

Orleans County Historical Association

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NAMES

Burt V. Thomas, father
Ellen Greenman, mother
Joseph Thomas, brother
Zaida Thomas, sister
Joseph Greenman, grandfather
William B. Greenman



Orleans County Historical Association

INTERVIEW

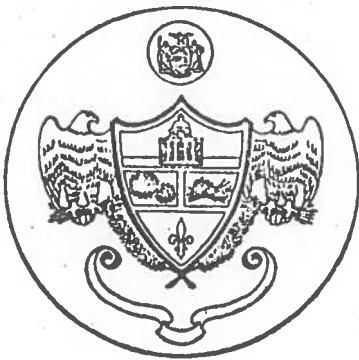
Miss Martha Thomas
69 South Main Street
Lyndonville, New York

Miss Martha Thomas, born February 21, 1895.

Interviewed by Miss Ethel Willis of Medina, New York.

T Thomas
W Willis





Orleans County Historical Association

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to collect information about the historical development of Orleans County by means of tape-recorded conversations with people whose experiences reflect the county's growth.

These tapes and transcriptions will be preserved as educational resources and possible publication (all or in part).

I hereby release this tape and transcription to the Orleans County Historical Association.

Martha S. Thomas

Signed

Dec. 13 - 1979

Date

Understood and agreed to:

Thos. P. Willis

INTERVIEWER

Dec. 13, 1979

Date

M. Thomas ~~27~~ *albin*

Please note the following corrections in this transcript:
(corrections noted by Miss Thomas: July 17, 1980)

- page 2 below the middle says "fry cakes"... friedcakes
also Mrs. Fairman lived in the Warren house
- page 3 Miss Phippany is not "Lydia" but "Lelia"
ice house was back of the "Roller Mill", not
"row of mills"
- page 6 Marriet Barry should be Marrietta Barry
- page 8 fish shoot should be fish chute
Jay Barry coal shoot should be N.J. Barry coal chute
El Morgan was (miss) Ella Morgan
- page 11 Charles Hare is Charles Thayer
Stanglan is Stangland
- page 13 Ella Currin is Ella Kerwin
- page 14 the name is Livonia Freary Timmerman
- page 19 the first line starts with the word "between"
just below the middle of the page, Leigh room is
league room (Epworth League, a Methodist group)
- page 20 the boy in front, should read: the boy in back
- page 21 tong should read thong

(corrections made by Helen McAllister)

W Orleans County Historical Association. I am Ethel Willis interviewing Miss Martha Thomas in her home at 69 South Main Street, Lyndonville, New York. The date is December 13, 1979.

Miss Thomas, will you please identify yourself.

T I am Martha Thomas and my mother was Ellen Greenman. My father was Burt V. Thomas.

W Someone told me there was something interesting about how your father and mother met ?

T Well I guess they met through his uncle and aunt. He lived in Newfane and the uncle and aunt lived outside of Lyndonville. And he came over and they evidently were friends of my mother. So they met that way.

W Oh, I see. When were you born ?

T 21st of February, 1895.

W 1895. And where were you born ?

T Right here in this house built by my mother's father, Joseph Greenman. His grandfather came to this county early and took up land on which the son; his name was William B. Greenman and his son, Joseph B. Greenman, continued on the farm. And then his son Joseph, my grandfather, continued on the farm until he moved to the village. And he lived in a house with - - they lived in a house with another couple for a short time. Then moved across from the stores and lived there several years and had this house built. You want that about the pony ?

W What date was this house built ?

T 1874. Mother was 12 years old. There are 20 rooms in the house and that was the complete family.

W 20 rooms.

T And while they lived across from the stores they had a pony that would march, keep time to music if it heard a band. And it also was a ^{trick} pony. One neighbor didn't believe that it would come if you pointed the finger at it and said General. So he tried it and the horse came and he hurried back into his house. There was a fence all the way around my grandfather's place so he thought well that was just a happen-stance as they used to say. So he stood in the door and said "General" and pointed

his finger. And that time the horse went into the wood shed.

W It doesn't pay to doubt a horse does it ? Did you have brothers and sisters ?

T A sister, Zaida. and a brother, Joseph.

W Are they still living ?

T No. My brother died about - - early 1960s and my sister in 1966. She has a son and he had two sons and a daughter.

W Unhuh. So now you live in the family home alone.

T Yes. Except that it's made into an apartment upstairs.

W Oh, I see. Is the apartment occupied ?

T Oh yes. Never's been empty.

W Never's been empty. Well what else would you like to tell me about your schooling or anything like that ?

T Well, I think maybe I'll start with something about a bakery we had and then the vandalism this fall. In 1907 Spaulding and Hatch had a bakery in the Grey Block which is across from what used to be the Drug Store on the west side of Main Street. And they made several kinds of bread, cookies, fried cakes and cakes on special occasions and they sold for 20 to 40¢ a piece.

W You couldn't get a fry-cake for that now.

