

# The Backbone

a publication of the Backbone Ridge History Group of Schuyler and Seneca Counties

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



No. 13—Dr. Smead showing the correct form of thighs and hocks for a dairy cow.—(See page 62)

Taken from Doc Smead's book—see story inside!

## EARLY LIFE IN THE TOWN OF HECTOR

Note from Marsha E. Smith:  
The following account came to me quite by accident-- I was contacted by a fellow Smith researcher online. The gentleman's name escapes me at present and I know that he has passed away since our encounter. He sent me some Smith information and I was absolutely astounded to receive some records which had been copied from my old neighbor, Clarence Huston's family bible!!! The information came from someone who lived many states away from the Huston family in Hector, NY. My fellow researcher had collected it and thought that I might be able to use the information.

Among the articles collected by Emily Durham, August 3, 1964 was a story, originally published by Clarence Huston's great grandmother in the Watkins Express in 1904. It is a wonderful glimpse of early life in the Town

of Hector.

Jonathan Adee, the father of the writer bought land on Lot 23 in the Town of Hector in 1828. An Elijah Adee, who I assume is related to Jonathan, bought land on Lot 34 in 1829. Of interest, Clarence Huston and his brother Charley Huston both lived on Lot 23 until their deaths in the late 1970's. I lived down the road from them on the corner of Tichenor and Huston Road (now called County Road 4). Here is the story:

### Interesting Reminiscences

“Here is a glimpse of the older days, their labors and their pleasures, written down verbatim, the other day, as the words fell from the lips of a lady with nine decades of useful life behind her, of which all but the first few years were passed in the town of Hector.

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## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

### History of Mecklenburg

The big news this time is the upcoming program on the history of Mecklenburg planned for April 15. Many thanks to Karen Allen, Bob Kibbee and many others, all of Mecklenburg, for putting this program together and presenting it. From what I am hearing it is not possible to cover Mecklenburg's history in one afternoon, so we should expect more Mecklenburg programs in the future. Please see the program announcement in this issue.

### Mills and More Mills

A quick scan of the 1874 Atlases of our towns confirms the importance of the early mills. In July, Walter Hollien, a millwright himself, will take us through an interesting review of local mill history at his mill museum in the Town of Hector. If you have any early mill related stories, documents or photos that you would like to share, please let us know. More details will be in the next issue.

### Patrons of Husbandry, The Grange

Plans are underway for a presentation in the fall about Granges around the Backbone. Many former members of Juvenile Grange from the 1950s still live here. Since we have some of the Minute Books, we have names and hope to organize a reunion as part of the program.

### Cemetery Restoration

Once again, our friend and mentor Dave Lacy from the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forest will be here to guide and assist with the restoration of abandoned cemeteries. Plans are to complete work on the Clawson family plot on Seneca Road near Cat's Elbow and then move to the elusive Bond family plot that Dave Beckhorn finally located in the Cronk Pasture. If you would like to join us we will meet at 9AM on May 11 in the parking lot

at the Hector Ranger Station Headquarters on State Route 414 just south of Hector.

### The Digs

Although each year she says it is her last, fortunately Dr. LouAnn Wurst and some of her students will be here from Western Michigan University for a week in May. They will tie up some loose ends in their research and spend a day with Heather Mott's history class of South Seneca School. LouAnn has also offered to do an evening program for her "friends", as she calls us. The program will be at 7 PM on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Hector Presbyterian Church. Watch for details in the local papers.

### Interviews

A listing of interviews will soon be on the website. Most recently Dave Beckhorn interviewed Marie Baumgardner, a member of the Ely Family residing in Hector since early settlement. Mrs. Baumgardner shared a story about her great grandfather who built the Red House Inn from logs cut on the property and hauled to a sawmill near Watkins Glen.

### A Gift from out of the Blue

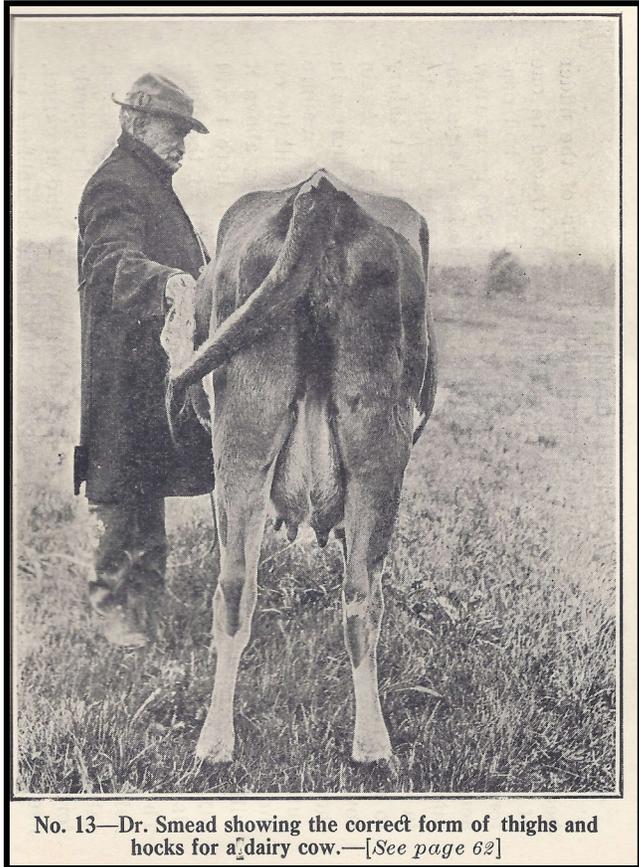
In a recent issue of *The Backbone*, I quoted from The Diary of Herman T. Smith 1884 transcribed by Marsha E. Smith and Judith L. Cone, published in 1993. Our neighbor, the late Jim Wilkins Jr. often spoke of Marsha's interest in local history. Out of curiosity I asked if Jim Wilkins III might still be in touch with her. A couple days later, with an e-mail address in hand, I contacted Marsha and it is like a flood gate of local history has opened. Marsha is the granddaughter of Herman T. Smith, lived in Covert until age 9, then, as she said, moved to "like another country" eleven miles away in the Town of Hector. She has invested

