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The Backbone

A publication of the Backbone Ridge History Group of Schuyler, Seneca, and Tompkins Counties

B E C A U S E H I S T O R Y M A T T E R S

CHARLES EUGENE ERWAY AND HIS DIARY TRANSCRIPTION

BY CHARLOTTE JANE (WHITE) DICKENS

I am transcribing the 1920 diary of (Charles) Eugene Erway, who was my great grandfather. I never knew him since he died in 1923 and I was born in 1946, a span of over twenty years. People often had large families in those days and my father, Herbert Eugene was the 7th of nine children born of Lelia Marion (Erway) White, Eugene's second child born in 1882, and her husband, Frank White. My father would barely have known his grandfather either since he would only have been about five at the time of Eugene Erway's death.

A diary can be like a voice out of the past; and so it is, Charles Eugene Erway, who speaks, even if it is commenting on the weather or the main events of a particular day, as in whom he visited, what meetings attended, or how much he paid for items of food. These things can inform us of both about the person who wrote the diary but also about ordinary life as it was lived in the days of the past.

Charles Eugene Erway was born on May 9, 1852 in Hector and married Arabella Jane Henry, who was born February 23, 1852. They married in 1877. They had four children, Charles Henry, Lelia Marion, Helen Arabella, and Herbert Eugene.



This brick house is part of the Chateau Lafayette Reneau Winery property and was where my grandfather, Eugene Erway, lived for many years. He may have been born there. My grandmother Lelia was born there, and my father lived there from the time he was two until he was about nine-

(continued on page 3)

Greetings to All Members of the Backbone Ridge Historical Group and those who are reading this Newsletter:

The Backbone Ridge History Group Board of Trustees is looking forward now to continuing activities and programs relating to the history of the area that is located within the U.S. Forest and the local surrounding area. We have, as many groups also have, struggled to maintain our presence in the community as the Covid pandemic disrupted many in-person programs and activities.



We were able to participate at the Trumansburg Fair with a display of artwork created by Chris Wolff. These panels depict the history of the local region before, during and after government acquisition of lands which are now part of the federal forest system. And we were thrilled to be part of the annual parade at the fair. Thank you to Sandy Bradford for the candy distributed to eager children along the parade route, to Harold Bush for the wonderful harmonic music and to Deb and Harold Bush for the use of the truck. Also, we thank Bryce Eastman for driving the truck and to Gavyn Eastman who rode beside his grandfather on the float. We are grateful to all who helped the Backbone Ridge History Group have a presence in the parade this year!

Our attention now turns to fall programs with two historical presentations and two musical ones, which will be explained in further detail elsewhere in this newsletter. All Fall programs are generously funded by the Nelson B. Delavan Foundation and are therefore free and open to the public. They are being coordinated by Mark Brown, BRHG Board Member and Lodi Town Historian. Thank you for all your hard work, Mark!

In our most recent meeting, we had a guest, James Jensen of the Logan Community Group that maintains the Logan Community Center, who spoke to us about a plan to do networking between local historical groups so that we can share information that would benefit us all, such as timing of events, advertising of events, and information that we have available about history of the area. Our board was overwhelmingly in favor of the idea. Reaching out and sharing should be helpful to the community in making information accessible to interested parties.

As I have mentioned previously, we would love to welcome new members or new persons interested in serving on our board of trustees. Interested people may e-mail us at backboneridgehg@gmail.com

We are looking forward to a busy fall schedule of programs and we hope to see many of you there. Until then, have a wonderful autumn as the leaves begin to turn and the days of summer turn into the cooler days ahead.

Sincerely,

Your president, Charlotte Dickens



Photo of Logan Community Center building from Logan Community Center Facebook site

Eugene, as he was usually called, was the son of Jacob Risley Erway and Eliza Wickham, who was the daughter of William Wickham, the son of the William Wickham, who along with his wife and their family, were the first white settlers in the town of Hector.

He spent most of his life living and working on a farm in Hector, NY, living in the brick house that still stands on the property now known as the Chateau Reneau Lafayette Winery. He raised and sold fruits and fruit juices. He experimented with sending produce, especially grapes, to Western markets, such as Detroit, Michigan.

In the last years of his life, he and his wife Belle moved to Burdett to a house on the corner of Barnum and Main Street and eventually sold the lake property. Frank White and Eugene Erway's daughter Lelia, lived on and eventually owned the lake property home and land until 1937 or 1938 when they moved onto a farm on what is now Kellogg Road, Burdett, N.Y where I reside today.

Eugene died on the May 5, 1923, in Elmira Heights at the home of his son, Charles Henry Erway who was a doctor and from whom he received care for the last few weeks of his life.

