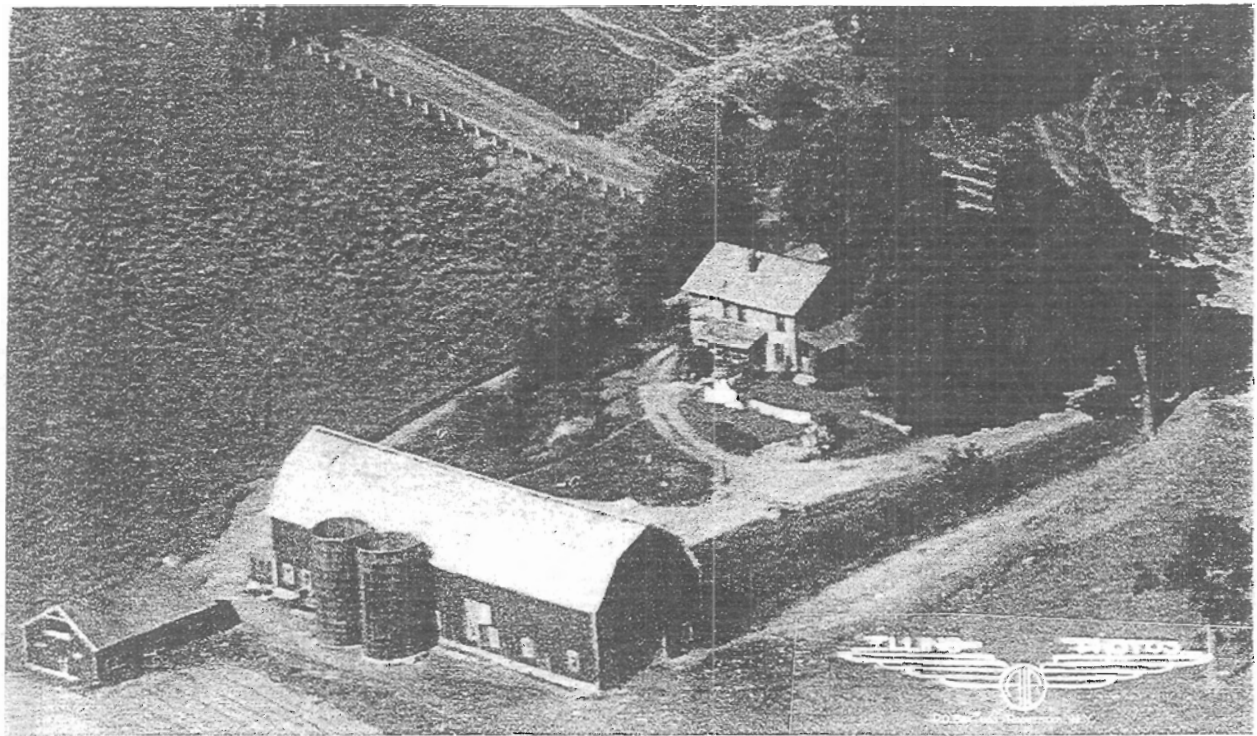


A Country Farm Boy Remembers



Bernard W. Potter

Our Family - 1965



Nancy, Bernard, Patricia, Margaret, Joanne, Wilburn, Bernice

Front cover: The Homestead, "Moneysunk", on Chenango Road, Truxton, NY c.1950



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dedication

Our children and grandchildren are Margaret's and my love and joy

we hope these words and pictures

will encourage them to dream about some

"Days before Yesterday"

With that wish, these recollections are dedicated with love to grandchildren

Adrienne

Masler

Alaina

&

&

Erica

Gregory



Potter
Michelle
&
Christopher



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PREFACE

It's November 11th, 1992, Veteran's Day. Fifty years have passed since November 9th and 10th, 1942, the dates of the John J. Bloomfield farm auction in Cortland County, Truxton, New York. The ad read as follows, "Promptly at 10 A.M. the beautiful and highly profitable farm of the late John J. Bloomfield will be offered at public auction to the highest bidder". On November 9th 1942, one month before Pearl Harbor, my father Dr. W.H. Potter was the final bidder. The price \$13,700.

At that time I was a senior at Cornell. After graduating in January 1943 I returned to farm in Truxton. The Bloomfield Farm was Margaret's and my home for nearly 47 years--from our marriage on June 10, 1944 'til February 23, 1991. The farmhouse was built in 1816. It is a treasure. We are so thankful that Daniel and Stephanie Potter, nephew and niece, are maintaining it as the priceless colonial structure which it is.

We now live in a beautiful cedar sided ranch, which we built in 1990-91, on Prospect Terrace in the hamlet of Truxton. Margaret put a fire in the fireplace today as grandchildren Adrienne and Alaina came to visit. It warms the lower level. We had a nice lunch together and in the afternoon the girls worked on some cutouts. Adrienne and I also played Tic Tac Toe with marbles.

My years have been enjoyable and exciting. Perhaps some of that excitement can be put into words for the reader to dream over. I make no apology for appearing somewhat egotistical by putting these memories on paper. It is, I submit, important to "tell the story" of some of life's experiences for those who come--after our days.

In the future I may delve into some of the farm organization and political activities with which I have been fortunate to be involved. For now we'll stick to the homespun memories. Hope the reader enjoys and overlooks my limited vocabulary. The pictures also tell a story. You will very quickly notice that these experiences may not be in chronological order.

It's hard to believe that it has been nine years--ten months and thirteen days since I wrote the above. This is the thirteenth day since terrorists took the lives of several thousand innocent folks, in New York City, in Washington, D.C. and on the countryside in western Pennsylvania. Many families and friends have lost loved ones. We cannot understand. We are a peaceful nation. A nation which has given untold help to distressed peoples all around this globe.

At this time of tragedy, it is hard to stay focussed with my story, started in my mind years ago. The words of the grand old hymn, "I Love To Tell The Story" should take precedence to this story which I also love telling. Even so, I have promised myself to have it ready for Christmas.

Our faith in a loving God, love for family and home, and our pride of being citizens of and living in the United States of America will stay our course for the long run. The covers for this writing reflect those treasured tenets.

Bernard W. Potter, September 24, 2001

A BRIEF FAMILY TREE

Wilburn Herrick Potter, my father, born 4-23-1892 --only child
 Farmer, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Community leader
 Rev. Wilburn Daniel Potter, grandfather--Universalist pastor
 Marion Herrick Potter, grandmother--teacher, homemaker

 Florence May Bean Potter, our mother, born 11-7-1891--1 sister, 4 brothers
 Homemaker, Community leader
 William Jay Bean, grandfather--dairy farmer
 Annie Harmon Bean, grandmother--homemaker
 Emma Gilbert Bean, step grandmother--homemaker, teacher
 William L. Bean, step grandfather--farmer

 Florence and Wilburn's children
 Marian Bean December 13, 1915--community service, homemaker
 Carleton Wilburn June 14, 1918 -- D.V.M.
 Bernard William March 28, 1922 -- farmer
 Willard Harmon July 15, 1931 -- farmer



*Mother and Dad---Florence and Wilburn
 A Fifty Year Loyal Partnership---October 7, 1964*

THE SETTING

When did life begin?. What I am asking--when do I first recall happenings as a kid. Many of us try to reach back and say, "Well I remember that or I remember this". One thing for sure, I was born on March 28, 1922--- at least that's what the papers say.