T No, not one. There were two telephone systems. One was the home and the other the Bell and the bakery had both phones. Then ~~XX~~ Lyndonville in 1907 got a railroad engine rim as a Fire Gong and the donation was made by Paul Warren of Buffalo. He was formerly of Lyndonville, a brother of Mrs. Charles E. Fairmon who was Loie Warren. He was a passenger agent on the

L.S. and M.S. Railroad. I don't know what those numbers stand for. Mrs. - - the - - lived in the Warren home and the fire bell was placed on the west side of Main Street. Then, after a time it was moved to the east side of Main Street when the Fire Company had a building north of the big hotel. But when the Grange bought that property next door they moved the Fire Gong back onto the west side of Main Street. And this fall vandals threw it into the creek and the next morning - - the next day the Methodist Youth Fellowship rescued it from the creek and put it back in place.

W Is that - - that isn't still used as a Fire Gong ?

- T If the power goes off or if something happened so that the siren doesn't blow. Sometimes it freezes and if necessary they use it. And it will raise you right out of bed !
- W It's that loud ?
- T Well I guess so. It doesn't seem to come in as loud as it might but it takes it. And Miss Phippany, Lydia Phippany, began teaching here about 1907 and my sister went to her and she was an excellent teacher but very strict. The youngsters all liked her though.
- W Children do like a strict teacher.
- T And Miss Ione Andrew, of Barneveld, New York was also a teacher.
- W Of where ?
- T Barneveld. In the vicinity of Lyons or Utica.
- W Oh, down that area.
- T And she married Ernest S. Breed. She was an excellent teacher too. And Dr. Arthur M. Wright had a large practice in New York City as a Nose, Ear and Throat Specialist. He had formerly been with St. Vincent's Hospital there but he often came to Lyndonville to visit his parents, Dr. and Mrs. R. B. Wright and they had a drug store north of the bridge, north of the big mill. Back of that there was an ice house near the pond, back of the mill.
- W Tell me about the ice house, tell about that.
- T Well, it was back of the row of mills. And after - - that's a complicated deal. It goes into the school story too. When I started school the school house was on Main Street where the present school is. It was a two story frame building. They moved it slightly and built a school there about 1907 or so.
- W Also a frame building ?
- T No, that was a brick building. And that was two story, very nice. I think I went to school in the wooden one until I was in - - well 5th or 6th grade - - is when they built the next one. And after they built that the frame one was moved by the bridge, by the north side of the creek between Riverside and the stream. And Pearl Flatten had a garage downstairs and THE ENTERPRISE was upstairs. And I would say about a year or two later that burned. There was an explosion downstairs and
- x the ~~xxxxxx~~ Burnettes, who ran the paper

were working upstairs and they lost everything. They hurried down and lost everything. Then they bought that little building back of the mill, put in equipment and between the time of the fire and the equipping of the building they printed a little news-sheet to keep it going. Then they moved - - had Morrell Dates and Charles Dates moved that building with all its equipment over across Main Street just east of what is now the Laundromat and that continued as a newspaper office for the "Lyndonville Enterprise" until, well as long as it existed. Then it was torn down and is now the parking lot for the Laundromat. After the fire, that destroyed the garage, Arah Barnum built the hotel and he had a good practice of clients, whatever you wanted to say, with transients because we had so many trains in and out of the village.

W Oh. Unhuh. To go back to the ice house. They cut the ice from the mill pond did they ?

T Yes. Dr. Fairman also had a ice house and that is still standing. Different ones would cut ice. Over years.

W And how did they store it in the ice house ?

T Well in blocks with sawdust between. And the buildings were - - - well not insulated like we do now but evidently the sawdust insulated it.

W Yes, the sawdust would.

T Between the wall and the ice.

W I wanted you to tell that because today's children don't know anything about ice cut from a pond. All they know is the kind you get out of the ice-maker in the refrigerator.

T Yeah. That's right. For many years Edward Edmonds, who lived on one of Joseph Greenman's farms for 30 years, delivered milk from door to door and we'd have to put our bottle or our can, usually a quart can or two quart can on the steps at night. He'd bring the milk in the morning in one of your dishes, pick up the one you left, take it home and bring it back the next day. That was repeated time after time.

W And if you were lucky enough to get the milk from the top of the can you got pure cream.

T Yes.

W And if it was from the bottom of the can you got water.

T Yep.

W But you paid the same price for it.

T Unhuh. No the bottom of your can was just good skim milk.

W Yes, skim milk, yeah.

T Yeah. And after he retired his grandson, Leon Edmonds, continued. Then later Hugh Fraser or Bert Swan or William Carpenter delivered milk that way.

W And it wasn't pasteurized milk either.

T No, and it was delicious.

W It sure was. It was all milk.

T 'bout 1907 the supervisors voted to widen certain roads in the county and the Town of Yates got the road between Lyndonville and St. John's Corners. That was the junction of 63 and 18. And it was widened about 4 feet, from 12 to 16.

W And that was called St. John's Corners ?

T Milton St. John and his wife and his sister lived on the corner.

W Oh.

T And the house burned down years ago.

W Umhuh.

T About 2 o'clock one morning, maybe 1897 or 1900, Petries evaporator burned, including tons of cabbage and evaporated apples. It was located on the east side of South Lyndonville Road and just outside the village, south of the Cooper Place up here, but before you got to the Petrie Place, the house.

W Unhuh.

T And it was back from the road.

W Just south of the village line then ?

T Yeah. And it was back - - - there were years that you could see the remains of it. But it's all gone now.

W Yeah.

