

# Greene County Historical Journal

A Publication of the Greene County Historical Society, Inc.

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Winter 1984

## EARLY FLYERS IN GREENE COUNTY

—Edna Ingalls Adams

A small boy living in Greenville Center saw his first airplane in 1924. Soon the early “barn stormers” were landing their planes in a field on the Horton Farm nearby. Leonard Gardiner, who in World War II would fly twenty-four missions as the pilot of a B-17 bomber, was this small boy. If someone had told him then that he would fly a huge airplane in a war in Europe, could he have believed it?

Len’s first ride was with Gus Michelson in a Waco bi-plane. Later Michelson had a Curtis Robbin, but unfortunately he crashed with it in an old orchard near Greenville Center. Michelson walked away unhurt and the small boy lugged home the broken propeller to hang it on the family barn.

About this time the Townsend brothers from Coxsackie used to fly up to the Lanny Rowe farm, also near Greenville Center. All the schools in the area were closed so the pupils could go and see!

Ted DeLaVergne, a Greenville garage owner, was an early 30’s pilot. He owned a Parks Trainer with an old 0 x 5 water-cooled engine. He too crashed one day in a grove of pine trees and also walked away with just a bump on his head. Early flyers seemed to live a charmed life.

Gerald Ingalls, whose father and mother were early resort owners, remembers the first barn stormers, who landed at Ingalside Farm to take the “boarders” and locals for rides. Riders put on helmets and goggles and followed instructions to “hang on tight” in the open cock-pit. My aunt, Leona Ingalls Rundell, forgot to hold on to her pocketbook and it fell out. Obviously the planes were not always right-side-up. The early pilots — Elmer Newkirk and George Seura, who was later killed in World War II, and the others — were perhaps not as conservative flyers as pilots are these days at Freehold airport!

Sometimes Jerry Ingalls and others would take their boarders to church in Cairo and while the boarders were at church would go over to the old Cairo airport and take “loop the loop” rides with Gus Michelson and John Cryers.

Elmer Newkirk, who now lives on Long Island and who made a special trip to Greenville to share his memories with me, spent two seasons at Ingalside in 1933 and 1934, flying the boarders and the locals. Once he almost lost Ted DeLaVergne, when Ted went up alone with him. The seat-belt was made for two people and Ted was very thin: he dropped down a few feet when Elmer looped the loop. It is reported that both pilot and passenger were shaken up a bit!



Elmer Newkirk at Ingalside Farm, Greenville, 1933

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
AERONAUTICS BRANCH

LICENSE NO. 27966

TRANSPORT PILOT'S LICENSE  
Issued to **ELMER F NEWKIRK**  
Date issued **JANUARY 8 1934**

Weight 135  
Height 5' 8"  
Color hair DK BROWN  
Color eyes DK BROWN

*Elmer F. Newkirk*  
PILOT'S SIGNATURE

This Certifies, That the pilot whose photograph and signature appear hereon is a Transport Pilot of "Aircraft of the United States." The holder may pilot all types of licensed aircraft, but may transport passengers for hire only in such classes and types specified in the accompanying regulations which are made a part hereof.

Unless sooner suspended, this license will continue in force as indicated on page 2 of the regulations.

This Transport Pilot's License and attached Rating Authority expires **JULY 15 1934**

Unless extended below by proper endorsement of a duly authorized inspector of the Department of Commerce.

LICENSE RENEWALS	
INSPECTOR'S ENDORSEMENT	EXPIRATION DATE
<i>James G. Harwood</i>	1-15-35
<i>Harwood</i>	7-15-35

Notes: All regulations of the Department of Commerce are made a part of the terms hereof, though written herein.

*Harwood*

Elmer Newkirk's Pilot's License

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## EARLY FLYERS *(continued from page 31)*

Ted White used to come to Ingalside on Friday evenings to do parachute jumps. One evening a man named Frank wanted to jump. Ted had to push the reluctant Frank off the wing and he landed on the roof of the new Central High School in Greenville.

Elmer Newkirk used to take passengers for moonlight rides over the Hudson River and then would land by flashlight and his instincts. Several times he landed at Leeds airport by the light of cars. He also flew state police officers over the Catskill Mountains looking for "stills." (This was in the late fall when the leaves had fallen.) These were the "Legs" Diamond years. The plane Elmer flew at this time, a Waco 10 powered by a 0 x 5 engine, is now in a museum in the Fort Worth-Dallas area. It was originally in a "Gates Flying Circus." (See Mr. Newkirk's picture.)

Marvin Parks was a Freehold boy who in the early 20's wanted to learn to fly. He went to Parks Air College (no relation) in East St. Louis, Missouri, about 1926. Perhaps because he was a handsome young man, the college used his picture, after his graduation, to advertise the school. Back home, he was a dashing figure in Greene County. He flew early charter flights out of Leeds, our earliest airport, and later out of Cairo. One of his famous, or infamous, passengers was "Legs" Diamond. "Legs" apparently used this charter service several times.

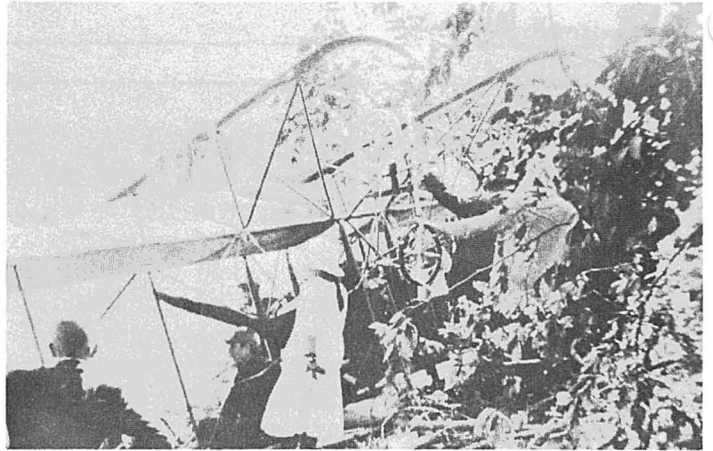
Later Marvin went to South America and flew Ford Tri-motors for Panagra Air Lines, setting up routes for their early service. (Panagra was an early division of Pan Am.) During World War II he was a test pilot for Curtis Wright. At this time he also flew "the Hump," a very dangerous route over the Himalaya Mountains to China, to supply the Chinese in their fight against Japan.

