechert, Harriett Rasmussen, and Don Teator.

Don talked about being in Washington, D.C., during Columbus Day Weekend (the reason for canceling October's meeting) which was at the same time the sniper scare was running rampant around the capital area.

The long-promised slide show was seen. In about 1970, the Chamber of Commerce, with much of the work done by Frank Tiberi and his wife Anita (narrating), hosted a presentation that showed Greenville and the surrounding area. Emphasized were the Provost Manor and Becker Electronics, and mentioned were many businesses and attractions in the Greenville area. Some of the slides looked very familiar, while some slides showed places that had obviously changed in the thirty years since.

Dot brought in several pieces – phone book covers with their advertisements, a Bryant's courtesy card, a Community Theater (Catskill) schedule for a week in February (year undetermined but probably in the 1950s), and a Vanderbilt Theater

(Greenville) schedule for December 3-11, 1954 (Reap the Wild Wind, Brigadoon were two of the "must see" films).

Martha brought in a newspaper clipping of Jackie Kennedy the day when she pushed a "reporter" who was photographing her as she left one of that era's most risqué movies.

David brought in an announcement from Park Green Council, No. 684, Royal Arcanum for an annual party to be held at the Vanderbilt Opera House in January 1910. No one knew what this group was. If you do, call me.

Harriett retold the first four months of 1916 in Eleanor Goff Ingalls' diary and that is included in this newsletter. I teased Harriett she is writing more and more about a shorter time period than usual. No one, including me, minded because Harriett's retellings helps to relive that time period.

Alice Roe has moved and you can contact her, if you wish at 790 Rt. 9W, Apt 155, Glenmont, NY 12077

Don reminded everyone to consider working on some project over the winter. Also, calendars are available for a while longer. And, may Winter 2002-2003 treat all of you well.

The first meeting next year is in April, unless we do the pot luck dinner. Details will be in the annual newsletter if we do pot luck.

Take care,



Eleanor Goff Ingalls Diary

1916 (January – April)

The year begins with reports on the weather. There is a bad ice storm on New Year's night and the following day it rains and freezes all day. Not a very nice Sunday for her niece Ariel's 18th birthday. Then on Monday's wash day, Eleanor complains of a "terrible, terrible high wind" which tore the hem of her table cloth.

You may remember that at the end of last year, 23 year old Stanley had bought the teaming business, including the horses, from his father and was to take possession on January 1st. He is now busy with his old routine of "up trips" and "down trips." On January 5th, while on his down trip (starting from Surprise) to Cossackie, he stops at the dentist and has a tooth pulled. The procedure must have gone well because at 4 A.M. the following morning, his day begins with a trip to Durham with coal and he brings a load of lumber from Slater's lumber yard for Pop.

Meanwhile, Eleanor and Mamma are cleaning and baking in preparation for a visit from Joe's family. [This is Eleanor's youngest living brother who had married 2½ years ago and now has a 15 month old daughter, Beatrice.] Mamma must have been disappointed after baking gingerbread, crullers, and a chocolate layer cake, on January 7th, to wait for company that didn't arrive.

We can all relate to the kinds of events happening over the next week or so. Just when you have company coming, some bug is bound to attack the family. Stanley comes home, on the night of the 8th,

sick with the grippe. Eleanor goes out with Irve (Cameron) who lives on the other side of the house, and helps him get the egg crates off the load and tend the animals. The company arrives from Richmond Hill real cold and tired. The next day both Joe's wife and Eleanor are not feeling well but it is Sunday and Ethel and Ransie and sister Carrie all visit. And at night Trum and Carrie bring 20 year old Clarence to make the down trip for Stanley on Monday. One wonders how they can have sleeping room for eight people.

I'm sure Joe and Florence wonder what they have walked into. On Monday, Joe goes to his brother-in-law Vern Smith's but apparently leaves Florence and the baby at Surprise until Wednesday. Eleanor never tells us that Joe and Florence are actually moving up to Norton Hill. Later entries tell of visits to Joe and last year in October there was mention that he was leaving the house in Richmond Hill where the family rented from the Nikola family. On the same day that Joe leaves Surprise they have to call the Dr. for Stanley who is bed with a temperature of 102°.

The grippe, that January, must have taken them all down. On January 11th, Eleanor writes, "Clarence made the up trip. I was sick in bed all day. Dr. came at night. I had temperature of 101°. Edna isn't feeling very well. At night Mamma was taken sick. Stanley tried to sit up a while but had to come back to bed." And so everyone is down except Clarence who keeps the business going.

On January 12th, Eleanor makes this entry, "Clarence made

16, brings them back to Surprise. They spend the night with Eleanor and Stanley and the next morning they move to their own place. I'm sure the stoves had to be started and the house and beds warmed up before the move. The entries after his move pick up the old theme of the two families visiting and helping each other.

