



Razing of Corner Restaurant - early 1960s

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

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Share Session

Autumn was noticeably in the air, with the brilliant foliage that some of us had viewed during the daylight, and with the darkness that greeted us. Thirteen came out for the meeting – Harriet Rasmussen, Margaret Bogardus, Gerald Boomhower, Rosemary Lambert, Ron Golden, Alice Roe, Jeanne Bear, Elsie Turon, Toot & Betty Vaughn, Phyllis Beechert, Dot Blenis, and Don Teator. A special welcome goes to Elsie. (It should be noted that Alice was ignominiously left off the list of last month's attendees. This newsletter's writer's memory cells must have been running on low that night. Sorry, Alice!)

The remnants of the Cunningham Museum holdings was the potential topic of the night but repeated phone calls had not been returned, and will be attempted for the November 10 meeting. Thus, we turned to our fallback, the share session, which has enough to last for a couple meetings.

Harriet came with her summary of Richard Taylor's 1864 diary, which will be printed in a later issue. Following in this newsletter is Harriet's 1862 summary.

Phyllis brought in a photo album

made by the Pioneer Insurance Company in the 1950s. It included earlier pictures of the business, as well as group shots of the people who worked. This album was loaned by Dave Elsbree to view for the night, and possibly to be contributed to the files.

We talked about the razing of Mary's Restaurant building which was knocked to the ground earlier in the day to make way for an enlarged Cumberland Farms store. A short history, gathered from our meeting, is written below. If you can think of some corrections or additions, bring them to next meeting or write me or call me.

The site of Mary's was part of a ball field seen in earlier, turn-of-the-century photographs. When the first structure was built, no one could recall, but Toot's earliest memory was that of Sheridan Palmer with a gas station in the 1920's. He was followed by Harry Hartman, and then by Ken Ingalls who ran a service station in the 1930s, and was followed by Herman Dettmer. Somewhere in here was Mobil who bought out the gas station. Some recalled that Phil Butler was associated with it next but did not know if he owned it or managed it. In the 1950s, Les Barkman ran a used car lot, paper store, and

gas station. The Cocksackie Bank used the site for a short while in the 1960's. Mary Pizzo, the namesake of the building, made it a restaurant in the early 1970s or late 1960s, and it was during this operation that the addition upon addition took place. Lou and Theresa Spinelli were the most recent owners until Cumberland bought the site this year. During the Spinelli years, Tony Pantilieri was involved in some capacity, and the name of the store was, for a time, called the Parthenon.

Your turn. Can you narrow some of the time spans? add information? correct mistakes? add a story?

Notice was drawn to the historic start of a new weekly newspaper – the Greenville Press. Now, Greenville has two newspapers!

Don had brought the recent editions of the Rensselaerville Press, the quarterly production of the Rensselaerville Historical Society.

Don had brought many of the photos that Kathie Williams had brought last month, and we spent almost 45 minutes trying to identify the photos and the people in them. A large picture of the GCS class, probably in the early-mid 1930s was a good reason for Harriet to act as recording secretary for Toot who, with a few others, recalled names from a long time ago. A typed list will be available at next meeting.

The clock was drawing close to 10, and we disappeared into night, waiting for next month to call us again.

Don

Notes:

As mentioned above, the polling for GLHG's person to be recognized for the 1999 calendar took place at this meeting. Anyone not at the meeting wanting to cast their ballot should call me (634-2397) before the November meeting. You are allowed three choices, with your first choice getting three points, your second choice netting two points, and your third choice getting one point. You can vote for one, two, or three choices. The results of the phone calls will be added to the vote at the meeting and the official results will be announced at the November meeting.

Calendars are still available from Bryant's, the Pharmacy, and Library, as well as from me (until sold out).

The issue number of last issue should have been #92; thus, this one should be #93.

November is the last meeting of the year for us. Come with "stuff" you're working on.