It has been said of Marvin Parks that he was "the most experienced pilot Greene County ever had."

While this kind of flying activity was going on in the valley, up in Windham there was another young man who was eager to fly, John Garraghan. Mr. Garraghan, who became a Navy pilot, still lives in Windham and shared his reminiscences with us. From him, for instance, we heard of the first fatal air accident in Greene County. The date was 1914. A plane resembling the early Wright aircraft over-shot the Prattsville field and flipped over, landing in a creek. The picture of the accident is somewhat blurred but the bicycle type wheels are very much in evidence on top! (See the accompanying photograph.) A woman passenger was killed — women seemed to have been interested and involved in aviation from the very first days — but the accident mainly illustrates how very dangerous flying was, especially in the mountains.

The first native flyer in upper Greene County was Paul Sutton, son of a Dr. Sutton. Flying a Curtis Jenny J-N 4, a slow, safe and popular airplane, he probably used in 1927 the same Prattsville air strip where the fatal accident had occurred. A slow, safe

*(continued on page 33)*



Photos of first fatal accident in Greene County, 1914

## EARLY FLYERS *(continued from page 32)*

plane was obviously a help in mountain flying. Air strips of that day were very short, 1000 feet, for example. One at Platte Clove in Hunter was about that length but was also uphill and then down grade and ended in a creek! One at East Jewett on the Gabby Hayes Ranch was even shorter and a plane crash made it necessary to close it. Many of the planes of that day, however, had high-lift wings and could fly at much slower speeds than today's aircraft.

Mr. Garraghan also mentioned that Cornelius Sabratto had an airstrip at Sunside, Paul Saxe had one at Kiskatom, and Rice Deyo had a very short one in a field in back of Trinity Episcopal Church in the town of Ashland.

One can see from this partial listing that the hills and valleys of Greene County were filled with early pilots and airstrips.

Among other pilots one should not forget Basil Rowe of Windham, a well known aviator who became chief pilot for Pan American Airways. He had his own airstrip at Shandaken. Another field in this area was on the George Osborne farm, from which a Mr. Loesing "hopped" rides, using a Waco F airplane. Jack Walsh, who was later killed during a "spin-in" at the Roosevelt field on Long Island, also flew from the Windham area. Also Donald Pond had an 0 x 5 Travel Aire, which crashed in 1931, shearing off several fence posts. The pilot was shaken up but alive. John Garraghan himself, who has an early pilot's license, #9934, was active in all kinds of flying. He received his training at the Curtis Field on Long Island in 1929. On his first cross-country flight he almost didn't make it back when darkness descended. He had to land at Stony Point just clearing electric wires and stopping fifty feet from a stone wall! The next morning two farmers held his wings steady, so he could take off. In 1939 Garraghan bought a field in Windham, constructed a 1400 feet runway and in 1940 bought his first plane, a Piper Cub J3, for \$1,448. The first Air Mail service in Greene County was flown out of Windham by John Garraghan.

These are the kinds of stories that could be duplicated by other aviators from the earliest days down to modern times. Today for instance, a thriving airfield at Freehold is owned and operated by Clem and Rita Hoovler. Before them was Virgil Phinney who started the Freehold field on his family's farm. Virgil once demonstrated the versatility of flying when he tracked down from the air a lost elephant! Later he was unfortunately killed in the crash of his plane while flying four passengers. Today Clem Hoovler, who learned to fly from an old barn-stormer in an old World War I fighter plane on Long Island, conducts a busy field, including a soaring center for gliders, and gives lessons and rides. A tie to the early days of flying is a 1931 Fleet Bi-plane, which was one of the first planes bought by the State of New York. It had been wrecked and arrived at Freehold in boxes. Today the famous old plane is restored and flown in air shows. (See photo.)



1931 Fleet Bi-plane — One of the first planes bought by the State of New York. Restored by Clem Hoovler

After World War II an airport was constructed at Rainbow Lodge, near Greenville, by Walter Birman, Sr. Several local people — Len Gardiner, Lawrence Applebee, Walt Birman, Ed Haverly and Ted DeLeVergne — bought two airplanes and Len, having a commercial license, "hopped" rides for boarders and local people. He also flew charter flights. This airport is no longer in operation.

At Cairo in 1958 a new airport was constructed in a potato field by Alfred Leis, Sr. and Alfred Leis, Jr. (The first was on the site of the present-day school.) It continues today, emphasizing scenic rides. There is also a camp ground.

During the past twenty years an airport has been in operation at Athens. It includes a center for radio controlled flying models and the new "ultra light" planes.

Hunter has an airport started by Michael Slutzky. He died in 1983 and now it is continued as a Memorial Airport.

And so we have a few high spots of the history of general aviation in Greene County. This article was a labor of love in memory of our twenty-nine year old son who was killed, January 4, 1982, by a drunk who rammed a vehicle into Jim's plane as he was taxiing into an airport in the U.S. Virgin Islands. He had soloed on the day he became sixteen, at the Freehold Airport. Recently he had flown for five years over the Catskill Mountains for the State Conservation Department in its project of tracking bears.

*Editor's Note: Edna Ingalls Adams is Greenville Town Historian and has contributed to this Journal in past years. She states that John Garraghan, who told her of the early flyers in the mountain area, died just before she was finishing this article. "Now we can appreciate his reminiscences even more." She also expresses*

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**EARLY FLYERS** (continued from page 33)  
 her thanks to Len Gardiner, Gerald Ingalls and Elmer Newkirk for their help in this article's preparation.