My earliest recollection of a happening was on a Christmas morning. I don't know whether I was 2 years old, 3 or 4, but it was an experience which I vividly remember--going downstairs where we had our stockings hung up on the stair railing and finding an army truck with a canvas top. It was a tough little truck, probably 18" long, a big thing to me. It wasn't too long after World War I and army things were still in, also in the stocking was some sort of a sparkler that worked like an egg beater when cranked. Evidently there was a flintstone in it, and it sparkled like crazy.

I hurried upstairs into Dad and Mother's bedroom and showed mother, who slept on the side toward the door, the toy. She put her arm around me and gave me a hug and said I could jump into bed with Dad and her. I remember lying between them and just being so happy that I had that little sparkler. But it also showed something much more important. The love that was showered on all of us children as a family--it shown bright on that Christmas morning.

On many Sunday afternoons my mother rested on the living room couch. Dad would sit on the couch beside her. He would read from the American Magazine, Ladies Home Journal or the Saturday Evening Post a story in which Scattergood Baines was the prime character. Dad would read that and other stories to Mother while us kids would sit on the floor either reading something from our Sunday School papers or playing with our toys. We relaxed together as a family. If more families did that today, the family unit would be stronger. I am glad that was part of my growing up. I also remember Dad taking my Mother in his arms and doing some sort of dance around the kitchen. This usually took place when he came in from the barn after milking in the morning. I'm sure this was a morning "love greeting"!

DAD AND MOTHER

not about the earlier days of my family? This was related
Mother. Dad was born in Huntingville, Quebec, Canada.
andpa Potter was a Universalist minister to his and Grandpa
in different churches. At the time my Dad was to be born,
living in Huntingville, on the south side of the St. Lawrence



*West end of living room in our comfortable farm home on Cheningo Drive
Mother (Florence) at the desk, Bernard at typewriter,
Ruth Hazzard, great city cousin, reading --1938*

DAD AND MOTHER

What about the earlier days of my family? This was related to me by Dad and Mother. Dad was born in Huntingville, Quebec, Canada. I mentioned that Grandpa Potter was a Universalist minister so he and Grandma moved around for different churches. At the time my Dad was to be born, Grandpa was preaching in Huntingville, on the south side of the St. Lawrence River.

Dad had much fun about pretending to be a "Canuck". Especially when he was trucking cattle across the border from Canada. The Customs officials always asked him where he was born, "*I was born in Huntingville, Quebec*". The official, "*Show me your naturalization papers?*" Dad would lead him on, then he'd say, "*I'm the son of American parents*". So there was no problem. But he always said he could never be President because he wasn't born in continental United States!

My Mother was the daughter of Annie Harmon Bean and William J. Bean. They lived on a farm on East River Road by Lorings Crossing about two miles out of Cortland. This farm later became the J.M. McDonald Farms. It was later gifted to Cornell University by the McDonald Foundation. The Bean family were known as fine farmers and community leaders.

In 1907 Grandpa and Grandma Potter moved to Cortland to pastor the Cobblestone Church; also the church in McLean. Florence Bean and Wilburn Potter were in the same 1910 class, Cortland High School. That's where they met, became in love and later married by Grandpa Potter on October 7, 1914 at the Bean farm.

As in many families, mother was the teacher to the children. She was the disciplinarian; instilled into us table manners, acts of courtesy and the like. Dad was her continual support. Never did I hear him, before us kids, question any of her rules. Many times he praised her, before us, which helped us worship our parents even more.

We were never spanked--to my recollection. However, our mouths were washed with soap if we said a bad word! Mother instilled table manners in us. We never ate with our arms or elbows on the table; we always asked to be excused before leaving the table. We never washed our food down with a drink of milk. Our mouths were always empty before speaking.

Courtesy was a must. If we met a lady whom we knew on the street, we tipped our cap. We opened the door for a lady and she entered first. When visiting a home, other than our own, we removed our cap or hat. Never would we be seen with a cap on upon entering a house of worship. Of course food and drink during worship were a no-no. In school the same respect rules applied.

Each night, as we went to bed, we kneeled by mother as she sat on the bed. We said our prayer. After ours, mother asked God to bless us in Jesus name.

These simple rules of common courtesy may seem archaic. To me they would be just as beautiful and proper for all of us to use in today's "helter-skelter" hurry up society in which we live.

THE EARLY YEARS

Grandma Annie Harmon Bean died in 1910. Florence stayed home and kept house for Grandpa Bean. In 1912 Grandpa married Emma Gilbert and then Florence enrolled in Syracuse University. The love bug had bitten Florence and Wilburn and after her two years in Syracuse they were married October 7th, 1914.

Dad like to remind folks that Mother received her degree, of MRS, after only two years of college! Dad was a great joker. He said "1914 was the year the war began", thinking of World War I-- also thinking of their 1914 wedding. In the same breath he would say "and it never ended"! Nothing could be farther from the truth. They had a beautiful marriage which lasted almost 53 years until they both passed away in September and November 1967.

As a growing up young man, Dad was an ambitious fellow. Only recently while I was reading Grandma Potter's diary did I realize the responsibility Dad had when he was in High School. Grandpa Potter, his father, had contracted tuberculosis and had to retire from the ministry. He went, 1909, to Ray Brook in the Adirondacks to a sanatorium for the fresh air. So it was left to Dad to be the man of the house. Grandma had many diary entries about "Wilburn did this or Wilburn did that". She really depended on him. That diary made me admire my dad even more than I thought possible.

In high school he peddled milk for Mr. L.D. Thomas on Blue Creek Road in Cortlandville.. As a young man Dad always wanted to have his own dairy. After graduating from high school, he went to Canton Agricultural School, and from there, 1912, he took a job with Borden's Farms. They operated several farms around the state. The closest one being near Earlville and Dad went there as Superintendent of the dairy.

Borden's produced certified milk and shipped it to New York City for their customers. Certified milk was milk that wasn't pasteurized. It was produced under the very best sanitary conditions, and was supposed to be perfect milk. We know today that all milk should be pasteurized. Under the standards at that time it was the cleanest milk, the best milk that could be produced. Borden's bottled it under the certified label, which commanded a premium in the market place, which was New York City.

When Dad and Mother were married in 1914, Doctor Hall D.V.M. who was in charge of Borden's farms wanted Dad and Mother to go to Chatham and manage the farm over there. They agreed to do that, and that's where Dad said, "Mother and I set up housekeeping in Chatham in 1914".

