

# Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

November 1995, Issue #76

Share Session

Wintry weather caught up with our November share session. A sparse turnout (Toot & Betty Vaughn, Dot Blenis, Judy Rundell, and Don Teator) braved the elements. With us in spirit was Harriet who, despite having a bad cold, sent Cas down with her account of the Taylor family in 1893, a copy of which is reproduced later.

Don brought a couple rolls of aerial shots taken by Debra, showing Greenville's Rt. 32 from Balsam Shade to West Road, Freehold, the grass track behind Balsam Shade, and a few other sites. Another roll of film was taken of the grass drag held a few weekends ago at Balsam Shade.

Finally, we got to Harriet's summary, read, in turns by Judy, Betty and Don. Harriet had also slipped some other goodies in Cas' bag — water district rules, GCS PTA program of 1962-1963, Democratic candidates brochure for 1963, the Asbury Methodist Church's Women's Society of Christian Service agenda for 1961, and a September 1964 newspaper clipping about the fish die-off in the pond.

Don shared the transcription work done by Georgia Damino for the audiotapes of Burdett Griffin (1994) and Gerald Ingalls (1990). A few bits were read, noting both the local history value and the general difficulties of transcribing. Don related his past transcriptions, having had to pause the machine while trying to type at the same time, which is possible if one has four hands. Georgia is working on some more audiotapes and these will be shared as Don gets them.

Bob and Emma Spees' letter was read, saying hello to all in Greenville. Recent communication with June Clark was shared. Note was

made of Rosemary Lambert's wanting to be at the meeting but instead is battling cancer treatment.

What had threatened to be a non-meeting turned into one of our usual meetings, and we finished disappearing into the November darkness at a little after nine.



## Notes:

Calendars are available only at Bryant's and the Pharmacy. Although I have just a handful, these two businesses should have enough until the new year.

Our next meeting will be a share session, the second Monday in April. If anyone wants to organize a pot luck or something else before then, feel free to do so.

The usual annual report will come out in February (January, if I get going).

I trust some winter projects will get done, or at least have some progress made.

Where does the name for the GCS yearbook, *The Pioneer*, come from? If you know, give a call at 634-2397.

A genealogy request: Dawn Pratt, 137 Clapper Rd, Selkirk, NY 12158; phone 767-2285 is looking for information on the family of Moses and Sally Peck who had four children born between 1809 - 1820 in Schoharie, Albany, Rensselaer and Greene Counties. One of the children married Mary Ann Gould. Dawn is also looking for info on a William Ingraham/Ingram who married Mary Crane and lived in Medusa or Rensselaerville. A daughter Hattie married Charles Roe. Hattie has a sister Bertha.

Richard Edwin Taylor  
Diary of 1893  
Harriet Rasmussen - transcriber

If you remember, the last entry of 1892 told of buying a stove for the parlor. Now, on January 3rd of this new year, Dwight drives Mary to her school at Woodstock and then goes on to Oak Hill to purchase a length of pipe (probably at either Tripp's or Ford's store) so they can put up the new stove. Just in time! The following day is "zero weather."

There has been no mention of Addie since October of 1892 when R.E. writes, "I gave Addie \$25 for helping care for the boarders." Apparently Addie has been having a little vacation herself. The January 12th entry reads, Addie arrived home from N.Y. where she has been since election." She may have been visiting her cousin, Charles Lord, who is a merchant there. And on June 12th, Charlie with his sister Rose and mother Sarah come for a five day stay. It is the first time R.E. has seen his only sister Sarah in some time. Addie has a second vacation in July when she and cousin Emogene Cleveland spend a week at Lake George.

On January 20th, R.E. is not very well. Even so, there is a party at the house that evening. A Mr. VanSlyke and his friend, Mr. Thorne, come to stay for the weekend. This is the widower VanSlyke who marries Addie in 1895.

It is time again to sell the pork. So on February 4th, "Dwight went after Hallock's kettle to scald the pigs on Monday." And on Monday, "Elmer Goodrich butchered 7 pigs and I gave him 75¢ for it. Dwight returned Hallock's kettle." The following day, Seward (who is still the hired man) drives to Catskill with 566 lbs. of pork which he sells to Mr. Bourke for \$56.60, so we know that pork is again selling for 10¢ a pound.

Mary closes her school at Woodstock on February 15th and Addie begins teaching at the school on the corner of their property on February 27th — at \$4.50 per week. So there seems always to be a teacher or two in the house even though R.E. has not taught for some years. But he is very busy with his paper work, too. This February he makes out a will for Charles H. Furry (the man from whom he bought his first farm in Norton Hill). And he signs a Bond for

Mrs. Titus Delamarter to be guardian for Ida Litchfield. In March, he is elected Chairman of the Democratic Caucus and on March 7th, he notes, "Democrats cleaned everything." In May he is elected President of the Cemetery Association for the Winston Cemetery again. In July, he draws a will for Cornelius A. Schermerhorn and so his duties go throughout the year.

About five days before Addie's school opens they are hit by a 15 inch snowfall and the wind begins to blow. The following day, it starts to snow again — another 3 inches. The wind continues and the drifts are heavy. The boys are busy opening the road and on Friday, the mail gets through for the first since Tuesday. In the midst of all this bad weather, R.E. and Louisa go to East Durham to the funeral of friend, Judson Moore. There will be eight more funerals to attend this year. One, in June, is for Louisa's oldest sister, Ruth Cleveland. This is the first mention of the loss of one of Louisa's siblings in any of the diaries. Louisa is the third child in a family of nine or ten.