(continued on next page)

## MORE ON DOC SMEAD

The Winter 2011 issue of *The Backbone* presented an article written by Denny Teeter about Doc Smead of Logan, a well respected and widely read veterinarian. A note at the end of the article indicated that Doc Smead's book, *Common Sense Treatment of Farm Animals* is available on Amazon.com. Having been around cows and horses all my life I decided to purchased an original copy of the 63 page book copyrighted in 1911. Below are photos from the book that may be of interest to the farmers in our group.

Submitted by Allan Buddle.



No. 13—Dr. Smead showing the correct form of thighs and hocks for a dairy cow.—[See page 62]



No. 8—Dr. Smead showing how to relieve a choked horse by a blow on a plank held across the buttocks of the animal.—[See page 61]



## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

an untold amount of time and effort in collecting and transcribing early Town of Hector records and articles from local newspapers. And best of all, Marsha has offered to be a regular contributor to *The Backbone*. Her first contribution appears in this issue.

### Strategic Planning

Following up from the previous issue of *The Backbone*, a grant has been received from Museumwise to provide a consultant to assist with strategic planning. A summary of the results will appear in the next issue of *The Backbone*. Funding for the grant is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts.

Submitted by Allan Buddle, President

## EARLY LIFE IN THE TOWN OF HECTOR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The Express is very glad to put before its readers this picture of bygone times, for the life of this excellent lady differed in its detail only from the life of some ancestress of every family in this part of the state. We should be pleased to have similar reminiscent articles from other residents of our county whose years overpass the Psalmist's limit, and who can tell of the conditions existing here when the last century was young:

### **“A Little of my Life”**

“Jonathan Adee and Elizabeth Smith Adee, my father and mother, were born in Dutchess County and married there. All ten children were born there; one died when young. As our friends have brought up the history of the Adees, I will give a few of the remembrances of my childhood. I was born in Dutchess County in 1811. My mother was a weaver. She used to make \$10 a month weaving; did her sewing, baking, and sometimes her washing in the evening. The people had to make their blankets and wearing apparel in those days. She said: “Father woke up one night and said, “Lizzie, if you don't put away that wheel, I'll put it on the fire.”

Mother told me about a woman sending for the doctor; he came; she sat by the little wheel, spinning. He said, “Good morning; I thought you were sick.” She said, “I am, but I must get my skein off.”

My Mother had ten children, seven boys and three girls, one died in Dutchess County. There we had a good home. I'd heard my mother tell about our home; she said our table and chairs were curly maple. We did not have carpets in those days: the floor was white. Mother used to get sand out of the bank, wash and dry it, put it in a funnel and make flowers and rings on the parlor floor, then fix it all up nice; after company had been there it was swept up, washed and dried and put down again. My mother had a nice house, but father wanted to sell out and come to the lake country to get land for his boys, so he sold the farm and started, eleven in the family. We came to Ithaca; put up there at night; had to carry our bed in and make them on the bar room floor. Next morning had to pay twenty shillings for staying. We came on our way to a house north of the Jerry Mathews farm. Uncle Bennett Smith lived there. We went in with them until father could get a farm.

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## MEMORIES OF HERMAN T. SMITH

Article Submitted by Herman T. Smith:

THE INTERLAKEN REVIEW  
Contributors' Column  
6 May 1932  
Memory

When we recall the past and compare it with the luxurious present, we are apt to consider our forebears like unto a class of unhappy exiles, bereft of everything save the bare necessities of life. But remember, "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise," and believe it or not, they were happier and more contented than are the present generation. Home then, was a little Throne where one ruled supreme.

Obedience, that God given law, was taught and instilled into the family circle, and it brought harmony, health, happiness, hope, and Heaven. Today, disobedience is trifled with and disobedience breeds discord, disease, discontent, deviltry, disruption, and destruction. If a child has no regard for parental law, upon reaching manhood, he is quite apt to disregard the laws of state. So, we see prisons filled to overflowing, simply because the youth were not trained to obey and respect parental law. The boy or girl who respect their parents make the good law abiding citizen of the future.