*Elmer F. Newkirk*  
 IS A QUALIFIED MEMBER OF

## OX5 AVIATION PIONEERS

Expires December 31, 1984

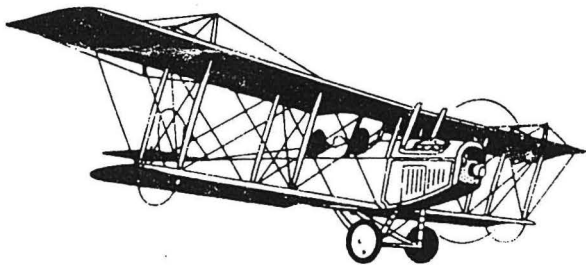
BY ORDER OF  
 THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### "OX5 AVIATION PIONEERS

OX5 pioneers are the forerunners of American aviation. If it were not for these gallant and dedicated aviation pioneers, this modern air facility would not serve the people of this nation.

#### WHAT IS AN OX5 AVIATION PIONEER?

The OX5 was the world's first production aircraft engine. The OX5 was developed for the U.S. Signal Corps in 1917 and, most famously, used in the Curtiss Jenny, a World War I training Aircraft. After World War I, a surplus of OX5 engines brought their price down to as low as \$25 each. For this reason, thousands of dedicated aviation pioneers designed and built airplanes around the OX5. Their foresight and ingenuity paved the way for today's modern aircraft."



□ □ □ □ □

### THE C. J. CAVE PAPER MILL AT WOODSTOCK

—Raymond Beecher

The Cairo township residents continued to be impressed. A major infusion of capital from the New York metropolitan area had revitalized the old Isaac and Charles Hoffman Paper Mill, with its large overshoot power wheel on the Catskill Creek. The newspapers were already calling it one of the best paper mills in the state. Charles J. Cave, the new owner, (actually it went under the name Smith and Cave for a short time) was a major New York City dealer in wrapping paper; his firm occupied two large stores at 164 and 166 Fulton Street. He was prepared to handle as much as a carload of paper each day from the Woodstock plant, provided the South Cairo and East Durham Rail Road could be completed with a spur line to the mill.

The farmers in Greene County were especially happy. Here was another local market for their rye, wheat and oat straw. Ten dollars the ton was being paid for rye, and six for wheat and oat. Farming income was bound to rise!

In its issue of March 31, 1882, the *Recorder* gave a most interesting account of the mill and its operation. John Story, former foreman of the Glenco Paper Mill in Columbia County, was employed to manage the new mill. It was expected he would utilize many of his inventive ideas to increase the output.

Basic to the mill's operation was the new dam built during the summer of 1881. Made of log cribs, filled with stone, the bottom tier of logs was bolted to the rockbed by means of key bolts. Over two tons of iron bolts and over 10,000 loads of stone were utilized for this thirty foot wide dam. Behind the structure was a pond in the Catskill Creek about three-quarters of a square mile in extent which, it was anticipated, would be a source of recreation for the Cairo people in summer and ice harvesting in winter.

The *Recorder* could also report the owners had already purchased and stocked thirty immense stacks of straw weighing over two thousand tons. For safety against fire, the stacks were scattered around the mill property. And, although workmen were drawn from a wider area, totaling between twenty-five and thirty males, the firm also constructed eight dwelling houses which it made available to families of its work force.

The Paper Mill consisted of a bleach room (35' x 40'), an engine room (30' x 41'), a machine room (40' x 90'), a boiler room, and an office nearby in which was housed the weighing scales. All the rooms, except the bleach room, were constructed of finished lumber to provide warmer working conditions during the winter months. The main building measured 40 x 155 feet.

The straw was brought into the bleaching room, hoisted up by means of screws attached to a triangle overhead run by water power, and put into the two huge tubs of Georgia pine, sixteen feet in diameter and sixteen feet in depth, holding from twelve to fifteen tons each. Here also was the lime tub, holding twenty-five bushels. After the lime was slacked, it was mixed with the straw in the bleach tubs where it remained for two or three days. The next step called for the cleaning of lime residue from the straw in the straw washer to prepare it for the beating machine.

The adjacent room (engine room) had four beating machines which made the pulp from the straw. Next the thick liquid was carried into the stuff chest and then pumped into the paper pressing machines. These machines could produce six tons of straw paper each day.

The power to run the mill came from four Risdon turbine water wheels, of one hundred fifty horsepower, supplying all the energy under a thirty-two foot head of water.

The 1883 annual *Paper Mill Directory of the World* listed six area paper processing firms in operation in this area, the Cave plant among them. They were:

Cairo: Cave, Charles J.; Straw Wrapping —  
 6 tons, 24 hours.

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## FIRST SOCIETY IN WINDHAM

—Raymond Beecher

The last sermon, "Your Fathers, where are they?" was preached in this pioneer meeting house by the Reverend Austin Morss in the last weeks of the year 1843. It signalled the closing of a meeting house which had served the pioneer communities of the Mountain Top since its construction in 1798. At its beginning it was felt to be a good location for the widely scattered, primarily farming population. But with the gradual development of the villages of Ashland and Windham, convenience for worshippers became inconvenience. Windham Center built its own Presbyterian Church; the remaining congregation transferred to Ashland. Today while driving along Route 23 in a westerly direction after leaving Windham village, one notices the walled cemetery still in use, as well as the NYS historical marker. No signs of the meeting house remain.

For the first few years after the 1798 building effort, this Society first known as a Congregational one, appears to have depended upon non-resident ministers for its religious services. But with the calling of the Reverend Henry B. Stimson in 1802, the situation improved. At the time of his calling, Mr. Stimson was not yet ordained. His religious training had come from the Reverend M. Thompson of Oak Hill and the Reverend Samuel Fuller of Rensselaerville. After his coming in September of 1803, this religious body was influenced to change its religious affiliation from that of a Congregational body to a Presbyterian one.