His obituary published in the Watkins Express on May 9th, 1923 said this of him:

"He early took up farming which he followed until four years ago, when on account of failing health he moved to Burdett and purchased a home still retaining his farm which was part of the original land bought by his great grandfather, a century and a quarter ago. Mr. Erway was also a land surveyor and did work in this and five adjoining counties. At the age of sixteen he gave his heart to God and united with the Methodist Church in Burdett, where he was a faithful servant for twenty years, later transferring his membership to the Presbyterian Church at Hector. At the time of his death he was an Elder of the Presbyterian Church in Burdett... Mr. Erway was greatly interested in the cause of religion and that pertained to the church's welfare."

Below is the beginning month of his diary of 1920: More excerpts will be forthcoming.
Remembrance-(first page)

Name—Eugene Erway

Residence—Burdett P.O. Box—2056

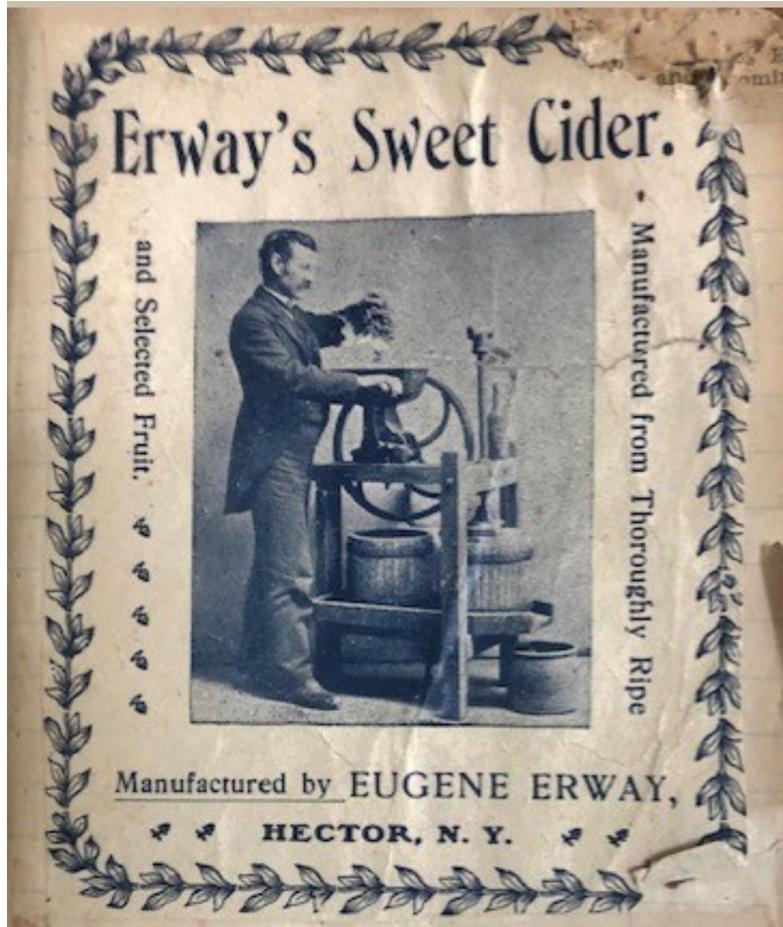
Automobile—439-045

Size of Hat—7 3/8

Hosiery—10

Collars—15 1/2 Shoes—7 1/2

Shirts—15 "



Under picture of Eugene Erway's ad for Sweet Cider, my grandmother Lelia Marion Erway White has inscribed: "Father, manufacturer of fruit juices and syrups, was a surveyor for many years. Died May 5, 1923. Notary public for many years."

*In case of Emergency notify—wife
Dr. C. H. Erway Elmira Hgts*

(continued on page 4)

CHARLES EUGENE ERWAY AND HIS DIARY TRANSCRIPTION
BY CHARLOTTE JANE (WHITE) DICKENS
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

Thur. Jan. 1, 1920—Wife and I spent the day alone Were at church in morning. Preformitory (Not sure of word) & was elected ruling elder of the Pres. Church in Burdett.

Fri. Jan. 2, 1920—We went to Schuyler Pattersons mission meeting for supper

Sat. Jan. 3, 1920—Grange meeting was held in hall & all took dinner

Sun. Jan. 4, 1920—Belle and I went to church and united with the church. I was installed as elder

Wed. Jan. 7, 1920—Malony's & Browns spent the evening & took supper here
Mr Judson came after supper

Mon. Jan 12, 1920—Settled at mill for load of coal Took due bill for (flour) for 240 lbs Wheat Made out my application for auto license also for Notary Public
Belle and I took supper at the Malony's

Tues. Jan 13, 1920—I bought this book of John Thompson Paid 2.00
I went down with Dr. (Chaffee?) to MB Young's Came back & went with him to Watkins
Put check in bank of 148.07
Amount of wheat

Wed. Jan. 14, 1920—I mailed application for auto license. Check mailed 8.21. Notary license mailed.