T We were living in the little house next door at that time. That was where my sister was born so that's how I know about what time it was.

W Unhuh, unhuh.

T And the growth of Rural Free Delivery was noted in a paper in the early 1900s. It started with an appropriation of \$10,000.00. In four years it had been raised to \$40,000.00.

And ten years later is was 37 million.

W Oh, oh, oh.

T We had four carriers from this post office. Then in the Thomas Block. George Webber, Robert Fisk, David Bangham, Andrew Edmonds. Mrs. Edmonds was his sub-carrier. Substitute. James Stroyan was Mr. Fisk's substitute. Burt Thomas was Mr. Bangham's substitute. And I think Charles Meland did it for Mr. Webber; I'm not sure about that. And later they were Chester Chaffee, Andrew and Leon Edmonds and Robert Fisk. And now, just recently, it was Robert B. Peters and Raymond Bates. And Charles Ingram was flag-man, at Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad crossing on Main Street. Carroll Phippany brought the mail from four trains up to the post office or took the mail down. And later - - -

W Four trains a day.

T Later his son Floyd took the mail. Then we had one each way that stayed overnight. One would go at 7:40 and the other at 8 o'clock; Rochester and Buffalo..

W Unhuh.

T Then there was one that came from the west at 9 o'clock and we used to have school children from Millers come on that.

W Oh.

T For years. Then there was one about 10 o'clock that came from Rochester. Then in the afternoon there was one went west shortly after 4 o'clock and the youngsters would go home on that. And one later that came from Buffalo towards Rochester and at 8 o'clock at night both trains came in and stayed overnight, to go back to Rochester or Buffalo the next morning.

W Unhuh. Well that's some difference.

T Yes and now we don't have a train at all.

In 1908 or 9 Miss Abby Barry, a Sunday school teacher here, and her sister, Harriet Barry, lived on Riverside Street and put Thank-you Notice in the paper for flowers in memory of their aunt, Mrs. Sena E. Church, who had lived in her home where Church Street now is. There's a stained glass

window in the Methodist Church in memory of William and Sena B. Church. Also eight other memorial windows in the church.

W That is how it happened to be called Church Street then ?

T Yes, that's right.

W I have often wondered about that because there's no church on the street.

T No. I can't tell just when it was but I can remember going to see Mrs. Church and Miss Silina Johnson, who lived with them.

About 1900 the land on the east side of Main Street between the river, a stream, and the hotel to the south was low, like it is back of the garage. And there was a railing, so people wouldn't fall off the side-walk, 'cause it's quite deep down, and it had two iron rails and back from Dates' home on Maple Avenue to the creek there's quite a hill and the youngsters used to and still do slide down Dates' Hill on their sleds in the winter. (The creek, river, stream mentioned is Johnsons'.)

W Unhuh.

T There were no buildings from the hotel to Riverside. Then Mr. Langdon built the Northside Livery Stable. In 1910 Burr Beecher built the Lyndonville Garage next to the creek, between that and the Livery Stable. And that burned in 1910 killing eight horses. Starkey had a Movie House and that was between the drive barn and Woodroe's Blacksmith Shop. It was called The New Lyndon Theater and it was used for all kinds of entertainments, until maybe 1925. In 1930 it became the property of the flourishing Lyndonville Grange, Patrons of Husbandry, and was remodeled into an excellent hall. It's now incorporated in the south side of Crosby-Whipple's Garage. The Blacksmith's shop was the second fire station. The first one was over on the creek bank. Pond bank. And there was a little building beside it. And those two buildings - - - at that time we had a steam engine, a fire engine, and people - - some of the people who had teams would hurry down to hook onto it and they could get steam up to 100 pounds from cold water in 6½ minutes.

W Oh.

T And later those two buildings were built together and made a dwelling which burned within the past year. And we had hose-

carts then. And the village or someone built a fish-shoot at the north side of the creek beside the mill so that the fish could jump into the pond. They called it a "Fish Ladder" too.

W Unhuh.

T And the fish would flop up. And Jay Barry built a coal shoot beside their bean house, next to the railroad. And after awhile Burdett and Arthur Squires built another one there. El Morgan was a small lady who could properly punish big boys. She'd take 'em by the collar and shake 'em. She was preceptress in our high school at the turn of the century.

W We had a sixth grade teacher who shook a boy one day and broke his arm doing it. But his father was a doctor and he didn't blame the teacher at all because he knew that his son was a mischief maker.

T They don't do that anymore.

W Un'huh.

T In 1903 something new ~~was~~ -- or in educational agriculture was promised by the New York State Agricultural Association. It was a farm train with a engine, a coach that was a lecture room, and a coach that was an exhibit room. And it had stops of 45 minutes, where ever it stopped at each village and the Farmer's Institute -- Institutes were conducted here for many years. I can remember my folks going. Usually in February.

In 1903 I noticed a clipping in the paper that there was much damage done to buildings and some orchards lost a dozen or more trees because of a high wind. It lasted 12 hours.

W In 1903 ?

T Unhuh. Even the pond had white caps.

W For goodness sake, that quiet little pond.