The Reverend Stimson's parish was a large one geographically. In addition, he was responsible for sharing his time with the Society at South Settlement (Jewett Heights). The first marriages performed by Mr. Stimson were:

- September 26, 1803 — Chaney Hubbard to Miss Anna Brainard, both of Windham
- March 18, 1804 — John Smathen of Cocksackie to Mrs. Dolittle of Windham
- April 5, 1804 — James Robertson to Miss Betsey Rogers, both of Windham

At the October 10, 1808 congregational meeting, with Perez Steele acting as moderator and Noah Pond as clerk, it was voted to incorporate as a religious society under New York State law. The certificate presented to Judge Munson Buel, one of the judges of the Greene County Court of Common Pleas, certifying as to the legal existence of the church body, was signed by Perez Steele and Ephraim Turney. Meeting court approval, the application was allowed on September 28 and recorded in Library A, Records of Religious Societies (pages 21 and 22), under date of October 24, 1808. The certificate of incorporation lists Noah Pond, Philetus Reynolds, Nathan Osborn, Timothy Hubbard, Elijah Strong and Janius Munson as duly elected trustees.

In addition to its legal status, the congregation faced other problems. The meeting house was still in

an incompleated state and income had to be found to meet the salary requirements of the Reverend Stimson, they being in arrears in the amount of \$150. That September 28th, it was voted to pay the arrears sum with the unusual proviso "provided the Reverend Stimson refunded the money were he to leave." Ephraim Turney, Perez Steele and Argulus White were appointed a committee of three to collect and pay out the money to the pastor; this they promptly proceeded to do.

To complete the framed meeting house and to "fence in the churchyard," pledges of money were sought from the congregation. This matter was placed in the hands of Jehiel Tuttle, Foster Morss (of Red Falls) and Robert M. Turney.

To pay the yearly salary of Mr. Stimson as well as to meet other minimal operating expenses, a more assured source of income was required; free will offerings were not enough. Yearly pledges for specific sums of money were solicited by means of the following worded subscription paper; the date was October 4, 1809. For some reason a few names, such as Foster Morss's, are omitted.

We whose names are undersigned do hereby Bind ourselves to pay yearly and every year unto the Trustees of the First Society in the Town of Windham County of Greene and State of New York or to their Treasurer [the sum] annexed to our several names for the purpose of having the Gospel of Christ preached one-half the time at the Meeting House near Medad Hunts & the other half of the time at the Meeting House on the Mountain both in Windham. The money to be paid on the first day of October in each year.

The conditions of the above obligation are such that if any of us should at any time hereafter join ourselves to any other Christian Denomination and bring forward a Certificate to show our special relation to them their obligation is to be void & of none effect otherwise to remain in full force and virtue. Witness our hands.

Arnold, David	3.00	Dudley, Abraham	1.25
Babcock, Abiel	1.50	Gates, James O.	3.00
Babcock, George	1.50		
Babcock, Isaiah	2.00	Hamilton, Joseph	2.00
Babcock, Levi	1.50	Hitchcock, Caleb	1.00
Brown, Shubel	2.00	Hitchcock, John	2.00
(moved)		Hubbard, Chaney	2.00
Burham, Joseph	1.50	Hubbard, Jediah	3.50
Burr, John	3.00	Hubbard, Samuel	2.50
		Hubbard, Timothy	3.00
Chase, James	1.00	Hunt, Horace	1.50
Chatfield, Increase	2.50		
Chatfield, Samuel	1.00	Ives, Roma(?)	50/50
Chafflin, Aaron	2.50		
Clover, Selio(?)	2.50	Loomis, Jesse	1.00

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**FIRST SOCIETY** (continued from page 35)

McFall, Leich(?)	1.50	Stimson, William	2.00
Munson, Junius	2.00	Stone, Abijah	2.50
Munson, Orange	1.75	Strong, Anna(?)	1.00
		Strong, Elijah	3.00
Osborn, Nathan	3.00	Strong, Jarius	3.00
Parsons, Timothy	1.50	Thrope, Burist(?)	1.00
Pond, Noah	1.50	Turney, Ephraim	5.00
		Turney, Robert	5.00
Saxton, Silas	2.00	Tuttle, Alvin	1.00
Smith, Alvin F.(?)	1.50	Tuttle, Dormass(?)	1.00
Smith, Reuben	1.00	Tuttle, Sidney	1.00
Snow, Freeman	1.00	Tuttle, William	1.00
Spencer, Stephen	1.00		
Steele, Aaron	1.50	Ward, Polly	1.00
Steele, Perez	4.00	Wheeler, Elizar	2.00
Stimson, Nathaniel	2.00	White, Argulus	3.00
		(?) uncertain spelling	

Subscription lists notwithstanding, the payment of the Reverend Stimson's salary continued to be a vexing problem for the First Society. On January 18, 1810, the sum of \$25 was raised by "taxing the male members."

The earlier effort to complete the Meeting House was not entirely successful. In 1811 a second plan was proposed. Funds were to be solicited from the more affluent members "over and above their subscriptions" which would be refunded after the finishing of the construction work "and the House is paid for by Pew rent." From the content of the Minute Book it appears this building effort was more successful and the Meeting House finally completed except for a steeple.

With each succeeding year from 1810 to 1813 the lay positions were filled in a democratic manner, by vote of the congregation at annual meeting. Among those serving yearly terms were:

- 1810 – Ephraim Turney and Argulus White
- 1811 – James O. Gates and Nathaniel P. Stimson
- 1812 – Robert M. Turney and Levi Babcock
- 1813 – Joseph Hamilton and James Robertson

The church continued to fall behind financially, again having to resort to "taxing the male members" to pay outstanding indebtedness. By 1822 the congregation decided that if it could not raise Reverend Stimson's agreed upon salary of \$400 and 30 cords of wood, he would be given due notice. Pews were to be sold annually for Society income and since the Reverend Stimson stayed on until 1826, it is assumed the finances improved slightly.