Thurs. Jan. 15, 1920—Belle + I went to a meeting at church where Mr. Burgess of Albany gave a talk. Mrs. Martin + myself was made a Committee to solicit for Students for training class teachers in Sunday School

Cold Fri. Jan. 16, 1920—I stayed about about house. Social at Mrs. Bailie's

Cold Sat. Jan. 17, 1920—Stayed about house all day.

Cold + Windy Sun. Jan. 18, 1920—I didn't go to church. Stayed about the house all day

Cold 5 degrees Mon. Jan. 19, 1920—I got 25 lbs flour at the mill on my 240 lbs of wheat which I hold due bill

Cold 4 degrees Tues. Jan. 20, 1920—Paid Mrs. Lembert (?) her rent of check for 7.00 also I gave Lee Fink (?) a check of 5.00. 96 cents in goods and balance in cash bought 4 lbs sugar of McCaully @ 20 cts

Cold Wed., Jan. 21, 1920—We went to social at Eugene Smith's.

Cold Thurs. Jan. 22, 1920—Belle attended party at Geo. B Pattersons for Ladies. Herbert brought load of wood for me bought ax handle 45 cts and file for wood 50 cts We went for prayer meeting

Fri. Jan. 23, 1920—Paid Claud B. Coon bal for taxes 93.11 Herbert took my battery to Gates' to store for winter

Cold Sat. Jan. 24, 1920—Borrowed back saw + cut little wood Belle sent to [words not clear] 2.29 for child's shoes

Cold Sun. Jan. 25, 1920—I went to church + Sunday school did not go in evening

Cold-Mon. Jan 26, 1920—Cut little wood borrowed #10 lbs graham on due bill of Patterson

Warmer Tues. Jan. 27, 1920—Called on Mr. Judson + Holland Smith + cut little wood Sent oil can down to Hector

Cold Wed. Jan. 28, 1920—Called on Mr. Mallory Cut a little wood

Cold Thurs. Jan. 29, 1920—Ther. 0—Herbert brought up some wood. 2 jars of butter dressed pig can oil clothes bars. Due me from Herbert 7 lbs pork I cut some wood.

Cold Fri. Jan. 30, 1920—Got my mail +stayed about house

Cold Sat. Jan. 31, 1920—Grew colder We stayed indoors + tried to keep warm Cut some wood at door

FREE FALL EVENTS

Thanks to the generosity of the *Nelson B. Delavan Foundation*,
the **Backbone Ridge History Group** is proud to host a series
of **FREE** events this Fall!

Sunday Nov 6th at 2pm
Queen's Castle & Fossenvue
Presentation by *Walter Gable, Seneca County Historian*

Logan Community Center
4074 County Rt 2, Burdett, NY 14818

Sunday Nov 20th at 2pm
Bluegrass Day with
THE JESSE ALEXANDER BAND

Lodi Historical Society
Rt. 414, Lodi, NY 14860

Sunday Dec 4th at 2pm
Ferries & Steamers on Seneca Lake
Presentation by *Gary Emerson, Schuyler County Historian*

Logan Community Center
4074 County Rt 2, Burdett, NY 14818

Sunday Dec 18 at 2pm
Holiday Special!
Christmas with **DEVORA JOHNSON**

Welcome in the the holiday season with the joy of seasonal
favorites performed by this amazing NYC and Local Vocalist

Lodi Historical Society
Rt. 414, Lodi, NY 14860

Questions? Email backboneridgehg@gmail.com

Seneca County is pleased to announce William G. Pomeroy funding for 5 new markers to be installed next summer.

They include markers for the Busy Bee Ferry, early Lodi settler, Silas Halsey, Lodi Landing, Ovid and the Baby Bear as site of local chapter of G.A.R. and currently SUVCW (Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War) Studios. Also, the formal approval is forthcoming for WGP Foundation funding for a marker for Oak Hill Cemetery in McDuffietown, for its veterans of many wars buried there. That's pretty good for one year!

Markers erected this summer include the historic markers for black landscape artist, Robert S. Duncanson in Fayette and the Lafayette Tour marker at Lafayette Park in Waterloo.