The Taylor Diary
1862

January starts out snowy and windy. In fact, it is so windy on January 16th that RE writes, "Windy. Barn door gave me a clip – tore my overcoat bad." One hopes it is not the new overcoat that sister-in-law Julia made him last fall. Perhaps that is his school coat and he wears something older to the barn.

Taylor is still teaching at Lampman School. He doesn't record the number of students daily but on January 27 he reports that school is small. There seems to be an unusual number of visitors there. G.B. Head visits on January 30; a Mr. George L. Boughton on February 3, and on the following day he writes, "Had a number of callers and visitors today at school." This visiting continues on March 12th. I do not understand what all this means unless people are possibly assessing his teaching methods and pupils' progress. On March 15, RE remarks, "Closed my school today. Passed off well – had number of visitors." It rains on that day and on the following day, "The trees loaded with ice today – some broken down. Remained at home. Howard is not very well."

Howard will be 17 months old in another week and now he is sick. It is interesting to note that this father goes to Medusa after his sister Sarah who, the tombstone at Medusa reveals, has suffered the loss of four of her infant children by this year. On March 19, he records that Howard is not much better and the following day, "Took Sarah home and brought Arvelia over." We have to assume that Howard is OK when there is no more mention of him until RE pays 38¢ on March 26 for "a pair of shoes for Howard." But Howard will be sick enough to record once more this year. On September 5 his father writes in his diary, "Howard taken vomiting and purging tonight." The next day things do not improve and, on Sunday, Taylor decides they need some help. The diary entry reads, "In the afternoon I went to see Mother to know what to do for Howard." We do not know what advice Phebe gives but this appears to have been some kind of self-limiting stomach upset and we don't hear anything more about it.

The snow and particularly the wind continue through February 28 when he reports, "Tremendous blustering – the worst day we have had this winter." It had snowed on the previous

day and now the winds cause the closure of roads. On March 1 his entry reads, "Got Mackey and A. More out and we opened the road to Norton Hill." Remember he is living about halfway in on Sunset Road. On March 4, the snow and wind cause there to be no school. It snows all day on March 21 and that is probably good for forcing the manure he was drawing on the old meadow into the soil. There is still snow on the ground on April 6 when he takes niece Celinda Lord home in a sleigh but by the 9th it is warm and for the next five days he comments on the rapidly melting snow. On April 13, one can almost picture the scene as he pens, "Clear moonlight as I write this in the Eve. by it."

On April 1, RE goes to the town meeting and although he doesn't tell us what transpires there he does drum up some masonry work for himself. He writes, "Took a job of Spencer Stevens and Wm Lampman." Two days later he is at Isreal Utter's working on a cellar wall. This year his work as a mason and his lathing and plastering would be steadier than in previous years. RE is very busy through both the planting and harvesting season but I'm sure Wm. Richards has things well under control there. And Peter Egnor comes to help with chores like haying, ditch digging and drawing stone to fill the ditch.

(As a little aside: The introduction of Peter Egnor into the diaries was of special interest to me. Six or seven years ago when the school children here were working on their local history project someone brought in a Civil War pension request for the widow of Peter Egnor. The name was not familiar and we could not figure out who these people were. A year or so later I came across a list of Civil War soldiers from this area. It gave me the following information: Peter Egnor – Greenville – Born July 10, 1824 at Durham – Private – 7th Heavy Art. – Enlisted Feb 15, 1864 – mustered in Feb 15, 1864 for 3 yrs. at Kingston – white – married – son of William & Hannah Sherman Egnor – laborer – died of disease at Washington on April 5, 1864.

So now we know the story. The 38 year old, who helps on the farm in this year of 1862, goes off to war two years later and within eight weeks is dead of disease. Disease took more lives than wounds did in The War Between the States. A peek ahead in these diaries reveals the April 24, 1864 entry which says, "Wm took horse and wagon and carried Mrs. Egnor to the funeral

at Freehold.”)