T Yep. And the old Clark Homestead dwelling located where the Presbyterian Manse is burned 'bout that same time. The alarm was pealed out on the fire gong which some called "Peter Quick". The paper reported that Clarence Johnson managed an evaporator for American Food Products of Rochester and bought thousands of apples in different parts of the state. And he also managed one in Barker for the same company. And the price of apples, dried apples, was 60 to 70¢ a hundred pounds.

W Oh my word. And now for 60¢ you get about six apples in the store

T I think you get about four.

W Four ? I haven't bought any lately.

T I haven't either.

In 1909 we had a Millinery store next door to the Vancurean store. That was a shoe repair and a harness repair shop. And upstairs - - downstairs was Malin, John Malin's grocery store. He was selling out at that time and in the spring Vancurean moved downstairs and lived upstairs. And the building stood beside a large tree where the bank now stands.

Side Two - First.Tape

T In 1909 George Webber put a new Soda Fountain in his building next to the Turner Market. And years later he had that building torn down and built a new brick block. And he discovered quick sand and it took a long time to get it built.

W Hump !

T And Cora Rutherford built a new house across from the school. I remember Mrs. Rutherford when we'd go to school. And that was at the time the frame school house was there. John McCauly improved the hotel on the west side of Main Street putting in new windows and redecorating all through the building and fitting up a writing room in the room north of the hall. And he painted the outside. And that hotel had a porch downstairs and a porch upstairs all the way across the front of the building and it stood on the west side of Main Street, south of Eagle Street, where Earl Henion built his new home years ago. It burned one night, I would say around in the '20s. And it was a real bad fire but it was being torn down at the time.

W Unhuh.

T So that Mr. Henion could build.

W Unhuh.

T And north of it was a two story building. Downstairs George Grapes had a shop - - - a shoe shop. Upstairs Edward Henion had a barber shop and he moved from there before the fire into a small building north of the Drug Store. And he was there the rest of his life.

Dr. A.D. Haines, an Eye and Ear Specialist, would come to Edgar Hill's store every year and stay five days and people would go in and have their eyes examined and get glasses. He did a good business.

And the Bell Telephone system was purchased by the New York Telephone Company about 1908.

The school used to sponsor a lecture course of entertainments. There would be five programs in the series in the winter.

The village installed 16 electric lights at the street corners and a few places between.

In 1909 Church Street had been laid out and accepted by the

village. It was thought that the street might be extended across Johnson's Creek sometime later so when the new bridge was built the plank bridge with the iron frame work was moved to the end of Church Street, by the creek, so that it could be used to span the creek in case the street was extended.

W But it never has been.

T No never has been.

The Lyndonville Mill, Rollar Mill, was probably built around the middle of the 19th century. Some records say 1856. But they can't prove the date. Some think it's 1837. It was frequently remodeled and finally became a three story building. William Anderson, Hiram Bickford, Eno Riemer, Clarence Gracey, and William Page were various owners. And while Mr. Page had it, it burned and he built a one story motorized mill, I think.

W So they didn't use the water power after that ?

T No. The fire was - - - it was in 1940, about 5 o'clock in the morning, possibly from spontaneous combustion. And there was wind and sparks went everywhere and the roofs of various buildings caught and we had Medina and Barker Fire Companys. And they saved every building except the R.B. Wright Drug Store and that burned and it also damaged the residence that was attached to it. And Dr. Wright, Dr. Leon Wright, was a dentist and he had upstairs in the Drug Store and he lost everything. And even antique furniture in his home, he was living there in the house.

The passing of the aged maple tree in front of our school house in 1979 reminds me of the big old elm that stood on South Main Street some 50 years ago near the Clark - - - it was on the Clark property. And it was near where Cecil Wright built his home which is now the Presbyterian Manse.

W Unhuh.

T Watson Ballett was an able Auctioneer. Charles Hare had a Greenhouse behind his house on Eagle Street and he enlarged it after some time. Clarence and Bela Stanglone were brothers and they were carpenters. Frank Plummer and Truman Toms were also carpenters and they worked together. And then Fred Bane ~~xxxxxxx~~ was a carpenter and Leonard Bane and his four sons, became carpenters. And all of them built

many houses in Lyndonville. (George, Paul, Floyd & Gordon). Cement side-walks were laid all over the village by Thomas Nie.

And Norman Allen was an excellent mason.

Quincey Bentley did many houses as a painter and he painted carriages. At that time it was horse and buggy days.

W Sure.

T Burt Thomas was a painter and decorator.

From about 1890 George Stokes had a Grocery and Dry Goods Store downstairs which Earl Henion took over. And upstairs for many years we enjoyed all kinds of entertainment. It was Stokes' Opera House.

W Oh.

T And the Yates Dramatic Club put on "Soldier Of Fortune" and also another home talent play, "Old Maid's Convention", was put on February 13, 1900 and it filled the Opera House, which could seat 400.

W That was quite a sizable building.

T Oh yes, it's the whole top of that double store. There were 21 actors in it. C.S. Snook was the 'Amazing Mr. Makeover' with his Remodel-Scope Machine which would make a person into what each wanted to be. The person entered from the top. It was quite a good sized machine. A person entered up the stairs, down through the top and you'd hear a sound and they would come out the other side at the bottom. A person wanted to be thin; a fat lady would go in the top and a thin lady would come out at the bottom. An old person wanted to be young would do the same. You see that's where they got so many characters because someone else always took the place. Gray hair would come out with light or dark. A non-singer would come out as a vocalist. A woman wanted to be a man; she'd come out different. ^{if} she wanted to be an angel. And the admission was 15¢.