On top of all this, Seneca County approved restoration work which was done on over 40 other markers. It was truly a year where history was celebrated!

The Busy Bee marker was spear-headed by noted historian Naomi Brewer who sadly passed this year. The marker will serve as a wonderful symbol of her contributions to local history.

Lodi also lost noted historian Alta Boyer whose books on Lodi and Silas Halsey were a great help with the marker project.

The Pomeroy application for the Halsey marker read, in part:

From the Congressional Record: "HALSEY, Silas, (father of Jehiel Howell Halsey, father of Nicoll Halsey), a Representative from New York; born in Southampton, Long Island, N.Y., October 6, 1743 (old style); attended the public schools; studied medicine at Elizabethtown (later Elizabeth), N.J.; returned to Southampton and practiced medicine from 1764 to 1776; resided three years in Killingsworth, Conn., during the Revolutionary War, when he again returned to Southampton, N.Y.; undersheriff of Suffolk County 1784-1787; sheriff 1787-1792; moved to Herkimer County in 1793, settled in what is now the town of Lodi, Seneca County, and continued the practice of medicine; also erected and operated a grist mill; supervisor of the town of Ovid 1794-1804; member of the State assembly from Onondaga County in 1797 and 1798 and from Cayuga County in 1800, 1801, 1803, and 1804; member of the State constitutional convention in 1801; clerk of

Seneca County 1804-1813 and 1815; elected as a Republican to the Ninth Congress (March 4, 1805-March 3, 1807); served in the State senate in 1808 and 1809; engaged in farming; died at Lodi, Seneca County, N.Y., November 19, 1832; interment in Old Halsey Cemetery, South Lodi, N.Y."

Photos to right:

Gravestones of Silas and Hannah Halsey in the Old Halsey Cemetery, Lodi, NY



MANY NEW MILESTONES MARKED IN SENECA COUNTY

BY MARK BROWN, TOWN OF LODI HISTORIAN
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)



Installation of the new Lafayette Tour mark in Waterloo: Summer 2022

From Left to Right: Robert Shipley, Seneca County Historian Walter Gable, Ernest Brownell, Seneca County Manager C. Mitchell Rowe, Carrie Berse Executive Director, William G. Pomeroy Foundation and American Pomeroy Historic Genealogical Association, Julien Pierre Icher, Founder, and President of The Lafayette Trail INC, and Patrice Powley Briner, NY State Regent of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution



**Installation of the
Lafayette Tour
marker in Waterloo,
Summer 2022.**

New York State DAR
Patrice Powley Birner (in
blue suit) and local DAR
members.

FREE FALL EVENTS

**Sunday Nov 20 at 2pm
Bluegrass Day with
THE JESSE ALEXANDER BAND**

Lodi Historical Society
Rt. 414, Lodi, NY 14860



The Jesse Alexander Band

Jesse Alexander joined his parents on stage performing with his fiddle and singing at the age of 5. Now years later he's still performing playing mandolin, fiddle and guitar on stage with his own band. He's joined by his good friend, Luke Parsnow on guitar, his mom, Susan on bass, and Dad, Andy on banjo.

The Jesse Alexander Band has performed at bluegrass festivals in West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and appeared on The Song of the Mountains TV show in Marion, Virginia. Jesse has also been asked to perform as a guest with other bands playing mandolin and bass.

His Band has been the host of the Pickin' In The Pasture Bluegrass Festival held on the family's Lodi farm in August, for many, many years. Their vocals and tight bluegrass harmonies are enjoyed by all who attend his shows.

FREE FALL EVENTS

**Sunday Nov 6 at 2pm
Queen's Castle & Fossenvue
Presentation by Walter Gable, Seneca County Historian**

Logan Community Center
4074 County Rt 2, Burdett, NY 14818



Photo courtesy of Carolyn Zogg

Fossenvue was a lakeside summer campground founded at Fassett Point (now Caywood Point) on the eastern shore of Seneca Lake by suffragist Elizabeth Smith Miller, her daughter Anne Fitzhugh Miller, and five other friends in 1875. The camp name is an anagram for “seven of us.”

Fossenvue lay approximately halfway down Seneca Lake from Lochland, the Miller estate at Geneva. Family members and visitors would travel between the sites by boat. Life at Fossenvue was marked by relaxation, games, meals of local foodstuffs, and cultured discussion. Miller once described the purpose of the camp as "square

meals and philosophy too." For one month each summer, Fossenvue was an intellectual feast on the lakeshore. Prominent visitors included Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Ethical Culture Society founder Felix Adler, suffragist Alice Stone Blackwell (daughter of feminist pioneer Lucy Stone), ornithologist Louis Agassiz Fuertes, and a great many others.