They couldn't have been there much longer than a year. Dad told Dr. Hall he had made up his mind to enter the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University. Perhaps Dad's admiration of Dr. Hall helped make the decision. A side note to this story is that Dr. Hall died in a train derailment, on the New York Central Railroad, near Little Falls in the 1930s

He entered Veterinary College at Cornell in 1915. They lived in Varna on Prof. Walter Tailby's farm. Tailby was in Animal Husbandry at Cornell. He had some cows and Dad milked those cows night and morning. Dad drove a team of horses and a wagon with the milk over to the East Ithaca station where there was a creamery. He tied his horses up during the day at Cornell and went to college.

On December 13, 1915 my sister, Marian Bean Potter, was born in Varna and a family was started.

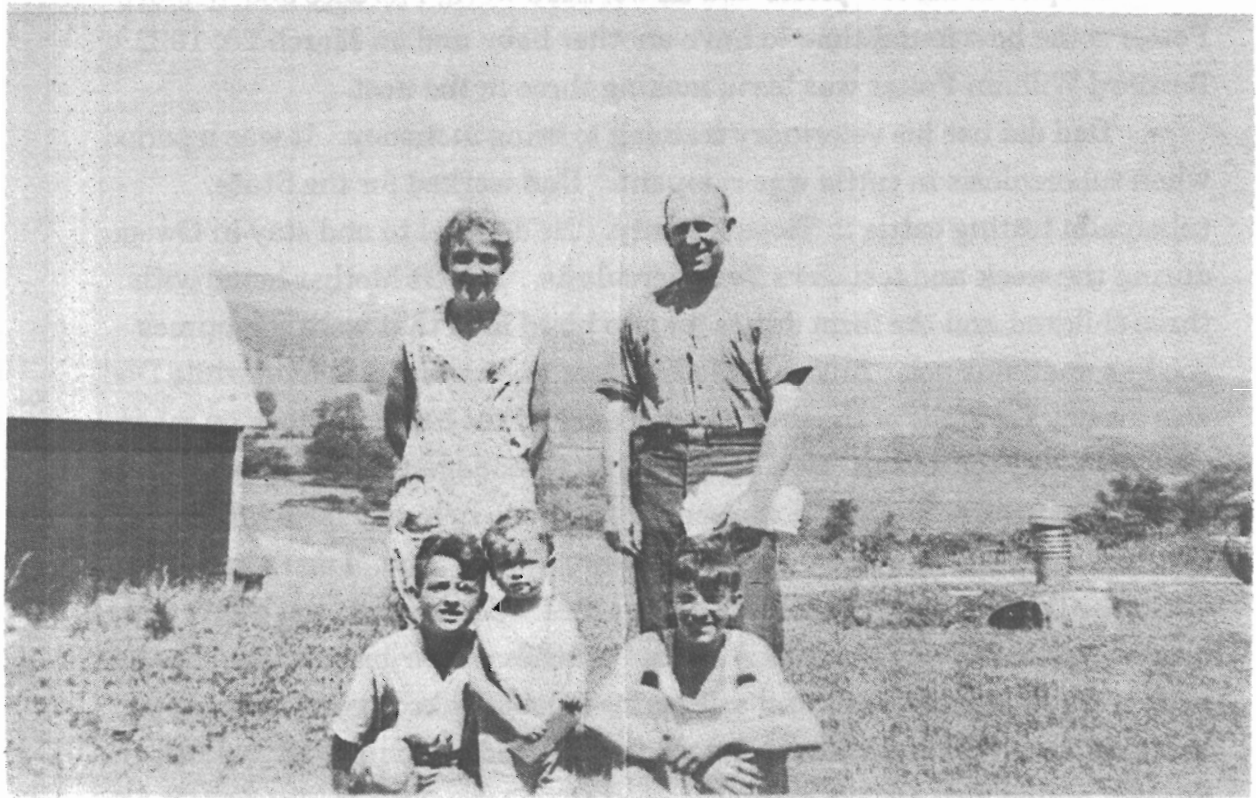
Dad found college real rough, learning all the bones etc. of animals. I guess Mother knew the courses just as well as he did. Because they worked as a team, Dad always said that Mother could pass the exams just as well as he.

His graduating from Cornell in 1918 set a pattern that has become a tradition in our family. Twentyone of his direct descendants have studied at Cornell. Each of his four children married a Cornellian. When we were growing up, Dad would often point to a person and say to me, "Son, he's (or she's) a CORNELLIAN!. No person had greater pride in that school, "Far Above Cayuga's Waters", than Wilburn Herrick Potter DVM '18.

Carleton Wilburn Potter was born June 14, 1918-- Marian has a brother.

After graduating Dad took a job with another certified dairy, the Markham & Puffer Farms at Elm Place in Avon, Livingston County, New York. The owners made their fortune as investors of Continental Can. Miss

Isabel and Miss Linda Puffer, lived in the big house. Dad and Mother lived in the small herdsman's house. Dad was superintendent in charge of the dairy and the cropping. Wherever they went, people liked Dad and Mother. Miss Linda and Miss Isabel were dear friends with Dad and Mother throughout their days.



*Dr. Wilburn Herrick Potter and Florence Bean Potter
Bernard, Willard and Carleton 1933*

At the farm in Truxton--note the milk strainer and milk pails which were always washed at the house until electric hot water heaters were available

THE MOVE TO TRUXTON

The urge to own their own farm was great. In the spring of 1920 Dad and Mother decided to stake out on their own. They probably would have come back to the Bean farm but my uncle Walter Bean, Mother's younger brother, was farming there with his wife, Ivah. Grandpa Bean had since passed away.

So they bought the farm, for \$20,000, in Truxton from Clark and Cecil Rowe. Here's the story. It was 1920, prices were high, and then the bottom went out similar to 1990 and 91. Prices recovered--but not a lot. Dad and Mother struggled through the 20's with the help of Clark and Cecil Rowe, who didn't want the farm back. They really took a love for Dad and Mother and they worked their financial problems out together.

In spite of the low prices and all the hard work, Florence and Wilburn Potter some how found time to have another baby and on March 28, 1922 Bernard William Potter was born, making three in the nest.

Dad did use his veterinary training to bring in money. It was a period when tuberculosis in cattle was rampant. Dad worked for the State, tuberculin testing cattle in Tioga County. He'd travel to and stay in Owego during the week and test cows for tuberculosis. He left Mother home with three children and the farm duties for two hired men that were sometimes good-- sometimes not. Anyway, Mother kept the home fires going while Dad was away. Reminds of the arduous responsibilities Margaret took on when I was in Albany for a year. He also went into Onondaga County and tested cattle. That work brought home some revenue to help pay farm bills.

We must have milked around 50 cows at that time. I don't know much about the financial end of the farm except that we were poor, but didn't feel it because we had loving parents. We had patches on our britches and ate lots of milk gravy, boiled potatoes and salt pork. Boston baked beans with brown bread on Saturday night was standard fare. Bread and milk and popcorn on Sunday nights was always special.

We ate all of our meals around the dining room table with its rounded corners. That included the entire family plus any hired men that mother boarded. We had quality time together. We learned to play ping pong on the round cornered table--it was a challenge!

Dad and Mother became involved in the Dairyman's League. They believed that cooperation between farmers would lead to a higher standard of living and increased profitability. It was right for the whole farm industry as the bargaining power for our milk was increased. In those days there were no Federal Marketing Orders. The pricing of milk was determined by each dealer.