W My goodness.

T And I think that same year the Yates Post Office was closed at Yates Center.

And Lyndonville had the "In-As-Much King's Daughter Circle", The International Order of King's Daughters and Sons.

It was dedicated to helping the poor and it did a lot of good. Ella Currin, Mrs. Howard Barry, Mrs. Nellie Breed, Mrs. Charles Day, Mrs. Burt Thomas and Martha Thomas were all members. Oh they would have 50 members in it and they would do things and they would take things to the poor. And, of course, 1908 they had a convention here and the State President was here. And other agents have taken over that work so that they finally had to disband.

Mr. Frisbie sold his harness shop to Charles Conley and he remodeled it into a hotel and he added the third story.

William Warner, from Port Jervis, bought Fred Langdon's Cooper Shop and made barrels there for years.

Frank Bunce sold his Hardware business on Main Street and Michael Cummings and Robert Smythe ran it for a long time.

W Robert Smythe, that was Millard Smythe's father ?

T Yes.

W Unhuh.

T And Michael Cummings was Emma Cummings brother. She was a school teacher here for a number of years.

The village in 1979 tore down that hardware and built their new Village Hall on the property.

And Roy L. Butterfield had been Principal here from 1905 until 1910 when he went to Charlotte, New York as Principal and everybody liked Mr. Butterfield. He was the one we always spoke about.

W And that would be the time that you were going to school.

T Yes. I had gone into high school the year he left.

W I see, unhuh. Well all of the grades; the elementary grades and the high school were all in the one building, weren't they ?

T Yes, yes.

W The building that is now the Elementary School on the east side of Main Street ?

T I think so, until the new school on the west side was made.

W Yes, yes.

T And when the school previous to this one, on the east side of Main Street burned, school was held in every place in the village that had a spare room.

W Is that right.

- T The church, the Opera House, the Town Building, everything.
- W Were you going to school at the time it burned ?
- T No I was through school; no I was through.
- T The Methodist Women sponsored a Flower Carnival for years.
- W Oh yes.
- T And people would come from all over. Regular home day, home week or what-ever. And people who'd lived here enjoyed coming back. After the carnivals the School Lecture Course was held each winter. And then we had a wish for more education so we got the Chautauqua Tent to come and that stayed for years. It was on Lake Avenue back of the garden here for a year or two and then it went down on the plot back of the Methodist Church and it was there as long as we had it after that.
- W Well that Chautauqua Circuit really served a real purpose.
- T Oh yes, yeah. And Memorial Day Services, back when I was a little girl, were THE thing; like the Fourth of July now. And The Grand Army of the Republic, G.A.R., soldiers would parade and everything.
- W Yeah, we did in Medina too.
- T Unhuh. In 1898 The Literary and Historical Club was formed by Ella Gray, Sarah Tuttle, Nell Breed, Selina Johnson, and Mrs. Uriel Timmerman, she was Livonia Furrie. I think from Medina, I'm not sure. And they formed it for the reading of good books and keeping up with information on the times and the study of history. They were workers - - oh I think in the Bean House or Dry House or something and they wanted to improve their minds.
- W Why now what was the Bean House, you referred to it before ?
- T Well, they a - - - Mr. Barry would buy beans from the farmers and they would bring them in and they had to be sorted. And the stones and the bad beans and things picked out.
- W Oh, I see.
- T And the dirt pebbles and all. And they would work several weeks during the year. And then he would sell the beans.
- W For about 10¢ an hour they worked.

T I don't know. I've heard people say they get a dollar a day so it probably was 10¢ an hour.

W Yes, yeah.

T It was not long before the Literary Club had a bigger membership and then in a few years they got up to 25 and they could hardly entertain in their own homes so they had to limit it then. And it still is flourishing.

I must have been 12 years old or 14 maybe when John Gray and Company ~~lumber~~-yard on North Main - - on well North Main Street, north of the corner, on the west side was purchased by Roy Tripp. I mean he purchased the brick building which had been used by Gray for maybe a foundry or something and he remodeled it into two stores. He used the back part for his work and he sold cutters and wagons and equipment and things. And one part of the front was an ice cream parlor run by Edward Snowdon of County Line. And upstairs Joe Coppa had a shoe repair shop and George Derby had a barber shop and he did chair caning there. And Mr. Hatch had the Bakery downstairs.

W And that's where you got the cakes fresh.

T Yeah.

W 20¢.

T And after a time S.W. Smith and Son, which was Charles Smith and his father; later it was Charles Smith and his son, Sherman; had an Under-taking Parlor there.

W Is that where Millard Smythe learned the business ?

T Yes, unhuh. And Mr. Smith was an excellent undertaker. And Millard, I think, was just as good as Mr. Smith used to be. And John Gray continued his lumber-yard in the buildings north of that. And between his Planing Mill and the creek was Norman Eckers Black-smith Shop and I used to look in both sides of the street and see the black-smiths shoeing horses when I'd go to school.

W And a black-smith's shop smelled uugh, didn't it ?

T I don't remember any smell to it but it probably did.

W Don't you ?