In spite of the fact that a trip up home (to Trum & Carrie's) takes three hours, they go quite often, usually staying over. They do that on March 11 so Stanley can go to the basketball game in Norton Hill. This time they take Edna and they have to stay over in Grandma's (Adaline) rooms because Mother (Carrie) is having one of her infamous headaches.

March seems to be a month of emergencies. On the 13th, Maj (the horse) calks himself quite badly in a Medusa snow bank. On the 15th, while Eleanor and Stanley are visiting Ed and Carrie, little Edna gives her grandmother and Irve's folks quite a scare when she gets into the quinine tablets. Eleanor's finger, which she had hit on the wash tub, gets infected and is very painful, necessitating a visit from the doctor and causing Clarence, Warren and Irve to do the chores for her on the 22nd. [She still has chickens and she records at the top of each day's page how many eggs she collects.] For a few days the diary is even in Stanley's handwriting.

At the end of the month, friends Irve and Alice Cameron move out of the rooms on the other side of the house. Although Eleanor does not write it, it appears that she and Stanley are now going to use the

whole house. Around the first of April they are tearing off wallpaper and on the 4th they are looking in vain for the paper hangers. This is the month for the spring cleaning. Days are filled with putting oil cloth on the pantry shelves, merescoing the walls, taking up linoleum, cleaning and moving the stove, and cleaning drawers and cabinets. They are having snow off and on making for bad roads. Major calks himself again so Stanley can't drive him so he stays home and helps Eleanor paper the bedroom ceiling. I thought they may have given up on the paper hangers, but on April 13th Frank Sanford comes and papers all day until he runs short of paper in the dining room. Eleanor sets Marguerite and Stanley to washing woodwork.

By April 16th, it is time for a change and apparently Eleanor's mind is on Easter. She goes up the next day with Stanley, making a day of it. She writes, "Got my hat at Mrs. Thomas [she was the milliner living where the Mobil Station is now]. met Warren on West Greenville corner and he went to Norton Hill with us. Ran in to Mary's for a few minutes [her cousin Mary Bell who lived in the big house before you get to Peter Steven's store]. Went over to the store and got some floor oil cloth. Went over to Warrens and stayed there to dinner. Stanley came over in the afternoon and got a load of hay. Warren came home with us."

This is typical of the days when she goes on an up trip with Stanley. It gives her a chance to visit family, shop a little and have a day out. Sometimes she spends time at Vern's or Mom & Pop Ingalls', and now her brother Joe, I think, is living

on Maple Avenue. She is lucky to have her mother at home taking care of Edna so she can make these trips. It will be two more years before there will be a new baby in the household.

And now that she has her hat, she goes, on the following day, to Carrie's house where she meets Abbie Losee, and the three girls pick out the Easter music. They practice at Abbie's the next evening. They are all ready to sing in church on Easter Sunday. [It is the first entry mentioning church this year but others will follow.]

All the papering and painting and extra space must have caused a desire for some new furnishings. They make a trip up home on April 26th and she records in her diary, "We stopped in Cunningham's and ordered our bedroom suite. Stanley had to wait for a collar for Dick to Joe Smith's so we went in Sanford's and got an ice cream soda. Also Edna a little toy wagon." [Charlie and Fannie Sanford had an ice cream parlor in the building we know as Baker's before it was razed to make room for the Hardware Store.]

Sometimes if he was late Stanley would stay overnight at his parents on his up trip. When Irve and his wife lived in the other half of the house, I think Eleanor felt safe but now that the Camerons have moved away the Ingalls are the only occupants in the big house. On April 28th, Eleanor writes, "Mamma, Edna and I stayed all alone all night. We heard the rats in the cellar."

I don't know where the Camerons have moved but they must miss little Edna. Irve comes and gets her on the last day of April. It is Sunday and in the afternoon

Stanley and Eleanor go there for a visit and they stay to supper. A nice day with old friends is perhaps the way to end this summary of the entries that Eleanor Ingalls made in her diary for the first four months of 1916. Her daily recording paints a picture not only of the activities going on in the household in Surprise but of the family and friends which are so much a part of their lives.

(to be continued)

his down trip. I had to get up and do the work as Mamma had to go to bed. so I managed to drag myself around after a fashion. Layed down most of the afternoon. Mrs. Cameron took care of Edna most of the afternoon."

By the next day Edna is sick and Eleanor is back in bed. Only Stanley is beginning to get on his feet. It has been a rough January but after ten days of sickness, things finally return to normal and January 19th finds Mamma and Eleanor busy tying off a quilt which Eleanor had pieced on the machine. By the 21st, she and Stanley go to Norton Hill with a load, do some trading at Peter Stevens' store, end up at Trum and Carrie's where they get ready to go to the donation. They have an "awful good time" and apparently stay overnight. [Mamma must be home with Edna.] In the morning while Stanley goes to East Durham with soft coal, Carrie takes Eleanor up to Joes. [This is the clue that Joe has moved his family to Norton Hill.]