I remember when grain was cut with a cradle, three acres being considered a good day's work. A good cradler would cut a swath from five to six feet in width and with a swing, drop the grain behind in a straight line. Then came the reaper. My! but this was a labor saver, though it required two men to run it. It was like the self rake of later date minus the rakes. The driver sat ahead and the man with a rake, behind, facing at right angles from the driver. The handle of the rake on an angle of 45

to its head was used to keep the grain falling on table properly and when large enough for a sheaf, was slid from table to the ground. Then came the self rake, which released the second man to aid in binding. Then the binder. And now we see the combine nosing out the thresher, destroying the sale of binding twine and raising Cain in general.

On the four square miles surrounding us, I can count thirty-nine dwellings that contained families sixty years ago, which today, are either empty, torn down, burned, or dropped in the cellar. What is the cause? Machinery.

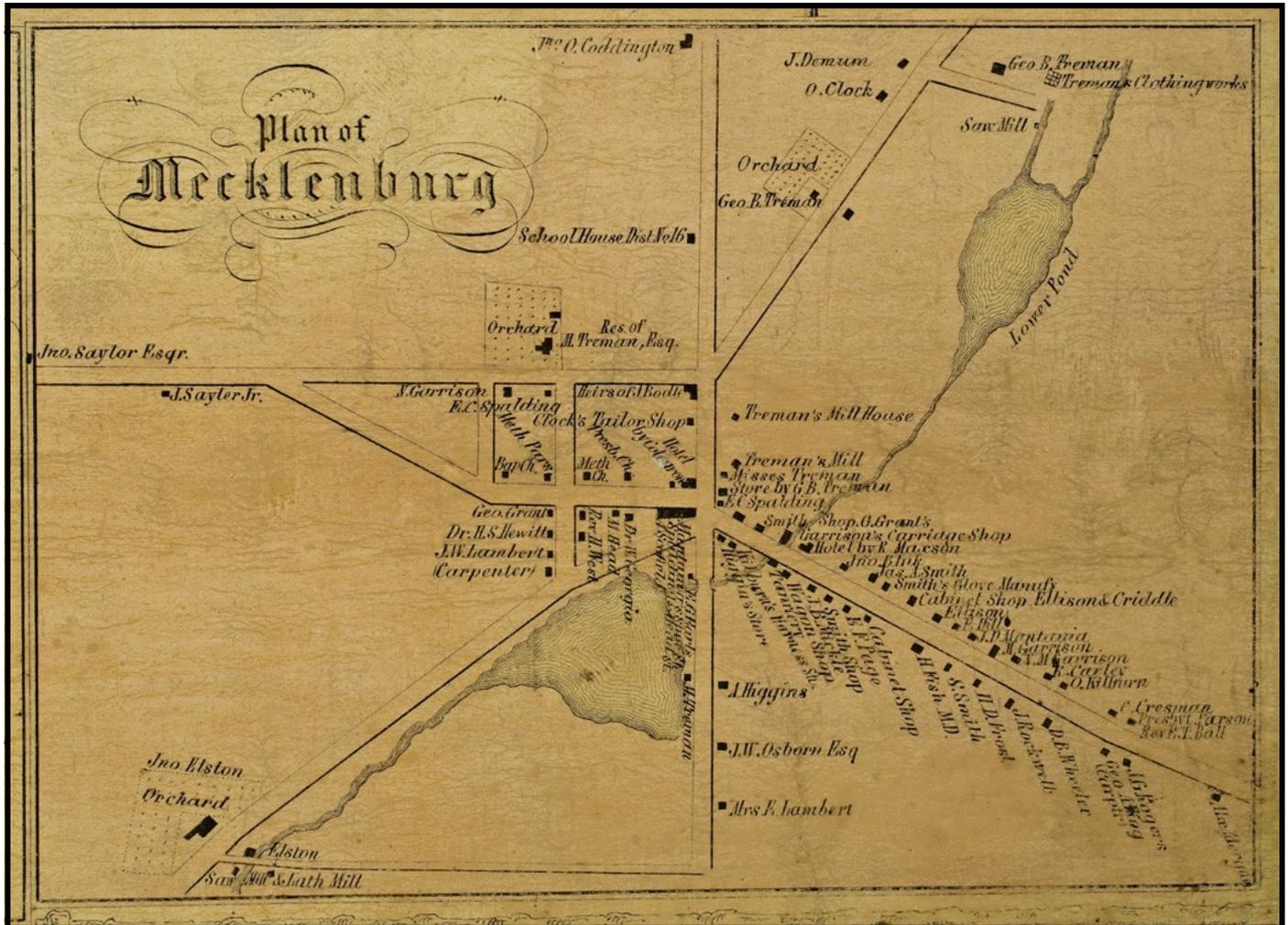
I remember when Kelley's Corners boasted a store, blacksmith shop, feed mill, cheese factory, and a cemetery.

I remember when Townsendville supported two blacksmith shops, cooper shop, tailor shop, two stores, and last but not least, a church with a membership of one hundred and fifty. Dear old church! we never pass your sacred grounds without feeling a spirit of reverence stealing o'er us. The very air seems laden with spirits of thy departed. Though you stand empty and deserted, your influence still lives and may your spire point the weary traveler heavenward, years yet to come. I remember when small paper bills called "Shin Plasters" were in circulation for amounts under one dollar. They were about three inches long by one and one-half wide.