T Those horse shoes would sizzle when they were dropped into the cold water.

W Unhuh, unhuh. Well I remember going, in Cooperstown, going to

the black-smith's shop there, you know, and it had a very peculiar smell.

T Unhuh.

W I supposed from the burning hoofs.

T Probably.

W When they put the hot shoe onto the horse's hoof.

T And about 1910 a cannon was offered to the S & P Gilbert Post of the Grand Army of the Republic that was here in Lyndonville. And they - - the village accepted it and placed it in the Cemetery. That's where our cannon came from.

W Oh.

T Hudson - - - Leon Hudson and Ralph Welch operated a Green-house on Lake Avenue, down at the end of Lake Avenue.

W That's the greenhouse where the Nichols were later ?

T Yes.

W Yes, no longer in operation.

T No longer. It has been torn down and it's been leveled off and seeded and it's a lovely lot.

W Oh.

T Robert B. Peters bought it.

W I see.

T And lived there and made it - - a - - took it down.

W Unhuh.

T And at the same time Charles Thayer had a Green-house up on Eagle Street behind his home. He could walk right out of his house into it. And it was the house right east of the Telephone Building, if you know where that is ?

W Unhuh.

T Robert Muchow did use the Hudson and Welch, and Thomas Sullivan was there before Robert.

W Oh that's right, yes. Unhuh.

T George N. Fish was a Thresher here and he was also an excellent shot. He would go to all the shoots anywhere around. He would get a score of 73 out of 80, beating two good professionals.

W Unhuh, unhuh.

T And this I'm reading: "The 50th Anniversary of the Reunion of the 28th Regiment New York Volunteers of Niagara and Orleans Counties was held two days in Olcott. John Cornwell

was given a badge that day that said '50th Anniversary, Olcott, New York, May 21st, 1911 - 28th Regiment New York Volunteers, First Brigade, First Division, 12th Corps, Army of the Potomac'" Mr. Cornwall was there the second day, his 78th birthday. He lived on Eagle Street with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Breed. And no matter what time of day you would meet him, he always said 'good morning'.

W Unhuh. It was always morning to him.

T Yeah.

W Maybe that's good philosophy.

T I think myself I can say 'good morning' easier than I can 'good afternoon'.

W Yeah, unhuh.

T I found that in 1911, Willis G. Housel, Charles E. Housel, Frank B. Housel, Albert Hise, he was in Medina for a while.

W Yes.

T John Ward, Lee Wells, and George Resseguie met at the Housel Brothers Bank. That was the new bank building and organized The Citizens State Bank. They'd been running as Brothers Bank for several years.

W And you worked in that bank did you not ?

T Yes.

W How many years did you work there ?

T Well, I would say steadily about 40. I worked there three summers then I got the permanent job and I worked there until '61 and I've been going back vacations and sick time ever since.

W Is that right ! You still go back and work in the bank.

T Well I was there three weeks in September.

W Were you ! Well didn't you tell me the other day that there was a Hold-up at the bank one day ?

T Oh yes.

W Tell me about it, now.

T Oh yes. On January 28, 1924 - -

W On my birthday.

T Was it ?

W Yes.

T Of Harry Welch, Josie Gracey and I were working at the bank.

And Cidna Flatt was a customer in the bank, when three men heavily armed bandits came in just about closing time. And they ordered us into the vault. Mr. George Prudom seemed to be the leader and he rattled the doors to get in behind the counters and Mrs. Gracey went to the door and let him in. With her arms - - - she raised her arms, standing right there in the window and someone across the street saw it and thought the bank was being held up; but nothing was done. Sure enough. Mr. Prudom and Mr. Totman and a third, Mr. Crane, came in and they had Mr. Welch go in the vault and open the safe where the money was. One of the men brought Mr. Flatt and me into the back room. Of course they all had guns. And I don't remember where Mrs. Gracey was, whether she was in the back room too; but anyway Mr. Welch said: "Well my keys are in my hip pocket !" He didn't want to be shot putting his hands down. So he got his keys and gave the man the money - - felt around and gave the man the money. And they left. One man stayed in the car, headed south, on the east side of Main Street, wrong way.

W Unhuh.

T They went out and got in the car and went towards Medina. I understand they went to the Horan Road and switched cars; then they went towards Buffalo. Well of course - - - the reason they couldn't shut us in the vault was because they had shut another door between.

W Oh.

T And it interfered with everything. And so we soon managed to get out and called Mr. Housel who was in the Middle-South for a vacation, being in January. And he said: "Anybody hurt ?" And we said: "No." Mr. Welch said no. Mr. Oakes was ill that day so he was home. And we just went on from there and in two weeks, those three men had been caught. It was - - they said a \$25,000.00 robbery.

Side Three - Second Tape, First Side

T The time of the robbery and the time the men were caught. George Prudom had been to the Blind School in Batavia and married a blind girl and he was caught while they were in their hotel in Buffalo.

W Oh the poor girl.

T That's what I would think.

W Were you awfully frightened when they came in ?

T Yes, I guess so I'm sure.

W Well do you have anything more special that you want to tell me about ?

T Oh, there goes Nellie. (*friend passes window*).

The Methodist Church added the Epworth League Room, that's part of the dining room, in 1912. I was still in school ~~down~~ here.