FRIENDS REMEMBER DAD and MOTHER

Dr. Willy and Florence Melberg DVM came to Truxton forty years ago. This year with their Christmas letter they sent Margaret and me a gift. It is a flexible wooden holder for four candles. It was crafted by Florence and Willy. Florence writes, in her letter.

"So we wish you a lovely Christmas and may the Light of these Candles remind you of the Love that we Share.

Forty years ago, Florence and Doc Potter, two of the most kind and wonderful people we have been privileged to know, opened their home and hearts to us.

The Summer on the Farm did not just fulfill the Cornell requirement but it opened the door to so many opportunities and learning experiences. Willy loved riding with Doc on his calls and was honored to be offered the hill farm if he wanted to stay and farm.

I loved learning to manage a farm home and was privileged to be trusted to handle the place while Florence ran the Women's Pavilion at the State Fair. I loved meeting all the family and especially caring for Nancy. We were made to feel a part of your family.

Our lives continue to be touched and enriched by that experience. We are ever so grateful. May '93 bring all Good to you and Peace in the World." (signed) F.

Florence's words of kindness about Dad and Mother would be echoed by all who were ever touched by my parents. We were so blessed. As a family we can only say, "Amen".

Florence and Willy, in their Cornell days, first lived in Taggin Wagon park in Varna. After Aunt Isabel's passing, Uncle Harold Smith needed someone to care for Dave, little Debbie and keep house. Harold invited the Melbergs to help him. They moved in with his family on Slaterville Road.

After graduating from Cornell Veterinary Medicine, Willy set up a large animal practice in Allenton, Wisconsin. At the present time he is also SCC Librarian. A genealogy resource for those of Scandinavian descent in America. He maintains its computer program in their home.

Florence and Willy visited us this fall on their way to a family reunion in Connecticut. Count them in as wonderful friends who remember.

12-30-92 bwp

Last week we received a note from Florence bringing us the sad news that Willy had passed after a long struggle with cancer.

10-4-01 bwp

PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE

I like to think about the changes in agriculture. We've seen the transition from horse drawn equipment and hand pitching of hay, to hay loaders and now the latest and most sophisticated storing and harvesting techniques.

Dad made a big change when he bought a McCormick Deering side rake, a dump rake, a drop head hay loader and a mowing machine. They were set up on our back lawn, ready to go, all new at the same time. That was some event in our lives when we could have all of that equipment brand new. The equipment was purchased from A.B. Brown Farm Equipment of Cincinnati. Alfred B. Brown was also a prominent civic leader in our county. A Democrat, he was elected several times, by Republicans, as chairman of the County Board of Supervisors.

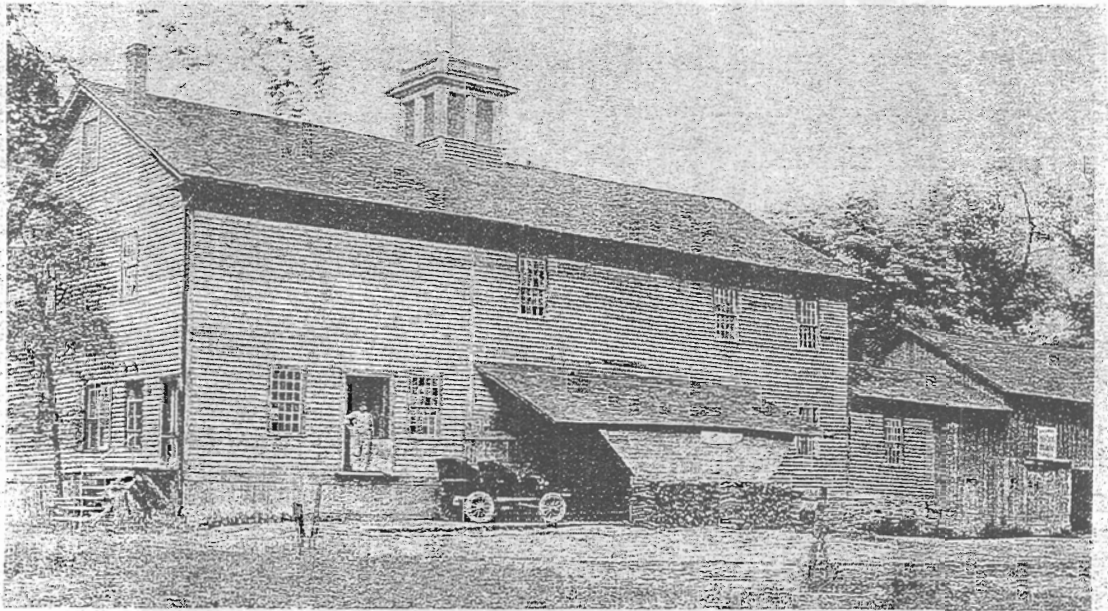
For a short time we milked with a machine. It was a double unit Pine Tree milker. It had some problems, so Dad and the men went back to milking by hand. Dad had large hands and he could really milk fast. Later when the Surge milker came on, we started using it and never went back to hand milking. Perhaps Dad couldn't find hand milkers that could keep up with him.

I recall our first tractor, it was a Fordson. To start, it had to be cranked and the spark had to be "retarded". More than one person has been "kicked", when in the cranking process, the engine reversed. A sprained arm was not uncommon. Our next tractor was a Case "C" steel wheeled hand cranked tractor purchased from Oscar Schenck of Schenck and Damsbo in Cortland. It was a step up from the old Fordson, the Fordson ran with a magneto and was never very reliable. We'd use tractor power by a belt pulley to run our buzz saws, ensilage cutters and like that. Later we purchased our first rubber tired tractor following World War II. It was a Case SC. We'd really come up modern! I don't know what the horsepower was, but I'd say it was 40-50. It would be a small tractor today, but it was big in those days.

We were fortunate to have a hay hoist. It was belted to our Fairbanks Morse gas engine, which chook, chook, chook, chook,--- chook and chook, chook, chook, chook, chook as it ran. The hoist was a small machine with a drum on which the hay rope was rolled up. As the rope wound up, a harpoon fork attached to the rope and placed in the hay on the wagon would lift the hay

to a "car" on a track in the ceiling of the barn. This car would then be pulled along the track. The fork would be "tripped" by a small rope which the farmer on the wagon would pull. The hay would drop into the hay mow. This small rope was called the "trip rope". We also had slings that picked the hay off the wagon bed to finish the unloading process. Most farmers still used horses to pull the hay rope and lift the hay to the mow.

Filling silo with corn and threshing grain was a great experience. We changed works with the neighbors. It was a thrill for us younger kids to be included in that gang and sit down with the men as they had their dinner. It was a real time of feasting for the men. Mother, Mrs. Bloomfield and Mrs. Hildreth as I recall, the ones that we changed works with put on a great feed. The men would all need it, as we ate together around the big dining room tables which were in most farm homes.