I remember when threshing was done by horse power. Six or eight teams hitched to sweeps attached to a system of cogs which drove a tumbling rod extending across the path of the horses to a universal joint connecting to another rod on the end of which was a wooden pulley about thirty inches in diameter. A drive belt conveyed the power from pulley to machine.

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# 1874 MAP OF MECKLENBURG



## Resolutions Town of Hector, Tompkins County April 7, 1823

- 3) Resolved that if any ram be permitted to run at large between the first of August and the tenth of November the owner shall forfeit his right to said ram to the Town of Hector for the benefit of the poor fund.
  - 4) Resolved that No hogs be allowed to run in the commons.
- Recorded April 7, 1823  
By Ira Reynolds TCLK

## MEMORIES OF HERMAN T. SMITH (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

A circular wooden platform was placed over the power on which stood the driver, whip in hand, urging on the teams to keep up the motion. Round and round trod the horses, while the driver cracked the whip toward the team not doing its share.

No phosphate in those days and mother nature's storehouse was relied upon to furnish plant food. Many farmers "summer fallowed" a field each year for fall wheat. They did not understand the whys and where-fors, but they knew that plowing two or three times killed weeds and grew better wheat. Farmers changed work in order to procure sufficient horse power for threshing. Clover was left to be threshed in the coldest of weather and believe me, it was some cold job for a driver standing on that platform in cow-hide boots (no warm felts or arctics in those days) with the wind capering around, whirling snow from barn roofs whizzing and sweeping from corners and thermometer sub-zero. Yes, this was the strenuous life.

But the upkeep of a fenced farm was too much of a drain on the farmer's purse and the needless, toppling fences became unpopular. They were removed and thrown on the wood's scrap heap, and now there is nought to obstruct the view of the passing motorist but telephone poles.

Then came the steam engine drawn from place to place by horses, the smoke stack being hinged, was let down when on the road. Soon after came the traction engine. Boy! all stopped work to see it pass. And now the tractor has displaced them all and those old monsters of iron have passed to the scrap heap.

It's not many years ago when all these farms were divided into fields from five to ten acres each and separated by rail fences, worm fences with stake and rider straight post and rail. Along the highways many farmers displayed a neatly built board fence. Timber began to grow scarce and farmers wondered what was to be done. Soon the woven wire fence appeared upon the scene and solved their problem, and today, about all that is fenced is the pasture lot.

The first woven wire fence to be erected hereabouts was built by Judson Rappleye on the farm now occupied by Sam Robinson. It separated the farm from the highway; had about fifteen horizontal wires, was "horse high, bull strong, and pig tight."

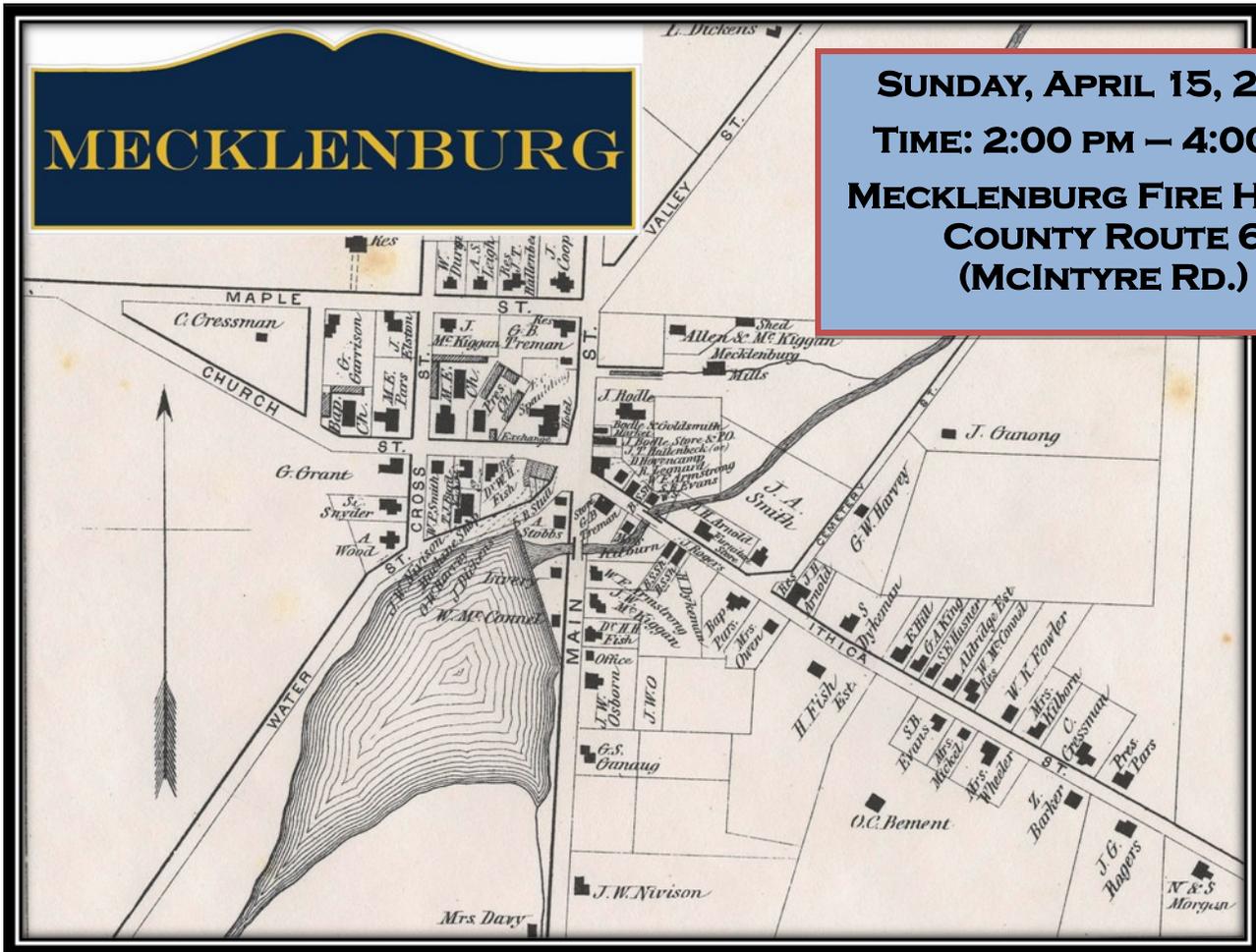
Transcribed and submitted by Marsha E. Smith