For twenty-six years the Reverend Stimson labored among the faithful of this mountain community but in 1826 (probably because of ill health) he resigned. That fall it was voted to call the Reverend Mr. Goodrich to "preach the gospel." To help finance operations, it was decided to sell the pews in blocks of six months' time.

The first indication of the forthcoming split in the congregation appears in the Minute Book under the date of April 16, 1827. At that meeting it was voted that no such division of the congregation would be made. Instead, the present Meeting House would be improved by a coat of paint and the construction of a steeple. The cost of this work was estimated to be \$450. Foster Morss, Sidney Tuttle and Bennett Osborn were appointed a committee to oversee the work, while Clark Finch, Foster Morss and Jarius Munson were authorized to manage the financial aspects.

The year 1831 brought a favorable vote to raise the sum of \$1,000 to build a parsonage and barn. That task was assigned to Sidney Tuttle, Foster Morss and Robert M. Turney. To encourage pledges of money toward the parsonage building fund, it was agreed that were the Society to be divided, the parsonage would be sold and the proceeds divided.

Heat came to the Meeting House (other than footwarmers) in January 1832 when two box stoves were installed in the center aisle. At the same time some members felt horse sheds were essential. To settle that problem, since funds were in short supply, it was agreed that those individuals wanting horse sheds should finance the same but eventually, by a complicated arrangement, the horse sheds would revert to church ownership. Permission was granted to Deacon Osborn, H. Hubbard, H. R. Potter, A. Steele, C. H. Goodrich, A. Stone, C. Camp, J. Tuttle, Doct. King, F. Osborn, H. Kinsley, T. Steele, and J. Robertson to build horse stalls for the shelter of their teams and wheeled vehicles or sleighs while attending the Meeting House services.

The list of subscribers to finance the building of the parsonage and its barn was headed by Sidney Tuttle, Bennet Osborn and Foster Morss at \$100 each. A total of \$992 was pledged. Those agreeing to contribute were assured that if the Society were to be divided, the parsonage would be sold and the proceeds shared.

The interest in building a separate Meeting House in the village of Windham simply would not fade away. On January 27, 1834, it was voted "that if a Presbyterian Meeting House was build in Osbornville (Windham) the inhabitants of Osbornville shall have their proportionate share of the property whenever this house shall be abandoned." The same for Scienceville (Ashland) if a Presbyterian Meeting House was to be constructed at that place. Also the same for the North Settlement.

The year 1834 saw the pews and stalls sold for \$527.87; the proprietors of the new sheds were authorized to move them if desired.

The Center Presbyterian Church (Windham village) was organized as a separate entity on April 29, 1834 with 54 members receiving letters of dismissal from the First Presbyterian Society. Their structure was dedicated January 13, 1835, the new congrega-

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## FIRST SOCIETY (continued from page 36)

tion calling the Reverend Leonard B. Van Dyck, son of Coxsackie's attorney-at-law, Abraham Van Dyck, and grandson of Judge Leonard Bronk of the Bronck Homestead. He remained as pastor until poor health (loss of voice) forced him to submit his resignation in December 1860.

The Reverend Mr. Lockwood was to be called by the First Society in April 1836 provided \$400 could be raised; Mr. Goodrich had served from 1826 to 1835 and Augustus T. Norton for less than five months in 1835. Following the Reverend Mr. Lockwood who served between 1835 and 1836, the Reverend Mr. Wright filled the pulpit from 1836 to October 31, 1837. He may have returned or else stayed on beyond the contemplated date of 1837 since in 1840 the congregation was considering him for another year.

In the meantime, after one committee failed to act, another consisting of Stephen Steele, Elisha White and Aaron Steele brought in a recommendation that the parsonage be sold and the money divided as per the original agreement at the time of its building.

On October 30, 1843, the annual meeting was held at Scienceville in the still uncompleted Presbyterian Meeting House in that village. Among the business being considered was an effort to raise funds to complete the new structure. The October 30, 1843 meeting was "adjourned to April next to the new meeting house in Scienceville." That December 1843 witnessed the final religious service of the First Presbyterian Society in Windham at the old site.

Between 1846 and 1849 the Reverend Mr. Howland had the Ashland charge. Then came the Reverend Phineas Blakeman. On October 14, 1850, the congregation met "at early candle light" for the purpose of selling the slips (pews) to support church expenses.

The disposition of the first meeting house structure is uncertain. Obviously the land was not sold since the cemetery continues to serve as the community burial ground and has, in fact, expanded. Did the building share the fate of similar closed ones, reverting to secular uses, or was it sold for salvage lumber? Perhaps a reader will enlighten us.

□ □ □ □ □

The Society welcomes the submission of historical articles suitable for Journal publication. Make inquiries of the editor.

Your 1985 Membership form is enclosed. Mail it in promptly with check to:  
**Barbara Van Orden**  
Box 489, RD 3  
Catskill, New York 12414

## CAPTAIN KIDD'S HUDSON RIVER TREASURE TROVE

—Raymond Beecher

Legends of lost gold and silver mines in the Catskills, as well as buried treasure along the shores of the Hudson River, are all part of the region's history. Many early land patents reserved the gold and silver mine rights to the English Crown. Charles Rockwell, in his 1867 *The Catskills and the Region Around*, writes of gold known to the Indians. The lost silver mine in the Catskills, involving the Dutch lass, Brant Slechtenhort's son, Peter Stuyvesant and the Patroon Van Rensselaer, are from that same 1867 source.

In later years the Four Mile Point section on the Hudson in Greene County would be the alleged burial site of treasure chests after the manner of Captain Kidd. Gold, as reported by the newspapers, was once found in Greenville Center, a few miles inland.