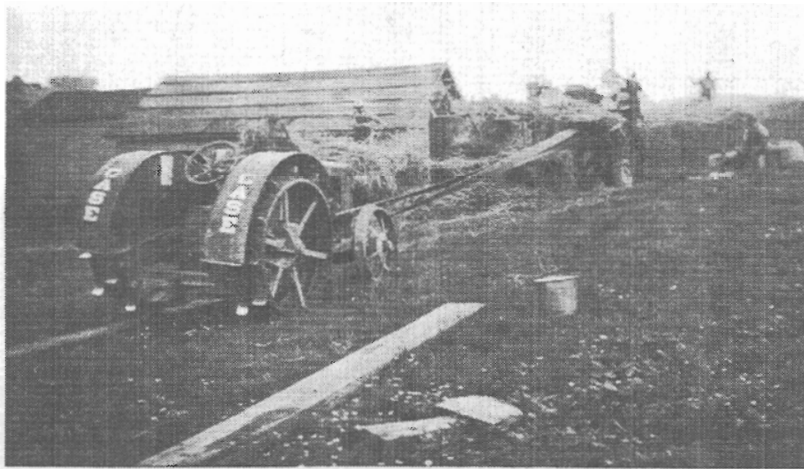
Willow Grove Mills in the early 1900s.

In the 1920s and 30s known as Bell's Mill operated by Will Bell who lived in Truxton where Ken and Annette Atkinson now reside. Charles Moore was manager. Water power from the Tioughnioga operated the mill. Mr. Bell was a successful business man. Dad purchased some feed there, but mostly from his friend, Ernest Woodward, whose mill was near the present Truxton Post Office.

AUNTS THAT WEREN'T!

Close friends of parents often times were recognized or greeted by children as Aunt or Uncle not Mr. or Miss or Mrs. The Smith sisters were in this class. We knew them as Aunt Mildred, Aunt Alice and Aunt Lillian. We weren't told why, we were just told. These three wonderful maiden ladies were high school classmates of my parents. Their mother was Myra and their father was Prof. Ferdinand E. Smith for whom Smith School in Cortland is named. He was superintendent of Cortland schools at that time.

As we became "of age" we learned that our "Aunts" weren't Aunts as aunts as relatives would be. As we grew up, the Misses Mildred, Alice, and Lillian became our friends as well as friends of dad and mother! Truthfully, they were real Aunts to us!



*Threshing for neighbors---Carleton did custom work to
earn college money--late thirties*

FAMILY TRIPS

Trips to see relatives were excitedly anticipated. The visits were delightful and the memories were never forgotten. Because our livelihood depended on milking cows twice daily, it was nearly impossible to leave the farm. The dairyman's situation was affectionately called, "being tied to a cow's tail"! Money also entered into the plans.

Our second hand Buick car was known as a Victoria style. It was a two door, two seater with a swivel stool seat attached under the front righthand dash board. Those autos had no heaters. A buffalo robe was the heater and we often used heated soapstones to keep our feet warm during cold weather.

Around 1928, after evening chores, we headed for East Rochester to visit Aunt Emma and Uncle Edmund Hazzard. Their children, our cousins, were George, Virginia and Ruth Ann. Uncle Edmund owned a drugstore. When we left home, in the early evening, snow was falling at a pretty good clip. We drove up the east side of Skaneateles Lake. Near Borodino the snowing became a blizzard and we became stuck. Dad shoveled around the wheels, put on tire chains and we were able to continue our trip arriving in East Rochester late after midnight. In East Rochester us kids were fascinated to browse around Uncle Edmund's drug store.

As Aunt Emma was mother's only sister. We made more trips to East Rochester than to other relatives. The visits between the Hazzard and Potter cousins was reciprocal. Much of their summer vacation was spent in Truxton.

A trip to Hastings-On-Hudson was a once in a lifetime event. Hastings was the home of Uncle Frank and Aunt Nellie Sweetland Bean. Uncle Frank was an accountant. Aunt Nellie was principal of an Elementary School in Hastings. Their only child, Gerald, was the oldest of our cousins. He graduated from NYU and lived in Chicago. This was a summertime trip. The big thrill was going into New York City and taking the elevator to the top of the new Empire State Building--at the time the world's tallest structure. We also visited the Battery, the Statue of Liberty and Macy's department store.

We drove out of state to Grandma Marion Potter's home in Orange, Mass. My first trip across a state line afforded us a chance to see a bit of New England. We became acquainted with such names as Athol, New Boston,

Greenfield, Shelburne Falls and Williamstown. The Mohawk Trail was the scenic route. Heights have always bothered me. I remember the ride over Petersburg Mountain--really only a high hill. I sat down on the floor of the car so I couldn't see the valley below!

Grandma Marion Herrick Potter gave grandfather's violin to me. Later I took lessons from Evelyn Beardsley at the Cortland Conservatory of Music on Court Street. I did not become an accomplished violinist. I did learn to appreciate the instrument. Megan Potter, Tom and Gretchen's number two daughter, has grandpa's violin today.

Some time after my Uncle Walter Bean was killed by a falling tree in the front yard of their home, my Aunt Ivah remarried Lester Lee who farmed in Cato, New York. My cousins Herbert and Kenneth Bean now had a step father. Carleton and I visited once or twice in the summertime at the Lee farm.

Cousin Joan Bean grew up in Homer. Her father, Albert Bean died in 1925 from complications attributed to World War I service. Joan and her mother, Aunt Ada, lived With Aunt Carrie and Uncle Albert Allport at 87 South Main Street, where Bill and Jean Cadwallader live today.

Aunt Ada was a beautician and operated her shop in their home. We saw each other many times. Fourth of July picnics were a highlight for as much family as could attend. Fire works were legal with plenty of noise.

Thanksgiving and Christmas were always family gatherings. Aunt Carrie, as the eldest, always asked the blessing. Aunt Carrie lived to nearly 100 years, her last few years at the Elizabeth Brewster House. Aunt Carrie never ate breakfast--perhaps that contributed to her longevity! Thanksgiving was always at Aunt Carrie's.

We were more fortunate than some families in that our parents tried to take us to special places and scenes. We toured Watkins Glen, Taughanock Falls, Fillmore Glen, Buttermilk Falls, Sylvan Beach, Syracuse and Cornell Universities and more.

My father was a great baseball fan. On one trip up around Syracuse, he saw, across the valley, a great number of cars parked. He exclaimed, "There must be a ball game over there, let's go see it". We drove over and discovered that the lined up cars were in a junkyard! Many times we asked Dad to take us to a ball game in a junkyard!

Truxton Farmhand Has Close Call When Truck Is Wrecked by Train

After Train Plows Into Truck at Truxton Crossing



Charles Elwell had a narrow escape from death Tuesday morning when a milk truck which he was driving and which was owned by Dr. W. H. Potter of Truxton was smashed by a train at a crossing near that village. Elwell was the driver in a recent fatal automobile accident. It was the third truck Dr. Potter has had wrecked at the same crossing.