## The Backbone Ridge History Group Presents:

# MECKLENBURG

**SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2012**  
**TIME: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM**  
**MECKLENBURG FIRE HOUSE**  
**COUNTY ROUTE 6**  
**(MCINTYRE RD.)**



### WHATEVER HAPPENED TO MECKLENBURG?

Join us as we present a pictorial history of Mecklenburg. Explore life in Mecklenburg since the 1800's and see the changes that have occurred in the landscape, industry, and the devastation caused by fires and the flood of 1935. View photos of the hundreds of students who attended the school between 1846 and 1962. Find out about the community then and now.

### *Exhibits Include:*

- Materials from Town of Hector Historian
- Flour bags from the Mill
- Local maps

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**KAREN ALLEN AT [KWA5@CORNELL.EDU](mailto:KWA5@CORNELL.EDU) OR 607-387-3171**

## LAST EDITION'S MYSTERY RE: SHANNON CEMETERY

In the Winter Edition 2011, we wrote that the BRHG group recently restored the Shannon Cemetery near Townsendville, but noticed that there were no Shannon headstones there. We asked our readers if they had any information or clues as to why. We received one response, from Jim Covert, and while it doesn't explain the mystery, we thought you'd enjoy the article:

The following is an article that my grandfather, C. S. Farr, had written for, I believe, the Interlaken Review about Uncle Dan Shannon. I don't think he was a real uncle, but rather someone who everyone called Uncle Dan. I had found reference to the Shannon's as some of the very early settlers in Lodi and I believe they held some town offices. This short article that first appeared in the late twenties and early thirties.

### EARLY DAYS

A narrative without a Shannon it, would not be complete. There were many of them here; now about all gone. Will mention a few. Uncle Dan, as he was called, lived on the west side of Butcher Hill on the Sulphur Springs Farm. He often told of the easy money he made, keeping the North Hector Landing Hotel, with which he bought the home farm. It was a good place to go and he was a good neighbour, and raised a family on a poor farm. He became quite a church man. A good story is told at that early day about an old house that stood where the shale bed now is. It was an old shack, and no one seemed to own it, and was frequently occupied by rather undesirable tenants. One day a man came along and said to Uncle Dan, "I am going to be neighbor to you." This man had a large family of not a very good repute, and it is said a full neighbourhood council was had that night, and lo, the next morning the house was no longer a menace to that quiet and orderly neighborhood. It was gone. It was said to have been strictly a neighbourhood affair, in which all participated. No one knew a thing, but all said, "No, Uncle Dan wouldn't hurt a flea."

William Shannon was a modest and unassuming man to the casual observer, but awful bright in spots. He could graft a tree, trim an orchard, or play for a dance. He had a most uncanny way with him as an herbicist could locate ginseng and name almost any wild herb or plant, and had a remedy for many ills. He could read off poetry by the yard, always with sentiment as well as pith and point. He was best in a political campaign, was an admirer of Gen. Hancock and organized a glee club for the big ox roast at Watkins, where Gen. McClellan spoke, and they were given first place on the platform. He would write campaign songs that were a scream, and fairly raise the roof at any meeting. His songs were published in the New York papers as the best of the campaign. We wonder if anyone has copies of these songs. Again, we wonder, if he had a just a bit more punch he might have been as rich and famous as Charles K. Harris who wrote, "After the ball."

C. S. Farr

Submitted by Jim Covert



## EARLY LIFE IN THE TOWN OF HECTOR

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

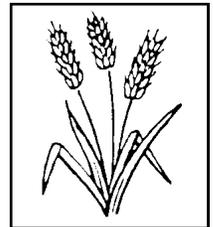
There were 22 of us. The children were out playing around in the yard, and there was a crash. The women ran out expecting to find some of the children hurt, but all were safe. The end of the house, with all its logs and clapboards, had come down.