These legends and rumors are periodically revived, but unlike the notorious 1844 swindle to recover Captain Kidd's treasure in the lower reaches of the Hudson River at Dunderberg, few, if any, were victims to financial entrapment.

To the overly credulous and avaricious, the Sergeant and Company plan to recover Captain Kidd's wealth in the sunken vessel at the foot of Dunderberg in the Hudson Highlands seemed a legitimate opportunity for a "quick road to riches." After all, weren't the recovered gold and silver coins and the old gun proof of the treasure's existence!

Sergeant and Company was formed in 1844, financed by the authorized issuance of stock in the amount of \$300,000 with shares having a par value of \$100 each. The company announced it had obtained from one Abraham G. Thompson, Esquire, the right to conduct salvage operations for two years on the wreck of a vessel sunk at the foot of Dunderberg, believed to be the sailing vessel containing Captain Kidd's hoard. In this same agreement with Esquire Thompson, the company would be entitled to two-thirds of all money, jewels and other valuables recovered, Mr. Thompson receiving the other one-third.

To finance the recovery operation, Abraham G. Thompson was appointed by Sergeant and Company to receive and bank all monies from the stock sales. He was further authorized to receive and expeditiously convert into cash, all treasure recovered, and to pay to the shareholders of record such part of the net proceeds as one share of stock bore to one thousand dollars. Dividends were to be paid every six months, from July 1, 1844, and as much sooner and as often as practicable.

The shares were placed on the market and rapidly snapped up by credulous individuals, helped by a Wall Street display of an old gun "with a loop like the handle of a jug," and also various antique coins of gold and silver which were alleged to have been brought to the surface of the Hudson River by workmen using an auger and other salvage equipment.

(continued on page 39)

## VEDDER LIBRARY NOTES

□◇ It is certainly one of the most important genealogical and historical reference collections ever to be received by the Greene County Historical Society and represents years of well-documented, scholarly research. During the last two decades George and Alice Peters of Honey Hollow (Grapeville section of township of New Baltimore) and Florida have traced down the lives of Powell descendants connected with the Hudson Valley as well as related lines. This major collection has been delivered to the Society together with adequate funding to publish the same. The over 10,000 cards will be duplicated, eight to a sheet of paper, three volumes to the set. Four sets will be bound, with the title *Powells of the Hudson Valley; Descendants; Related Families*. While the duplication work is in process the records will not be available for the public's use. A publication date of June 1, 1985 is anticipated.

In addition to the ten drawers of genealogical cards, there are 44 backup notebooks, folders of correspondence, Dept. of Health records, photographs, maps, charts, diaries, autograph books, newspapers and magazines. The material will be catalogued as the George and Alice Peters Collection.

Books from the same source include: Palmer – *Palmer Families in America*; Coffin – *The Fabulous Butlers of Brandy Hill*; Vincent – *The Vincent Family*; Divine – *Old Tombstones & Unusual Cemeteries in Columbia County*; Townsend – *Some Inscriptions from Greenwood Cemetery, Reedsburgh, Wisconsin*; Kelly – *Imprints on the Sands of Time*; Wardell – *The History of Laurens Township*; American Genealogical Research Institute – *The Powells*; Gross – *Housewives' Guide to Antiques*; Williams – *Old American Houses 1700-1850*; Chamberlain – *Open House in New England*; Pratt – *A Guide to Early American Homes, North*; Isham – *Early American Houses, the Seventeenth Century*; Cogdon – *Early American Homes for Today, a Treasury of Decorative Details and Restoration*; Yankee, Inc. – *Yankee's Book of Whatsits*; and Woman's Day August 1961 – *Dictionary of American Glass*.

□◇ Among the recent purchases from Hope Farm Bookshop are: Hill – *Recollections of an Octogenarian*; Brooks – *Short Stories and Tall Tales of the Catskill Mountains, Volume II*; Zistel – *Thistle & Co.*; Beers' – *History of Greene County Index*; and Burhans – *The Genealogy and History of the Ingalls Family in America*.

□◇ Mr. Ralph Gosse of Albany has been a thorough researcher on the stereoscopic views produced during the nineteenth century, views especially related to the Catskill region. During a recent visit to the Vedder Library we were of assistance to him in his research. As a thank you he left three views, one of the Laurel House and two of Catskill Mountain scenery. He expressed appreciation concerning the size and quality of the library's stereoscopic collection relating to this area.

□◇ *Claverack Township, History and Heritage* was an AR Bicentennial publication. It contains a wide range of that section of Columbia County's history. A copy has been catalogued, the gift of Harry and Betty Miller of Ramsey Schoolhouse Road, Catskill.

□◇ Manuscripts connected with Major Augustine Prevost of Greenville are always of serious interest. The 1792 contract for the sale and purchase of land at the northern edge of the village of Greenville, from Prevost to Spees, has surfaced. The document comes from Mrs. Virginia Werker and was in the estate papers of Judge Henry Werker, a former president of this Society.

□◇ A several-page history of the Talmadge-Hull-Atwater house on North Street in Greenville has been duplicated courtesy Douglas Thomsen of Oak Hill who serves as a library assistant. The Talmadge family was connected by marriage to the Roswell Reed family of Coxsackie, Dr. Henry Talmadge marrying Jane Ann Reed.

□◇ From the Senate House State Historic Site has come a sepia postcard of the Bronck Houses, from the 1930's.

□◇ Mrs. Shirley Martin of Hancock, New Hampshire, continues to mail verifications and corrections to her earlier research also deposited here. Additionally, she has contributed photographs and postcard views of the Hensonville hamlet as well as newspaper clippings concerning the Brockett family of the Windham area.

□◇ The Wilsey family Bible was acquired at the recent New Baltimore auction sale; it contains useful genealogical information.

□◇ Bernice Weir of Lloyd Harbor, Huntington, New York, has shared more Ferous-VanLoan information.