VICTIM GOES TO HOSPITAL

Charles Elwell Recently
in Fatal Crash

CORTLAND.—Charles Elwell, Truxton farmhand, had a narrow escape from death Tuesday morning at the Lehigh Valley railroad crossing near Truxton when the milk truck he was driving was demolished by a special westbound train.

He is in the Cortland hospital suffering from cuts, bruises, shock and possible internal injuries. Tuesday night Mr. Elwell was still in a dazed condition without recollection of what had happened at the crossing.

Mr. Elwell was driver of the car that seven months ago today figured in a crash at the Kinney Brook bridge on the Cortland-Truxton highway in which Max Rindge was killed.

He recently received his license to drive again and had been driving only since last Thursday. Mr. Elwell is employed on the farm of Dr. W. H. Potter at Truxton and this morning had been making milk collections. He had just picked up the milk from the farm of L. A. Freeman and was driving north over the Crains Mills road toward the main Truxton-Culyer highway when the crash occurred.

The approach to the crossing was icy. A special train had taken a detachment of CCC camp youths to DeRuyter and Sheds and was returning west toward Truxton with the tender preceding the locomotive.

The truck was driven 150 feet along the southwest side of the crossing with parts of it being strewn along the roadbed. Several cans filled with milk were scattered over the scene.

Dr. Potter, arriving at the scene shortly after the wreck, took Mr. Elwell to the hospital. It was the third truck Dr. Potter has had wrecked on the same crossing.

Merton Shoemaker was engineer and A. E. Woodward conductor of the train. Dr. C. J. Kelley is attending Elwell at the hospital.

Accidents do happen. My memory says our trucks were involved in three. Fortunately, our employees were not seriously injured. By the appearance of the grill, I believe that this truck was our 1934 Ford--the first V-8. It was purchased new from Ken Newcomb, father of Harry. When we picked the new truck up in Culyer, Dad asked me if I would like to drive it home. I did--12 years old!!

MINOR MISHAPS

Before we joined the Dairymen's League Mother drew the milk to the Sheffield Farms milk plant in Truxton with horses, Tom and Jerry. When she returned she would unhitch Tom and Jerry. The usual way was to unhook one horse, and the other would follow it into the stable.

Evidently I, about 3 years old, was in the horse barn and Tom, the gentler one, knocked me over and made a print on my nose and on my eyebrow that's been there for all these years. Never hurt me, apparently except really excited everybody. I don't remember anything as to when it happened.

Another one I remember was back when we trucked the milk. We set the milk cans off the truck in front of the barn by the milk house at our home farm. Carleton was sliding down the hill on his sled. We'd go like crazy, nearly to the river, when the snow was crusty. This time evidently Carleton misjudged, maybe the milk cans were in the way, anyway he cracked his noggin on one of those milk cans and bled pretty good.

We were unloading hay in the barn. Us kids would operate the hay hoist. Somehow I got my leg tangled in the rope which caused some real problems. Mother took me over to Dr. VanHoesen, who lived in the house next to our Methodist Episcopal Church. I remember getting fixed up there. I was just a little kid at that time.

Speaking of bumps and bruises, when playing baseball at Wicksville school. Harold Singleton knocked out flies; the bat hit my nose!

Because of Tom the horse and Harold's bat I've always had a crooked nose. In today's world there would be a giant lawsuit against the school for not providing adequate playground supervision!

We used to haul wood off the same hill in back of Wicksville, from a small wood lot, 20 acres or so, that was separate from our main farm. It was in the winter time. We would ride home from school on the wood wagon. Carleton fell off, the wheel of the wagon ran over him. It didn't hurt him, of course he was a tough little cookie, anyway!

I don't know how we got on this accident deal so much, but while we're at it I might as well carry along a couple more right up and through my college days. Harold Hunter, the Reverend Wayne Hunter's son, and I were good buddies. He was visiting at the farm one afternoon. At 10 years of age I'd learned how to drive the Brockway truck as we loaded peas in the field.

I wanted to show him how much I knew about driving a big truck! The gas pump was on the slope of the upper driveway even where it is today. If I was going to drive it I'd have to have a purpose. I said, "Harold, you and I will fill the truck up with gas. I'll drive it up to the pump and we'll fill the tank".

Perhaps fifty feet down the grade from the pump was a stone wall from the barn that burned years ago. Somehow or other I turned the switch off and I didn't have it in gear or didn't know how to use the emergency brake. The truck rolled slowly down and when the front wheel of the truck hit the old wall, the steering wheel spun like crazy and broke my left arm. Well, the truck didn't go any further, but I remember that I was taken to Dr. Higgins, on Court Street in Cortland, where the broken arm was set.

One of the later ones was between my freshman and sophomore years at Cornell. We milked cows, in the summertime, at our Webster place. The Webster place is the farm on Cheningo Road owned by Carl Hinkle. On this particular afternoon Dad and I were milking. This Ayrshire heifer was a little dilly. The Surge milking machine hung from a sursingle hooked around the cow's body. The breakaway type of sursingle had not yet been invented, so it was solid. I was attaching the milker to the teats on that Ayrshire heifer and boy she let go a good kick. She caught my arm in the sursingle and threw it out of joint at the elbow. Dad took me right up to Dr. Hamlin's in DeRuyter. Dad held my arm above the elbow and Dr. Hamlin on the wrist end, and they pulled that arm out and slipped it back into place. Well, that was a sore one. I wanted to play touch football at AGR at Cornell that fall, however it was a year or two before the elbow straightened out again. Just got to thinking that the Ayrshire heifer might be the cause of my present day erratic golf swings!

Carleton had another brush with possible serious injury. One summer day he was driving a frisky young team of horses on a dumprake and they suddenly decided to run away. Fortunately Carleton fell off backward to the ground and the horses kept on running. Carleton wasn't hurt and soon the

team stopped running. We had to warn all our friends, who visited, about different hazards. I think for all the activity we were very fortunate that there were no life threatening accidents. I don't recall our falling off any roofs or like that. We were a very active bunch of kids.



Carleton and Bernard on Tom & Jerry--our faithful work horses.



Team of horses drawing a wagon and hay loader. Two men usually loaded. Us kids drove the horses. A standard, "ladder", on the wagon front was a place for us to stand. Hay was loaded around us as we drove.

OATS, PEAS, BEANS AND CORN WE GROW

Crops grown for the cattle were hay, corn and oats. Timothy hay was the predominant variety plus red clover. Alfalfa became more important as the use of ground limestone increased. Lime raised the ph of the soil which was needed for growing legumes. Hybrid corn was unheard of. We grew West Branch Sweepstakes--lots of stalk and a decent ear!

We raised canning factory peas for the David Harum Canning Company of Homer. Later on, we contracted with the Halstead Canning Company in Cortland for peas, beans and sweet corn. The beans were picked by Italians who came down from Syracuse. They lived summers in what we called the "shacks" down at Halsteads or David Harum. This experience was my introduction to ethnic diversity. Some of those families I later remet when I was at the State Fair--really beautiful folks.