“My father started out, bought the German farm, paid what money he could spare, and gave a bond and mortgage. We had a log house and barn for stock. Sowed a nice field of wheat. The same fall my brother Daniel went to chop down a dry tree for wood; a limb fell, struck him on the head, brain fever set in and he died the ninth day. The next spring a payment was due. My father went to Dutchess Couty after some money; it was not ready for him; had to wait a few days; before he got back they foreclosed the bond and mortgage and took all we had but one cow, and she died. Father spent his money trying to get the farm back. Harvest time came, men came, cut and bound, loaded and drew away my father’s field of wheat. We then moved to the house opposite the Logan cemetery. Mother was taken sick, and for fourteen weeks was not dressed. Had an ulcer near her collarbone and several pieces of bone came out.

“I don’t know who carded the rolls, but my father gave me my first lesson on the spinning wheel; I was only seven years old. Father took a board out of the floor and set my wheel down; I walked by the side of it, and was stinted to seven knots a day. My sister was going to a birthday party; they told me if I got my stint done I might go. I worked hard, and the yarn broke many times, and I failed, so I had to stay home. If all knew how hard I’ve worked the most of my days they wouldn’t wonder at my mistakes. When eight years old we moved on the Culver farm; lived there three years; all worked hard, made quite a lot of money. I kept on spinning. One day, when nine years old, I spun forty knots.



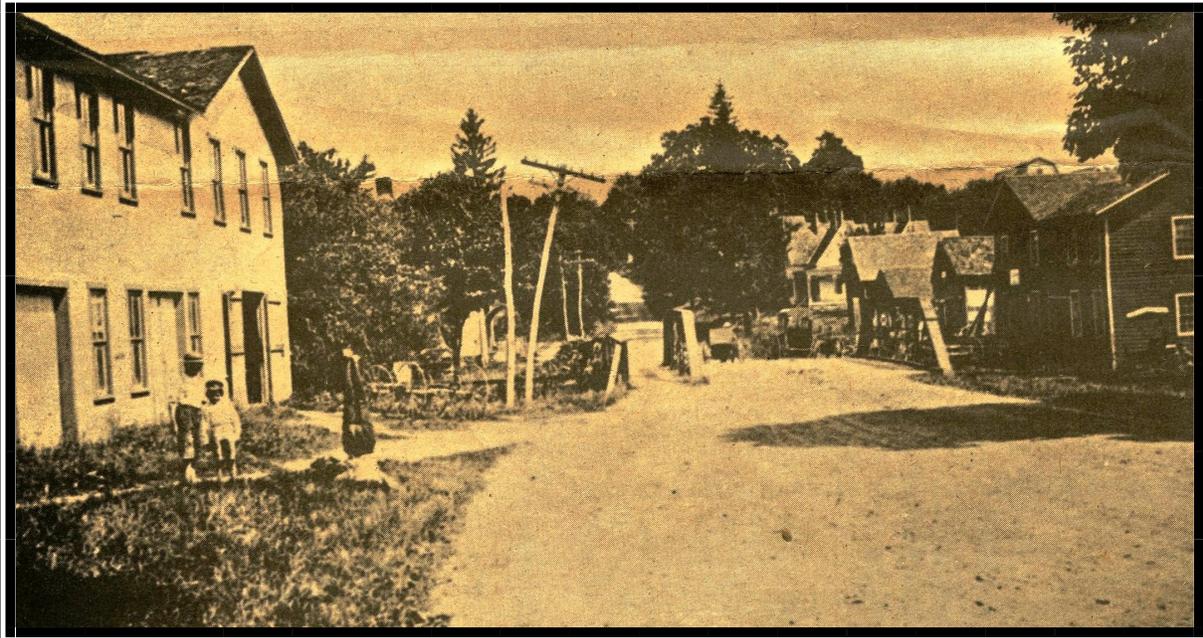
“Next we moved to where A. Cronk now lives, cleared a piece of ground, sowed wheat, built a log house, could fall several trees on the house; could see no road or house. My brother William soon died, and father lived only a few years. My father gave me a heifer and my brother-in-law gave me a sheep and lamb. In three years, I had two cows and six sheep. After that let my sheep out; had a pound of wool a head; spun and wove it and sold the cloth.



(continued on page 16)



## SPRING MYSTERY PHOTO



Can anyone identify where this photo was taken? Find out in the next edition!

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Please notice the label on the mailer page of your newsletter if you have become a member.

A **red rectangle** will indicate that your dues for 2012 are due now.

If there is a red **P**, that will indicate that your dues are paid for 2012.

If you have renewed, thank you!

Your dues go toward supporting production and mailing of the newsletter and for program support.

If you have not become a member, we hope you will support us in learning about and sharing more of the history of the Backbone Ridge and the surrounding communities. A membership form is attached to the enclosed brochure.

Thank You!

Rose Smith, Membership Chairman

## SHANNON CEMETERY MYSTERY

SUBMITTED BY GERALD MESSMER

The Winter Edition of the *The Backbone* carried the story of the restoration of the Shannon Cemetery near Townsendville, and the group wondered why there were no Shannon's buried there. The following story was submitted by Gerald Messmer:

After doing some historic searching of United States Census information, regarding the "mystery" surrounding the Shannon Cemetery in the Town of Lodi's Townsendville neighborhood, I am hoping that someone more adept than I will take up the challenge to find the origin of this small but significant part of our local history. Since the 1860 US Census was the first to list family members by name in each household, that is where I used the gravestone markings found in the Shannon Cemetery to begin my search. Because no Shannon family names were found, as such, on the stones I used the other "family names" found on the existing stones to try to "make some connection" that could link the Shannon's to those buried there and to why this cemetery has always been called the Shannon Cemetery.