□◇ Sally Bogardus and her son Robert left with Mrs. Frances Adams for the Vedder Library, records of the Roberts family of Coxsackie.

□◇ Additional genealogical information concerning the PeCoy family has arrived. Mr. Clarence O. PeCoy of Lakewood, Colorado, has turned his research efforts to this region since PeCoy Notch in the Catskills is named for this family.

□◇ Douglas Campbell's *Historical Fallacies Regarding Colonial New York*, published in 1879, is a gift from Mrs. June Vincent of Coxsackie.

□◇ Charles E. Dornbusch presented the library with first day postal covers for Cornwallville, New York, dated April 30, 1973.



### MEMORIAL FUNDS RECEIVED THIS QUARTER

For the Judge Henry F. Werker Fund:


The Merchants Club of New York

Mr. and Mrs. Aleck H. Jensen, Palmerton, PA

Mr. Victor J. Herwitz, New York, NY

In Memory of Mary Alice Sage Reaves (Mrs. George M. Reaves):

Marie Cooke Mason, Summit, NJ, a close friend from their Catskill years.





**CAPTAIN KIDD** (continued from page 37)

As the months passed by, without any dividends coming to the stockholders, disenchantment with the company set in. One of the largest stockholders in Sergeant and Company filed a bill in Chancery Court to have the scheme investigated. Fraud and deception were soon proven. One private investigation, substantiated by affidavits and statements, revealed that the gun had been sunk the day before it was raised with such great ceremony and publicity. The gold coins had been gilded and manufactured for the purpose of deception. Even the auger had been rusted and damaged to have the appearance of having performed feats of salvage set forth by Sergeant and Company in its printed literature.

The newspapers of this pre-Civil War era reported — “Altogether, a more plausible, yet shameless fraud, has never been practiced on the American people. Had no fraudulent inducement been practiced on the part of the people to purchase stock, it might have been considered a grand illusion on all sides, but by the exhibition of the ‘old gun’ and the antique coin, hundreds of our most wary citizens were deluded into the belief that there were untold treasures at the foot of Dunderberg Mountain in store for them.”

Almost a century and a half has passed since the Sergeant and Company Captain Kidd swindle. It may again be time for the more gullible to be approached to purchase shares in Captain Kidd’s Hudson Valley buried treasure.



**GENEALOGICAL CORNER**

Heads of Family and Offspring as listed in the earliest known records of the First Society in Windham. If Date of Birth (DOB) is not given, then Date Baptized (DBp) is listed. In a few cases neither is available in this record book. Uncertainties of spelling are indicated with a question mark.

Family Name	DOB or DBp.
Arnold, David	
Betsy	DOB Mar. 5, 1793
Ashbel	DOB Oct. 9, 1795
Milo	DOB Jan. 15, 1802
Clarissa	DOB Feb. 13, 1804
Orinda	DOB Feb. 6, 1808
George	DOB ---; DBp. ---
Babcock, George	
Abel Simmons	DOB Sept. 30, 1807
Harmon Briggs	DOB Apr. 21, 1809
Hirman Steel	DOB May 12, 1811
Horace Havens	DOB June 10, 1813
Baldwin, Samuel	
Lydia	DOB July 25, 1788
Hilon & Haertern	DOB Dec. 27, 1790
Wait Hill	DOB Feb. 8, 1793
Ambrose	DOB June 1, 1795
Lucy	DOB June 17, 1797
Ira	DOB Apr. 11, 1802
Henry DeGrass	DBp. June 1812
Fanny Caroline	DBp. June 1812
Baldwin, Ashahel	
Sally	DOB July 11, 1804
Eliza	DOB Oct. 7, 1806

Beach, Erastus	
Charles LeHatt [CMHouse]	DOB Sept. 26, 1808
Edward	DOB Feb. 24, 1810
Brown, J.B.	
Sarah	DBp. July 10, 1803
Jedediah	DOB Dec. 17, 1789
Sarah Brown, Jr.	DOB Jan. 31, 1792
Harriot	DOB Mar. 2, 1794
Uriah	DOB Mar. 23, 1796
Lucretia F.	DOB July 4, 1798
Caroline	DOB Feb. 17, 1801
Henery	DOB Feb. 18, 1803
Lorenda	DOB Aug. 3, 1805
Clafflin, Aaron	
Polly	DBp. Feb. 1, 1807
Coe, James	
Sylva	DOB Mar. 13, 1799
Luman	DOB Apr. 12, 1801
Norman	DOB Feb. 6, 1804
Crocker, Samuel	
Lucy	DOB Oct. 22, 1792
William	DOB Dec. 1, 1794
Abigail	DOB Aug. 22, 1796
Betsey	DOB Nov. 30, 1801
Charlotte	DOB May 3, 1806
Distin, William	
Ransom Wolcott	
Dudley, Abram	
Mary	DBp. Sept. 18, 1803
Anson	DBp. Sept. 18, 1803
Urban	DBp. Sept. 18, 1803
Lemuel	DBp. Sept. 18, 1803
Joseph	DOB May 4, 1806
Gates, James O.	
(no names listed)	
Hamilton, Joseph	
Joseph A.	DOB July 12, 1803
Axsah	DOB Jan. 12, 1807
Hanson, Samuel	
Martha	DOB Jan. 29, 1793
Sarah	DOB Mar. 9, 1795
Samuel Jr.	DOB Mar. 28, 1797
Experience	DOB June 9, 1799
Clarissa	DOB Aug. 17, 1801
Maria	DOB Mar. 2, 1804
Sylvester	DOB Dec. 24, 1808
Hosford, Henry	
Jane V.	DBp. Nov. 8, 1812
Hubbard, Amos	
Justen	DOB June 15, 1803
Samuel	DOB Sept. 1, 1807
Hubbard, Timothy	
Laura	DOB Nov. 29, 1789
Luzina	DOB Nov. 11, 1792
Alphred	DOB June 26, 1796
Weltha	DOB May 7, 1799
Halzey	DOB Sept. 6, 1802
Johnson, Harry	
Erastus	DOB Sept. 16, 1806
Emily	DOB Apr. 18, 1808
Gates Munson, Jarius	
Leverett	DOB Nov. 1, 1790
Clarissa	DOB July 15, 1793
Alva	DOB June 9, 1795
Bede	DOB Apr. 25, 1802
Lemuel Hartt	DOB May 29, 1806
Parsons, Timothy	
Eli	DBp. 1809
Albert	DBp. 1809
Timothy	DBp. 1809
Joseph Porter	DBp. 1809
Hiram	DBp. 1809
Lucetta	DBp. 1809