W Unhuh.

T And this necessitated raising the Sunday School Room floor because we would go in the south door, up two steps, one step onto a platform and one step into the vestibule; then we would go straight in to the Sunday School Room. And when we wanted to go into church we would go up about four steps to a platform and then go through a door into the church. So the dining room, the Leigh Room, was built level with the church. So they wanted to make that a kitchen in place of a Sunday School Room and they had to raise the floor and did that. And the kitchen and dining room had been a little room upstairs over the Sunday School Room. Then of course after they had a new kitchen, they used that for Sunday School Rooms. And that now is what they call the Upper Room.

W Unhuh.

T Then later, I don't know what year, they enlarged the dining room; put on an extension at the back and built a new kitchen. So the former kitchen is now, more or less a hall. The choir robes have a cupboard in it and the refrigerators are in there and storage room for the tables; things like that. And a book-case for the cupboard for the Sunday School materials. Then, recently, they built the Education Wing. Behind the pulpit, when the room was a Sunday School room, there were

double doors and for an over-flow growd those doors were opened and people could see. Back of the pulpit and hear pretty well. Then when we got the pipe organ and put that in, it was put in that place. And of course at that time the floor was raised.

W Unhuh.

T Had been raised. And the double doors were in the north side of the sanctuary and could be opened for the over-flow into the dining room. Then of course, when the front of the sanctuary was remodeled we got an electric organ and took out the pipe organ which the Lutherans, at County Line I believe, bought and installed.

Harold Patterson designed the new front for our sanctuary.

W Oh did he ?

T Mr. Charles Snook wrote several poems. One or two have been set to music. "Those Old Over-alls Of Mine" was one of them.

W Oh.

T In 1921 there was a play came here from out of town and some of the kids decided that it was a rotten show. So - - a bunch of them 'bout eight boys got into a car. Three of the boys stood on the running board and they chased the troupe out of town. And up South Lyndonville Road, a little over a mile. They tried to pass and the car skidded and my brother saw that they were going to hit a telephone pole so he jumped. He got a broken leg and a broken arm. The boy in front of him turned around to see where - - what had happened to him and he was killed.

W Oh dear.

T And the boy at the back only got some cracked ribs. So that was a catastrophe.

W Boys have always done dangerous pranks haven't they ?

T Oh I guess so. And really we used to see rail fences, herring-bone style.

W Unhuh.

T And you don't see them anymore.

W Oh no, no.

T And stone fences are going out.

W That's right.

Now you showed me last week when I was here an Indian Peace

Pipe.

- T Unhuh.
- W Tell me about that Peace Pipe, will you ?
- T The stem of the pipe is probably 18 inches long, it's over 12 anyway, and the bowl of the pipe is made of Pipe Stone clay. And that comes from, I believe, Minnesota; I'm not positive.
- W The clay does ?
- T Yes.
- W Unhuh.
- T And no matter how much one tribe is enemy of another tribe, while they are gathering pipe stone clay they are peaceful. Never any fighting.
- W Oh.
- T But watch out when they get away; they're ready for fighting.
- W Unhuh, unhuh.
- T And my father got that about - - - well 1888 or 1890 perhaps. He was in the Army in Dakota.
- W Would that be Custer's Army ?
- T A - - no, it was just the ordinary army of the United States.
- W Yes.
- T But at the time Sitting Bull was killed.
- W Yeah.
- T He was at Pierre and he also brought back home an Indian War Club which had a fairly long handle, perhaps 14 inches, and was all covered with beading. And the band that went around the stone of the hammer part was also beaded. And that stone was pointed at each end and was perhaps 8 inches from point to point.
- W And it's held to the handle by a tong, by a leather tong, is it ?
- T No, there's a tong at the top end of the handle. It's held by a leather band.
- W Band, I see.
- T That is beaded.
- W Unhuh.
- T And the tong at the top is supposed to be the scalp.
- W Well how did your father happen to get them ?
- T I don't know. He joined the Army at Fort Niagara and he was sent out to Dakota.

And he was discharged from Fort Niagara. He was living at Newfane at the time, you see and that's how he happened to join at Fort Niagara.

W I see, unhuh. Well that's quite something to have.

T And we also have a piece from the Tower where Paul Revere's Lanterns hung. My grandfather was visiting a friend in Boston and they went to call on another friend who was a carpenter repairing the Tower.

W The Old North Church.

T And that is how he got a piece of the Tower.

W Unhuh. And you have some lovely oil paintings here. Did you do those ?

T No and I've always regreted that I didn't take lessons of my mother. She went to - - - she went here to school for awhile and then she went to Genesee Wesleyan Seminary in Lima, New York. And before she had gone there she had done some painting. She was there in 1877 and 8 and while there her mother wrote to her that they had hung her "Winter Scene" on the north wall of the living room.

W And that's where it hangs right now.

T That's right. And it's a large picture.

W I would say it's about 30 by 20 inches, at least.

T Oh I think it's a little larger than that.

W A little larger than that. It's a beautiful scene. But you've never done any painting yourself ?

T No. I did a lot of drawing in school and after I got out of school and I liked mechanical drawing. And Mother did show me some oil painting work but she died when I was too young to decide what I wanted to do.