We had one experience with potatoes and that's all I care to say about spuds! We also raised cabbage one or two years. I was a slow learner in marketing. The time to plant cabbage is the year after the season when the price was low. Price would be better that year, because farmers were discouraged from their sales in the previous season. However my friend, Harold Creal, set the same acreage of cabbage every year and did not look for a "killing" in any one year. Otis Young was the "cabbage king" in our Tioughnioga valley. Robert Knapp held the same title in the Preble valley.

In the early years we trucked the peas to the vinery in East Homer where they were shelled. In the field the peavines had to be pitched onto the truck by hand and the same for the unloading. It was hard work. We tried to use a hay loader and that was only partially successful--the vines being so heavy. Later we did have a stake body dump and that helped in the unloading.

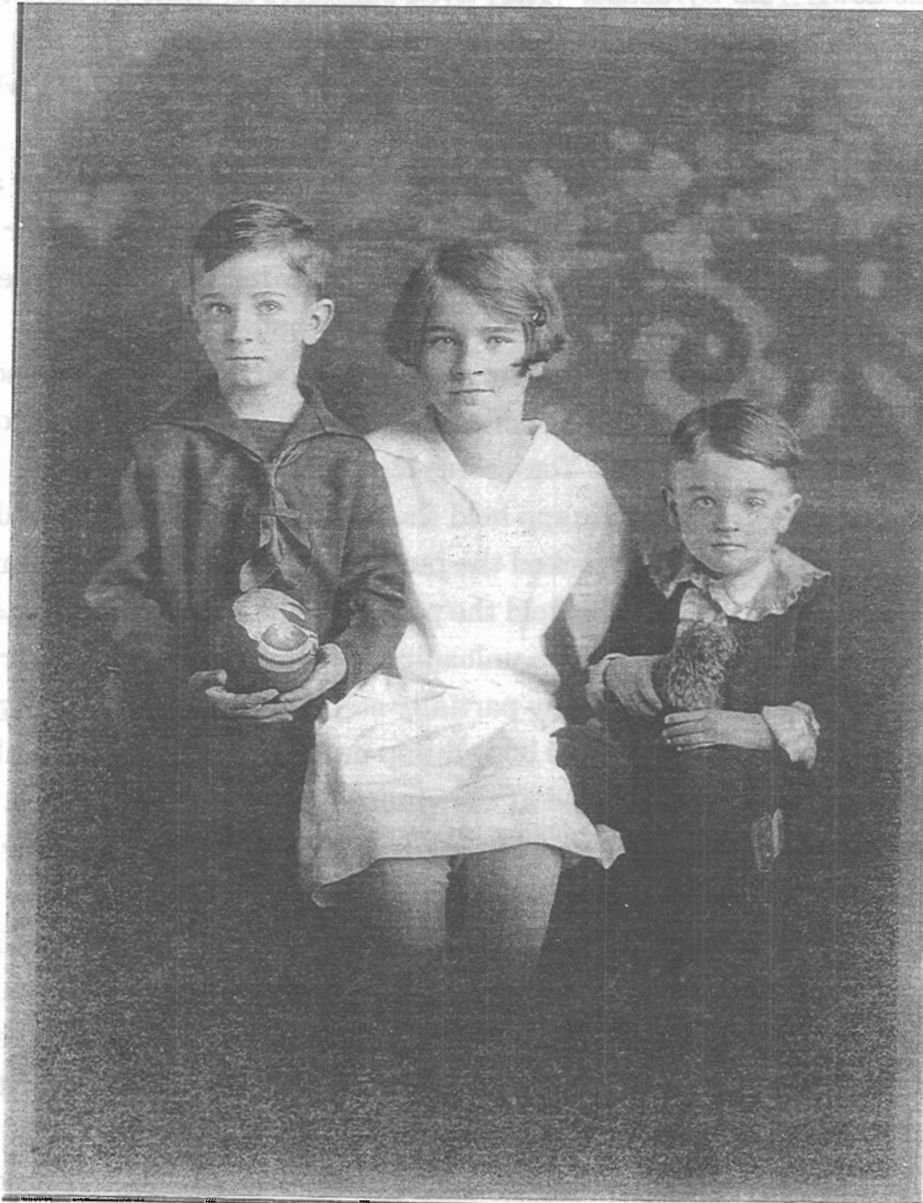
After the peas were shelled at the vinery the vines were stacked. Of course they fermented and became silage. In the winter the farmers, who raised peas, could come to the stack and bring home the silage for their cattle. Pea vine silage was one of the stinkiest things that ever happened, but how the cows liked it. We weren't allowed in the house until we had removed our clothes and scrubbed ourselves! Sometimes we took cattle to Interlaken, where Halsteads had a large vinery. They took care of the animals for the winter by feeding them on pea vine and corn cob silage.

One year we had a fantastic yield of peas. I believe around 6000 pounds of shelled peas to the acre. A fellow who was working for us, Wilson Bennett, said to Dad, "Doc, do you know why they yielded so well, it was because I planted the seeds all right side up." Dad often told others about

Wilson Bennett planting the peas right side up. This same Wilson Bennett bragged that he could carry four full forty quart cans of milk the length of our barn--120 feet. That's 400 pounds, 200 each in each hand. I never saw him do it, but that was his brag.

I had hoped to find a picture of the David Harum pea vinery in East Homer, or any other company, for the spot below. I failed.

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*Carleton, Marian and Bernard Potter
circa 1926--- page 6, "When did life begin?"*

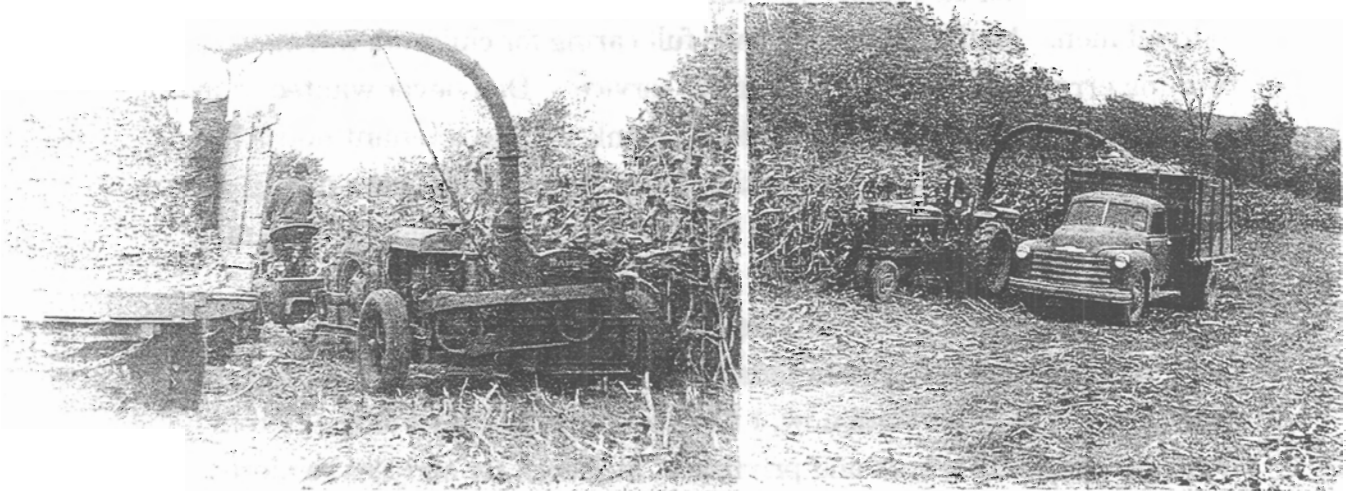
WE'RE IN THE TRUCKING BUSINESS

In 1929 Dad bought a used GMC truck from King and Caywood in Cortland. We trucked milk to the Homer Dairyman's League plant. We hauled our milk and from other farmers belonging to the Dairyman's League. We purchased a second truck, a Brockway, as people joined the League and we drove two trucks to Homer during the "spring flush". When cows went on pasture in the spring their production jumped which was known as the "spring flush". Much of the year we'd only use one truck for the trip to Homer.