**GENEALOGICAL CORNER** (continued from page 39)

Peck, Joel  
 Seth DOB Sept. 1812  
 Peck, Samuel  
 Clarracy DOB Feb. 13, 1790  
 Lely DOB Apr. 28, 1792  
 Chaney DOB Oct. 30, 1793  
 George DOB Feb. 22, 1796  
 Esther DOB May 6, 1798  
 Philo DOB June 8, 1801  
 Lucy DOB Aug. 4, 1802  
 John DOB Mar. 2, 1805  
 Susannah DOB Apr. 26, 1807  
 Pond, Elaham (J. or T.?)  
 Rebecca DOB June 22, 1800  
 Jenett DOB Mar. 10, 1802  
 Edward DOB Jan. 20, 1806  
 Samuel W. DOB Apr. 10, 1808  
 Gideon H. DOB June 30, 1810  
 Noah S. DOB July 6, 1815  
 Pratt, Simeon  
 Tanay DOB Dec. 2, 1784  
 Luther DOB Apr. 28, 1787  
 Experience DOB Oct. 26, 1790  
 Ruth DOB Mar. 6, 1792  
 Lucretia DOB Nov. 12, 1794  
 Ephriam DOB July 24, 1797  
 James DOB Dec. 3, 1802  
 Sally DOB May 3, 1804  
 Rice, Sally DOB 1785  
 Smith, Reuben  
 Louisa Hutchinson DOB Nov. 12, 1791  
 Jermima Hourd (?) DOB June 13, 1793  
 Reuben Hendrick DOB Aug. 18, 1795  
 Almira DOB Jan. 19, 1800  
 Philander Milton DOB Jan. 15, 1802  
 Betsey Allen DOB Aug. 16, 1805  
 Squire, Luman  
 Cynthia DOB Dec. 30, 1803  
 Edward DOB July 16, 1806  
 William DOB June 3, 1808  
 Mary Burr DOB Dec. 4, 1810  
 Stanley, Luman  
 Frederic DOB Oct. 22, 1807  
 Steele, Perez  
 Calista (?) DOB July 1, 1799  
 Harriet DOB Aug. 13, 1801  
 Julia DOB --; DBp. --  
 Stone, Abijah  
 Burrit DOB May 1817  
 Stone, Exp.  
 Danford DBp. Sept. 18, 1803  
 Nancy DBp. Sept. 18, 1803  
 Debby DBp. Sept. 18, 1803  
 Jeremy S. DBp. Sept. 18, 1803  
 George S. DBp. Sept. 18, 1803  
 Strong, E. [Iijah]  
 James R. DBp. Sept. 26, 1803  
 Anna Eliza DBp. Sept. 26, 1803  
 Samuel DBp. Jan. 18, 1807  
 Strong, Rockwell  
 Meriam Rockwell DBp. June 7, 1807  
 Tichnor, Benajah  
 Benajah DOB May 22, 1788(?)  
 Luther DOB Mar. 9, 1790  
 Herman DOB Mar. 17, 1792  
 Norman DOB Nov. 30, 1793  
 Almon DOB Mar. 17, 1796  
 Myron DOB Feb. 12, 1798  
 Hiram DOB Mar. 21, 1801  
 Sophia Bingham DOB June 12, 1802  
 Caleb DOB Oct. 16, 1804

Turney, Robert M.  
 Anne M. DOB Nov. 24, 1806  
 Lusina DOB Nov. 9, 1808  
 Sally DOB Sept. 10, 1810  
 Tuttle, (Tuttel) Joel  
 Alvin age 18 years  
 DBp. July 10, 1803  
 Anna Bierce or Pierce age 16 years  
 DBp. July 10, 1803  
 Dumah age 15 years  
 DBp. July 10, 1803  
 Julius age 13 years  
 DBp. July 10, 1803  
 Sophia age 10 years  
 DBp. July 10, 1803

□ □ □ □ □

**C. J. CAVE PAPER MILL** (continued from page 34)

Catskill: Austin & Austin; Press Board — 600 lbs., 24 hours.  
 Coeymans: Robb & Carroll; Straw Wrapping — 2½ tons, 12 hours.  
 Coeymans Hollow: Briggs, A. D.; Straw Wrapping — 4,500 lbs., 24 hours.  
 Medusa: Milton & Co., Straw Wrapping — 2,400 lbs., 24 hours.  
 New Baltimore: Crosswell & Parsons; Hanging — 1,400 lbs., 24 hours.  
 By April 17, 1886, the *Examiner* carried the Cave Paper Mill advertisement:  
**STRAW WANTED**  
 2,000 Tons Rye Straw Wanted!  
 At Woodstock Paper-Mill  
 Town of Cairo  
 For which the highest market price will be paid.  
 Charles J. Cave  
 The growth of this paper plant is well documented; its demise less so. Lack of adequate rail transportation could have been a major factor in its decline. Mr. Cave was known to have operated a second paper mill at Penn Yann with a similar output of six tons in twenty-four hours. With the increased use of wood-pulp, the straw paper demand might also have decreased. The site at Woodstock was eventually taken over by an early hydro-electric power plant, the dam being replaced by a concrete structure. In turn that facility was abandoned as uneconomical.

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