There is one stone bearing the inscription "**Harriet**, *Wife of Solomon COMB & dau of Jonathan Soper –Died May 27 1836 Age 21 Yr 10 Mo 26 D*" – since it is the oldest dated stone that is where I began my search for a connection to the Shannon's. The name COMB does not show in any US Census for Seneca County, Town of Lodi, or the surrounding communities. However, the name COMBS showed up prominently as early as the 1810 US Census for the Towns of Ovid and Romulus. Granted, a portion of Lodi Town may have been in the Town of Ovid but all of the Combs families had no one named *Solomon M. COMB(S)*. My follow-on trace began with a search of the Mormon Genealogical listings and the US Censuses looking for some lead to **Harriet** through her father (as listed on her grave stone) **Jonathan SOPER**. I could find no one with that name in either resource. Using US Census information I could not find a connection of Harriet Comb to the Shannon Family.

Next I began the search from the next oldest stone: "**Henrietta**, daughter of **Norman and Sarah Johnson**" (born approx. 1841-42, according to my calculation) who "died April 21 1845 at age 3 Yrs, 3 mos 9 days" – I found some Johnsons but not in Townsendville as I expected. In the 1810 and 1820 US Censuses no Norman Johnson could be found in the Lodi area. However, in the 1860 US Census a carpenter named Norman Johnson and his wife Sarah were living in Ithaca, NY, both were 40 years old and their children living there were Norman (Jr) 15, James 12, Margaret 11 and Ida age 9. Since Norman (Jr) was 15 at the time of the 1860 Census (done in June of 1860) it would put his birth in the year 1845, the same year the Johnson's lost 3 year old Henrietta – I believe that she was the Johnson's first born child. A year and a half later, October 1846, the Johnsons lost another child, **Mary M.**( born approx. 1843) at age 2 yrs 10 mos. as found on her gravestone in the same Shannon Cemetery. I can only guess that Sarah Johnson, Mary Johnson's mother, was perhaps the daughter of a Townsendville area family. The Johnsons were still living in Ithaca at the time of the US Census of 1900, both at the age of 81 – they reported they had been married 63 years which would have placed their marriage in the year 1837. In the US Censuses of 1870 and 1880 the Johnsons were living in Ithaca. Since there was no US Census for the years 1830-1840 the Johnsons may have lived in the Town of Lodi around the time of their 1837 marriage and on into the 1840's. Perhaps an 1850 Town of Lodi Census could discover this information and point out more positively that William & Mary Johnson of Ithaca, NY were indeed the parents of baby **Mary M. Johnson**.

(continued on page 13)

**(continued from previous page, 12)**

The next oldest stone I researched was for “**JOSEPH L.S, son of Wm. & Mary Kelley**, died June 13, 1847 age 16 YRs 8Mo 10Da”—the name KELLEY appears to never have been very extant in the Town of Lodi nor in the surrounding community in the censuses before the Census of 1880— however, there were several families named **KELLY** in the Lodi area in the 1860 US Census, and in earlier years, with at least one family in Townsendville, neighbors to long- time resident Gilbert Townsend. I did see a “**J. Kelley**” home on the 1859 property map approx. ½ mile south of the four corners of Townsendville on the east side of the County Road. 146. Not until the US Census of 1880 do we find **KELLEY families** living in the Townsendville area spelling their name KELLEY. So I found no further “leads” to a connection to the Shannon’s, only more questions re: the spelling of Kelly/Kelley and what the “L” stands for after Joseph’s name.

The next oldest stone in the Shannon Cemetery is that of “**Albert**, son of **Anson & Elizabeth Spear** –died May 31, 1851”(he was born June 30,1840). In the 1860 US Census we find A. W. Spear, 43, and his wife Elizabeth age 42. Their farm was just north of and right next to the large “ Townsendville Cemetery” in Townsendville, on the same side of the County Road 146, across from the Town of Lodi Supervisor Lee Davidson’s home. Their children were: Sarah, 18; John, 14; Clarissa, 12; Mary,10; Fred, 8; Augusta, 6; and Charlotte, 2. Also buried there (?) is **George**, son of **A.W. & Elizabeth Spear**, Died January 24, 1858, aged 1 year&1 mo: As per Spear family history he was born 12 December 1856. Charlotte, his sister, who was age 2 in the June 1860 Census, was born March 1858 – Elizabeth (Mrs. Spear) was pregnant with Charlotte when George died in January of 1858. Sure sounds like heartbreak to me. The Spear Family History ([www.byjanmarie.com](http://www.byjanmarie.com)) showed that Anson Whelpley Spear was born in Covert, Seneca County in 1816 (son of Tunis & Anna Whelpley Spear) married Elizabeth “Betsy” **Kelly** (born in 1817, died 1889) the daughter of Richard & Sarah Scofield Kelly. Richard Kelly died in March 1892, buried in West Lodi Cemetery. Anson & Elizabeth Spear had 13 children in their marriage. *There we have it: ONE Spear/Kelly connection!* Names that tie in with the children buried in the Shannon Cemetery (?) Now we have more MYSTERY (?) to contend with.....