Between 1874 and 1900 alone, the Fossenvue guest records document 534 visitors. (Records are not available for the camp’s next—and final—eight years of operation.) In 1899, the largest permanent structure at Fossenvue was erected.

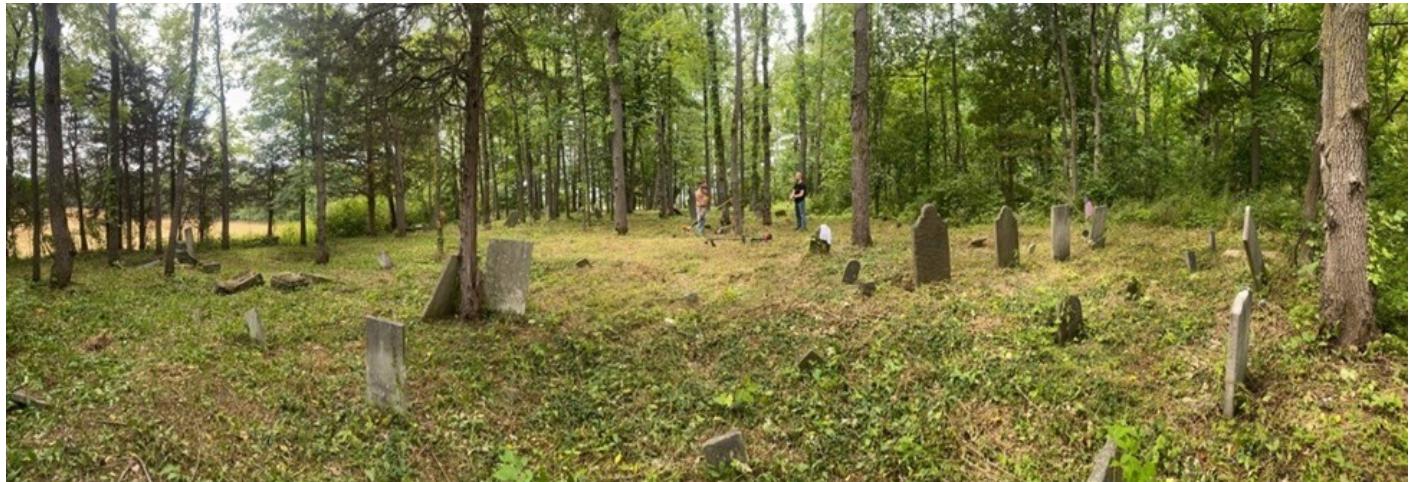
The Queen’s Caster was a seventy-seventh birthday present to Elizabeth Smith Miller, dubbed the Queen of Fossenvue. The Castle would form the center of camp life for just two more years. Fossenvue was closed in 1901.

For most of the twentieth century, the site operated as a Boy Scout camp. In 1996, the property was purchased by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and added to the Finger Lakes National Forest. The Lodi Historical Society cooperated with the National Forest to win the Queen’s Castle a place on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.

Queen’s Castle is the last surviving Fossenvue structure. During restoration work in 2004, it was discovered that someone had carved E S M —Elizabeth Smith Miller’s initials—into the fireplace mantel. Today Queen’s Castle can be seen by visitors to the Finger Lakes Nation Forest. Access requires some hiking.

GOOD WORK AT THE ABRAM COVERT FARM CEMETERY

Lodi Town Historian Mark Brown and a group of friends spent many hours at the Abram Covert Farm Cemetery this Summer. In addition to putting out flags and maintaining the grass, the group also installed a bench for visitors made by Shane James. Thank you to Lukas Brown, Damion Brown, Elijah Griffin, Bryan Cook, Shane James and, of course, to Mark. Your hard work is very much appreciated!



ABRAM COVERT FARM CEMETERY



Mark Brown,
Lukas Brown
& Damion Brown



Bryan Cook placing flags in the Abram
Covert Farm Cemetery



Lukas Brown &
Elijah Griffin

GOOD WORK AT THE ABRAM COVERT FARM CEMETERY



Photo left:
The new bench
installed!

Photo Right:
The amazing
view from
the new
bench made
by Shane
James.





We need you!

The Backbone Ridge History Group needs **you** to

- serve on the Board;
- help plan & run events;
- write newsletter articles;
- research and write grants; and
- plan for the future.

Can you help?

If so, please email **backboneridgehg@gmail.com**
or call Charlotte at 910-988-2268.

Your assistance is vital to our continued work.

**Backbone Ridge History Group
PO Box 62**

Trumansburg, NY 14886

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