W Have you ever considered going to the painting classes at the Senior Citizens ?

T Transportation.

W Oh yes.

T I'm too far from them.

W Yeah.

T Then Mother was also a musician and she took music while she was in Lima. And while there her mother wrote her that they had brought the melodeon out of the parlor and put it in the sitting room. Of course we had three coal stoves.

Side Four - Second tape, second side

- W A range in the kitchen, a coal stove in the dining room and one in the sitting room with registers upstairs in two rooms.
- W So did we, unhuh. And that's the melodeon that now stands in the corner of your living room ?
- T Yes and it still plays.
- W It does ? Well it's a beautiful piece of furniture.
- T I told nephews' step-daughter about it and she told her her teacher and the teacher says: "Impossible." Well I told my professor one year at school something and he said: "It couldn't be done, tell it to the marines." So I didn't like my professor very well after that.
- W What did you do for fun when you were young ?
- T Well, Niagara County always had a Pioneer Picnic. I think they still do. And we had cousins in Niagara County and my folks always wanted to go to the Pioneer Picnic because we'd see them. And we'd take our lunches and all eat together. Sometimes cousins from Illinois or California or some other state would be visiting with them or with us and we'd all enjoy it.
- W Where was it ?
- T Olcott, of course. And we would start on the morning train, maybe the 10 o'clock train, and go to Burt. Then we would walk from the rail-road station over across - - well an alley or a lane or something to the trolley station and wait for the trolley to come along. Then we'd ride the trolley to Olcott. And we always tried to take in the proformance at their little outdoor theater. Did you ever see the theater ?
- W Oh yes.
- T And they always had good programs. The stage was set down the slope and the background was the lake.
- W Yes.
- T And the seats were just ordinary wooden benches and we'd go through the log cabin that was there and of course the children would all ride on the little train.
- W Oh yes.
- T And I understand the little train came from the Exposition

in Buffalo, the Pan American.

W Oh did it ? I've ridden on that little train.

T Yeah.

W It had a little steam engine.

T Yes and it would whistle and ring the bell.

W Yeah, yeah. That was quite a trip.

T And then, of course, we'd come back the same way in the afternoon.

W Unhuh.

T Get home at 5 o'clock.

W Well did you have taffy-pulls and things like that when you were a girl ? Or hay-rides ?

T Well I guess they did. Yeah we had hay-rides on bob-sleds or cutters or whatever and we'd have heavy Buffalo robes, I can remember we had a Buffalo robe.

W Marjorie Williamson still has one.

T Does she ?

W Yes.

T Ours, the hair wore off.

W Oh.

T Disintegrated.

W The old buffalo shed his hair.

T Yeah. And we played Pom-Pom-Pull-Away.

W Oh yes, and Blind-Man's-Bluff.

T Yes, and of course Tag.

W Oh yeah, Shadow-Tag probably, we used to play Shadow-Tag.

T I don't remember that.

W Well of course you had to play that at night when the street lights were on, you know.

T Oh.

W You'd step on the other fellow's shadow.

T I see. Yeah. Backgammon and Parcheesi, Checkers, several different kinds of card games.

W Well times have certainly changed.

T Unhuh.

W They certainly have.

Well it's been very nice talking with you.

Oh ! There's one more thing I want to ask you about. Last summer, this summer, there was a huge big tree cut down that

had stood in front of the school building, down on Main Street.

T Yeah.

W Do you know how old that tree was ?

T Well I understand that two of our village people, George Smith, George M. Smith and Bartlett Breed counted the rings and they came up with 125.

W 125 rings. Well it was a huge tree. You got a huge tree right out here by your drive-way.

T Yes, that is a Locust Tree on the Paul Pollard property. They just bought the property. It originally, or when I was a child, was the Weld property.

W Unhuh.

T And years ago that tree was in "Ripley's Believe It Or Not".

W Oh !

T Pictured in the paper and we saw it in the paper.

W I see.

T There it said: "There was a tree growing out of a tree." But it is not quite that. A maple seed had struck the ground in a space between two of the roots of the locust tree and started to grow and that has grown until it is now fair sized.

W Well I thought that was all one tree, but it's two trees.

T It's two trees.

W A locust tree and a maple tree growing side by side.

T And the maple is nearly as high as the locust.

W Unhuh, unhuh.

T And there used to be three locust there, but one was taken down years ago.

W Unhuh. Well that's very interesting. Well you have some lovely old houses in Lyndonville; beautiful old houses. And did I understand that one of them was built about 1825 ?

T Yes that's down near the railroad, a couple of houses from the railroad on the west side.

W Unhuh.

T And someone was telling me, the other day, that there's a house, their house was built in 1827 and I can't think who it was.

W Well of course Lyndonville is an old, old village.

T Unhuh.

W Well this is a lovely old house where you live and I'm sure you feel quite at home with it.

T I'd be lost anywhere else.

W I guess you would.

Well this has been a very interesting interview and I'm sure that people in years to come will find many useful and interesting pieces of information in it and I thank you very much.

T Unhuh.

Mc This has been Tape 2 of Martha Thomas of Lyndonville, New York interviewed by Ethel Willis of Medina, New York for the Orleans County Historical Association, December 13, 1979.

Transcribed by Lysbeth Hoffman of Waterport, New York.