In 1892, I had guessed that a move by Belle and George was their move to Hensonville. But the February 27th entry proves me wrong. Taylor writes, "George took team to carry load of goods over to Hensonville." There are several more trips with the team and by March 4th, the move is complete. But it is not until April 17th that George drives his cow up to his new home. Belle is sprucing up the house, we think, because on April 14th, "Paid Polly \$2.60 for Belle's carpet." Polly is the widow of brother William. She is listed in the census record as a carpet weaver.

By March 12th, the snow is thawing but there are new troubles. All this month, R.E. is "very lame and full of pain." And sometimes he is housebound. And now Snip the horse "has the distemper and very bad off." Alex Parks comes to doctor her and the colts. They must all recover as there is no mention of any horse dying. However, Snip is sick with colic a few weeks later.

The matter of a land dispute with Joe Barlow comes up again in April when R.E. goes to Albany to see lawyer Charles Greene about his line dispute. While there, he stays at The Mansion. I presume it is a hotel. Still no clue about how the matter of the land is progressing.

We will have to wait again. But R.E. arrives home just in time. The following day, on April 20th, it snows 4 inches. That, and an all night rain probably contributed to his need to write on May 4th, "Creek the highest in years." A May 19th entry hints at damage from that high water. It reads, "The boys cleared stone over the flat where the water had left them."

But, back to the relations with his neighbor. It seems that they have not been helped much when the May 13th entry states, "Joe Barlow had 2 head of cattle in my rye, eating and treading it down in soft ground."

1893 is a normal year of preparing the ground and planting the crops. R.E. had increasing problems with lameness. He complains frequently of pain but the worst blow comes on June 21st. We read, "I fell and hurt myself badly this morning. Dr. Safford has been here twice to see me." By June 24th, "Had to send for Dr. Safford again — in great pain." He feels a little better a few days later when his old friend, George B. Head, comes for an overnight visit. But he is not well enough to drive him to Livingstonville in the morning. Mary is called upon to do it.

On the weekend of August 12th, R.E. and Louisa have a little vacation. We have not heard anything about Louisa's youngest sister Adelaide Bloodgood in a few years. Adelaide and her twin, Addison, were 16 years old when the diaries began and they were very often a part of the Taylors' lives. At age 28, Adelaide married John Burgett but it would end in tragedy. In the first year they had baby Della and when she was just a year old, John was found hanging in the barn. Adelaide went on raising Della alone for about 10 years. Then she married David Bloodgood. Now her sister and husband make a visit to her. She is living near Stone Bridge — somewhere up the mountain, I think. It is recorded that "we picked a few blackberries along the way up there."

It seems that apple season begins earlier than usual this year. The boys are picking for the first on August 15th, and the following day, they ship 4 bbls. to Nyack. On August 28th, there is heavy rain and high winds. R.E. writes, "Heavy rain last night and windy. Broke down trees and blew the apples off badly. We picked up 5 bbls. after the rain. The boys have helped to get tree

out of the road at C Places's." (neighboring farm)

The following days are spent picking up apples and the next three days, they ship 27 bbls. On September 4, he pays E. Hill \$14 for 50 apple barrels so there must be a lot yet on the trees. And they can just stay there while, on September 7th, the boys go to the Cairo Fair. Bronk VanSlyke comes and takes Addie. And R.E. and Louisa take in this yearly event the following day. In October, the picking begins in earnest and R.E. sells the remaining crop at "2.00 a barrel to Bedell of Coxsackie. He will come after the apples himself and sometimes he sends men to pick and head them up.

School starts again in September and Mr. Earl is teaching at the corner school and boarding with the Taylors at \$2.00 per week. On September 18th, R.E. carries daughter Addie to begin her school at Place's Corners. Apparently the old routine of coming home on weekends still exists because the Friday entry says, "I went after Addie." One can imagine that he and Snip traveled from his farm to Freehold — up past what is now Sunny Hill and straight down to Place's Corners. The school on the Taylor farm corner closes on December 29th and Mr. Earl had a board bill of \$28.00. That school will reopen on February 12, 1894 with Miss May Howard teaching.

October is also a month of harvesting the pumpkins, cutting of corn stalks and picking up of chestnuts and walnuts. On October 28th, Taylor carries 237 pounds of walnuts to Cairo to be shipped to Nix & Co. in Nyack. Some weeks later he receives a \$2.67 check for all that bending and picking. Now, by October's end, it is getting very cold and there is the yearly sawing and chopping of wood - both in the woods and on the pile.

No mention is made of Thanksgiving this year. George and Belle and children do not come in November — which would have been a clue to a family gathering. On December 9th, there is some activity through. The folks have a Saturday night out at the theater in Greenville. No word about the program there.

On December 23, the Allen family arrives for Christmas. Nothing is said about the festivities except that on December 24th, "The folks went to church." And on December 25th, "George and family started for home after din-

ner." One must remember that they have a long trip up the mountain to Hensonville. The children are now Percy, 9; Ada, 7; and Howard, 4 years old. Belle is now 29 and George is 35. It would be four more years before there were any more additions to their family.

Louisa and R.E. Taylor are aging rapidly these last few years. He is often unwell and does not take on as much of the strenuous farm work as before. In fact, he usually has a paid hired man from April to December. This year, on December 15th, he paid Stewart Goodfellow the balance for his eight months work at "20.00 per month and writes, "he is now working for \$15.00 per month."

There are still three unmarried children at home helping with the work and the day-to-day duties required to maintain the family. Addie is 31, Dwight is 25, and Mary is 19. Stewart seems to be treated very much like a member of the family and causes R.E. no apparent problems. So there are four able young ones to ease the older Taylors into a new year and over the harshness of another winter.

(update in the spring)