Eleanor writes this about the return home to Surprise, "Stanley came after me about 2:30 and we brought 4 horses home with us. Got home about five. awful sleighing." So we can figure the trip from Maple Avenue to Surprise took 2½ hours.

January ends with a bit of a scare. Eleanor explains, "Edna and I went up to Vern's with Stanley on the load. On our corner we had quite an exciting time and I was terrible frightened but it came out all right. Edna and I fell off the wagon." [Edna is just 15 months old.]

On this same trip, Stanley goes to get a load of lumber and has some trouble above Warren's in a

snow bank. They start for home with their load at 5 o'clock and arrive there at 8 o'clock. Remember this is January and they must have made most of the trip in the dark. The next day Stanley finds it very bad going on his down trip to Coxsackie.

February 1st, 20 year old Eleanor goes again with Stanley on his up trip and helps him unload egg crates at the evaporator [just below the corner opposite the Methodist Church]. They do some errands and visit cousin Mary Bell, eat dinner at Stanley's parents' house and make the three hour trip home. Good timing because the next day it snows all day and Stanley has to turn back after starting on his down trip. Instead he starts the fire in the smoke house and smokes the hams all day. In the afternoon they take their orders to the store to send to Sears Roebuck and also one to Montgomery Ward. [Do you think it every entered their minds in 1916 that Montgomery Ward would be forced to close its door some 85 years later?] The package from Ward's arrives on a snowy February 12th. It took just 10 days and they are well satisfied with what they receive. The lace curtains and granite bowl from Sears doesn't arrive until February 22nd.

There is another one of the unpleasant wagon rides on Sunday, February 6th, when Edna and Eleanor go with Stanley to Newry to pay David Losee's taxes [David owns the house where they rent]. Eleanor writes, "Went by way of Greenville and Edna was awful cross all the way [not surprising. She had been real sick to her stomach the day before] and we lost our black

shawl. We decided that Edna and I would never go in Irve's old wagon again."

On February 10th, she notes that it is their second anniversary and that Howard and Lucy were married. This Stanley's cousin Howard Spalding and Lucy Covenhoven who became the parents of Esther Tallman Griffin. [Howard is a son of Carrie Spalding Ingalls' brother Alonzo.] On February 17th, Stanley borrows neighbor Thompson's horse and they go to Howard's reception to which 70 people are invited.

It snows all day Sunday, February 13th, and on the 14th, it is 14° below zero.

In spite of the cold, Stanley comes in at 3:30 and says to get ready to go up home with him. Eleanor writes, "Had to walk almost all the way from Greenville over as I got so cold." Stanley stays up and goes after a load of apples. [I wonder why they didn't freeze.] Ransie brings a load down in the afternoon and Eleanor comes home with him. Stanley comes down the next day with Art Matthews and Clarence on a trip to Cossackie. Major [the horse] acts sick but Stanley decides to take him anyway and they end up sitting up with him until 11:30 that night. The next day they have to call John Parks to look at him. John decides it is a sprained foot and leg. Pop and Mother Ingalls come down to Clair Wickes' [should be Weeks] funeral and bring medicine for Major. Clair had died on February 15th.

Now they are short a horse so Harold Matthews rides Old Chub down and stays all night to go back with Stanley the next day. Marguerite

comes down with Stanley and is company for her Aunt Eleanor for a week.

This is a leap year and on the 29th when Stanley comes up from Cossackie, he brings the latest order from Montgomery Ward. They like the Mission suite [oak furniture] very much and there is a canvas for Stanley and shoes for Edna, and also a fly swatter.

March comes in real cold and windy with snow every few days. Eleanor never tells us how much snow falls or how deep it gets. And it rarely stops the activity. On March 2nd, even though it is snowing, Eleanor goes with Earle up to Aunt Lillie Ver Plank's [the house across from Green Hill where Walt Pierce used to live] to attend the auction at Mrs. Bart Miller's. Apparently they are traveling by car because they have a blowout and stay in Greenville for a half hour. She has a good time buying things for the house. She stays overnight and in the morning Stanley comes on his up trip. They do their shopping, visiting and dining and start for home expecting to go to Will Boyd's party, but Stanley has such a headache they can't go.

At one time in March the weather did halt activity. On March 8th and 9th there were blizzard-like conditions and the roads were so bad that Stanley couldn't make his trips. On the 10th, Ed Losee asks him to work with his team opening the roads. He has to do it again on the 16th.

I'm not sure where Ed and Carrie have been this winter but they haven't been at their house. On March 6th, Ruth, who has just turned