Taylor and sometimes brothers Charles and William work for 22 different people from April 3 until October 17 when he finishes lathing and plastering at Spencer Stevens place. Spencer is a son of Uriah Stevens, an early settler on the farm more recently known as Judge Werker's home. RE builds at least 10 chimneys this year for people like Jacob Hunt, Wm Lampman, Joseph Cowell, Lovett Head and Henry Winans. None of the work is on the mountain except a day or two at Big Hollow. Only occasionally does Taylor stay overnight on a job. This leaves him time to take Louisa home to visit seven times from the end of February to November 16th. He doesn't mention taking Howard but one does not go home to visit grandparents without bringing the grandchild. However, all five trips to Singing School are before the April mason work begins. And one of these times he takes Louisa with him.

We still hear almost nothing about the Civil War – certainly nothing about how things are going. On August 16, he writes, “Paid B.F. Hisert \$5.00 for Volunteer fund.” And on August 28, “Patched barn roof and went to Greenville in afternoon to Town Meeting to raise money by tax on town to pay volunteers.” On October 21, the entry reads, “Went to Greenville with F. Sebolt in the Eve. to hear Rufus Watson make a political speech.” None of these entries portray his anxiety but he is worried, I am sure. On October 28, he takes action to allay his fear. He pens, “Went to Durham and had my name erased from the military roll.” He does not tell us how he accomplishes this but one practice was to pay for someone else to serve for you. On November 1, he attends another political meeting at Cooksburgh. I wish he had told us some of the issues discussed.

There is not as much written about the harvest this year but the crops are good. Haying from July 28 to August 20 yields 47 loads, an increase of seven over last year. RE engages Weedon Hunt's rye straw which he takes to someone by the name of Milton at Medusa. He cleans 26 bushels of barley of which Weedon will also have half. His farm must have rocky soil because for days in November, he is busy prying stone.

Anyone reading these diaries learns to be ever ready for surprises. RE Taylor is not one for preparing you ahead of time. On December 3, he

writes, “Louisa had a girl at 1:40 P.M. and I paid Dr. Cone \$4.00.” And so Addie is born although we will not learn her name until some time next year. She is name Adelaide, I feel sure after Louisa's youngest sister.

The year's butchering had begun the day before with Mr. Cole doing the killing. And December 4, the entry reads, “Cut my pork & packed it and drew stone.” So the routine chores go on. But Louisa's mother must have been there for the birth because four days later Wm Richards takes her home and brings sister Julia over to help.

It is a busy month. Five days after the birth of his first daughter, Taylor “Commenced school with 20 scholars.” By the end of this year that number would be thirty-two.

The year ends on an unexpected sad note. On December 30, he tells us, “Went to see Sylvester Lord and found him a very sick man.” And on December 31, he pens the poignant message, “Ground covered with snow – went to see Sylvester this evening and arrived in time to see him depart this life at 20 min. to 10 P.M. & came home.” Sylvester is his brother-in-law, the husband of the same sister Sarah who had already lost four of her children. And now she has lost her 53 year old husband who is a well known mill owner in Medusa.

Sarah Lord, who is 17 years younger than her husband is now widowed at 36 years. In 1850, at age 24, she had twins named Cecelia and Cecil. The boy dies either at birth or the same year. Cecilia lives to age 2. In 1854, at age 28, Sarah had a son William who died in 1855. That same year, she had Sophia who also died in the year of her birth. The following year she had Charles F. and in 1858 a daughter Rose. All this except the birth of Rose happened in Sarah's life before Richard Edwin and Louisa were married. None of it is recorded in the diaries but tombstones often tell us sad tales and we wonder how these people endured.

The old adage that when one life is lost a new one begins was certainly true this year. Addie Taylor, who was four weeks old when her uncle died, would live to the age of 75. Sarah never remarries and although the diaries of her brother end in 1902, the Lord stone lists her death in 1915.