Reading the Spear Family History we see that their Family Historian wrote that BOTH Albert Spear and George Spear were buried in THE WEST LODI CEMETERY. A search of the burial records, via the Internet, shows 71 persons buried in that cemetery, NONE of whom has the name of Spear. That MYSTERY was solved... I feel the Spear children are buried in the Shannon Cemetery and that the Spear Family Historian perhaps may not really know where they are.

To make another family connection (but still not solving the “mystery” of WHY that cemetery is called the Shannon Cemetery)... we read in the Spear Family History that A. W. and Elizabeth Spear’s daughter Mary married CHARLES SHANNON on December 7, 1870. ... another family connection to the Shannon Cemetery Mystery.

In talking with another history enthusiast, my son Gerry Messmer IV, with whom I have roamed all over the area during our many hunting forays in that area now known as the Finger Lakes National Forest, we wonder WHY this little cemetery in the forest is called the Shannon Cemetery. Gerry remarked that many Irish Americans settled this area so long ago and mused if the cemetery might have some connection to the “auld sod” memories of the River Shannon and its environs “in the Old Country” – Ireland, or the lyrical Irish song “Where the Shannon River Flows” that also stirs up so many memories of Ireland. **(cont’d on p. 14)**

## SHANNON CEMETERY MYSTERY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

In examining the Property Owners Map of 1859 (the Town of Lodi segment) I found (4) Shannon homesteads: (2) in the North West corner of Military Lot #67, the T.J. Shannon farm on Covert Road & the C. Shannon farm on Keady Road, both located quite close to the intersection of Keady and Covert Roads. Also, on the South East corner of Military Lot #92 is the Wm. Shannon farm on the Lodi/Covert Town Line Road very close to its intersection with Seneca Road. There was **another** Wm. Shannon farm about immediately across the Lodi/Covert Townline Road from the other Wm. Shannon Farm but in the South West corner of Military Lot #93. Perhaps Wm. Shannon owned both farms or that his property was a single farm straddling both sides of the Townline Road.

There were other Shannon's in and around Townsendville but as far as I can find none of their properties were listed on the 1859 Map of Property Owners so one can assume they did not own the homes they lived in. At any rate none of the listed, owned Shannon properties were close to the Shannon Cemetery – soo... if the Shannon's donated the land by purchasing a small piece of land from the Townsends, whose property the cemetery would have been located on according to the 1859 Map, or if the Townsends donated the land for the Cemetery (which was only a short distance from the J. Townsend home) will have to be determined by another searcher of history. Another question arose as I read the Spear Family History & the Townsend Family Histories on the internet: a Wm. Shannon married a Sallie Townsend on July 9 1827 – could this Lodi Family Connection have had something to do with the founding of the Shannon Cemetery?

The 1859 Map shows the cemetery as clearly marked on the west side of County Road 146 (the Townsendville Road) between the two Townsend homes in Military Lot #80 **and** almost directly East across County Road 146 from the Cemetery is the only Townsendville Area home bearing the **KELLEY** name, that of **J. Kelley**, in Military Lot #81. Could this J. Kelley have also arranged to “found” the Shannon Cemetery so close to his home??

And so the mysteries remain: **WHY THE SHANNON CEMETERY** is known by that name **and** also the question “ were there other children or adults interred there,” both of which still bear more research; **and** were there burials in this small nearly forgotten tranquil place not marked by headstones, **OR if:** could some burial sites have once had markers that have been destroyed or carried off? We may never know,...or shall we?



### Shannon Farm Cemetery

This cemetery is located along a highway, adjacent to a pasture that is used for grazing cattle. The burial plot itself is fenced off, so that cattle do not damage the headstones.

#### Directions:

From Lodi, take Lodi Center Road south and turn left onto Parmenter Road. Turn right onto Route 146, and the cemetery is adjacent to the creek, old Case barn foundation, and corral.

## SCENES FROM MECKLENBURG



This photo has Burdett Ross written on the back, so we can assume that Mr. Ross is the man in the photo.

The scene is in front of Mr. Edwards store in Mecklenburg. Mr. Edwards died in a fire that started in his store in 1907. This photo had to have been taken prior. Thanks to Karen Allen for sending these along!



Mecklenburg Mills, still in operation, drew early power for grain grinding from the old pond and raceway which crossed Main St. Spencer Hungerford with his team of mules and spring-wagon regularly hauled flour to Ithaca. Arthur T. Kelsey operated the mill when this picture was taken.

Backbone Ridge History Group  
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EARLY LIFE IN THE TOWN OF HECTOR  
 (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

“I stayed and took care of my mother until I was twenty-five, then was married to Samuel Huston and moved away, but mother soon came to live with me, and was with me until she died. My husband died in 1871; had six children, four of whom are living. John died in 1882, Maxfield in 1902. I am still waiting and watching, with bright hopes for the beyond. I can walk to my daughter’s when the roads are good, an eighth of a mile away. Next month, February 8<sup>th</sup>, I am ninety-three years old.

Eleanor Huston  
 At my home, Logan, NY  
 January 28, 1904

Check your mailing label below, to see if you have a red rectangle (need to pay 2012 dues) or red “P” (2012 dues paid). We don’t want you to miss the next issue of The Backbone!

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