There were times that we'd truck coal from Carbondale, Pa. After returning from hauling the milk, the empty milk cans were unloaded and the driver would hustle off to Pa. He'd return in the evening with coal, unload it, wash out the truck box so it would be clean to haul milk the next morning.

As if we didn't have enough to do, Dad purchased the Marshall Wood furniture building in Truxton. That factory was next to the Lehigh Valley railroad track on the land which is now being developed by the Truxton Cemetery Association. This was circa 1937. The company had moved to Cortland. We tore the building down, sold the lumber, plumbing and anything that could be salvaged from it. Us kids didn't want for jobs. Our long time friend Ed Leonard, DVM, did farm practice that summer on the Potter Farms.

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Dad was an advocate for accepting positive progress. Shown above is the first field chopper in our area--a one row Papec powered by a LeRoi engine, drawn by our Farmall M. Hydraulic dumps were installed on our trucks. The chopper was adapted from the original Papec ensilage cutter used for filling siloes. Our first 2 row chopper was a Fox.

We were also the first to install bulk milk tanks to replace milk cans. Bulk tanks were a controversial issue. At a meeting in the Cortlandville Grange Hall, a farmer raised the question, "What are going to do with your milk cans?". Another farmer replied, "What did you do with your horseshoes?". 'nuff said!!

THE HIRED MAN

Margaret and I have often wished that we had kept a log of all those who helped on the farm. It would be long and interesting. I can honestly say that there was never an employee on our farm who suffered physical abuse by our family and hardly ever any verbal abuse. I do remember, with regret, one instance that I was guilty of and it was a lesson for me.

No business, no matter how small, operates without assistance from others. My thoughts are directed only to our family farm, its labor needs and many of the persons involved. More specifically the operation at the W. H. Potter Farm (Money Sunk), Potter Farms, and the B. W. Potter Farm. I break this into three names as it covers three eras of ownership. Dad and Mother purchased the home farm on the Cheningo road in 1920. Margaret and I came aboard in 1943-4 which also included Willard in 1950s and Jane in 1960. With the passing of Dad and Mother in 1967, Potter Farms was split into Milkland and B. W. Potter Farm.

Dad performed many vet calls and so the daily chores were often left up to hired men. Mother had her hands full caring for children, taking vet calls, running errands and doing community service. Dad never wanted or asked her to perform barn chores. At Money Sunk we had a tenant house for married helpers, mother boarded the single men. There were plenty of farm wives who performed farm chores but the hired people were always men.

The position of helper was for years known as "the hired man". Titles have become sophisticated in today's world (1990's), but the job description remains unchanged. Until now, I have never put it into words. "Hired hand", "An employee paid wages and privileges, in return for services rendered to the employer". There is no monetary connection with the farm business. The abilities needed in this person have changed immensely during this century because of the technology advances in agriculture.

HELPERS ON THE FARM

The first hired man that I can remember was Gaylon Burdick. Gaylon came from the Linklaen area and boarded and roomed with us. He was a devoted Christian and a gentleman. Dad trusted him with the animals, field work and the family. When he left the farm I believe he went to work for The Seventh Day Baptist school and farm in Union Springs. He married and later visited us in Truxton.

Linus Smith was a very early employee. Linus lived on South Hill with his parents Ralph and Cora Smith. The Smith family were what rural America was all about--honest, hard working, good neighbors and friends, family folks and more. Linus remembers me at a young age. It must have been in the winter time. Mother had me all dressed for the cold weather. Linus liked my red cap and immediately named me Santa Claus. Linus worked for other farmers over in the McLean area, eventually he married Marian (not my sister) and they rented the farm at the foot of the hill on Route 13 in East Homer. Later they purchased the Muller farm on Route 13 north of Truxton. Their two children, Linus and Wilma are our friends today.

In the course of Dad's veterinary calls he would run across men who were in need of employment and so that was a source of our hired hands. This area of calls was expanded when dad was working in Tioga and Onondaga counties as a veterinarian testing cattle for tuberculosis (around 1926-1930). In Tioga county, Dad tested in the town of Spencer where a number of Finlanders farmed. Ollie Mattson was one and Dad hired him to come and work on the farm. He was single and I recall that he had the small room next to the bathroom in our home. More than that, he played the accordion and the mouth organ! Us kids would sit in his room and listen to him at length as he entertained us.

A number of our hands came from the Linklaen-Union Valley area. Ralph Custer was one and the Burrows brothers, Louie and Harold were two more. Again they all came as single men whom Mother fed and roomed. They were all faithful and steady employees and admired by us kids. Dad was also in the milk hauling business at this period. Harold, Louie, and Ralph all drove truck at one time or another.

Previously Louie had various jobs off the farm--his latest before coming to us was working in the "beer garden" where he played saxophone in a dance band (this must have been around 1933-4 as Pres. Roosevelt had sought to abolish Prohibition-- the 18th Amendment). His instrument was a baritone sax. Eventually all of these men married and farmed for themselves. Louis' bride was Jessie Porter, from Cuyler, who helped Mother with housework. Louis son Jack is a farmer and cattle trucker in Cuyler at this time.

Ralph was an untiring hard worker. Later he operated a large farm near Linklaen. Over the years his family suffered a number of misfortunes.

Harold not only became a successful farmer. He had other enterprises and moved to Florida a number of years ago. Margaret and I enjoyed seeing he and his wife Phoebe in the south. We frequently see their daughter, Joan Smith, who lives here in Truxton. Their son, Bob, is also in the area.

I'll relate a story that Harold tells about working for Dad. In Harold's words, "After working considerable time for Doc, I thought I would ask him for a raise in wages. I was getting \$28. a month, room and board and I asked him for \$32. Doc's answer to me was, "Harold, I like you, Florence likes you, but my price is \$28". In this day it is beyond our thinking that wages could have been that low. We must remember that this was the Great Depression, milk was around a dollar a hundred and there was a struggle to exist. A quarter to a third of the people were unemployed and any job was a source of bread.

The Depression provided another source of employees. Dad would go to the employment agency in Syracuse. At the agency there would be dozens of men looking for work. Dad would look them over and talk to one he thought might work in our situation. Many of these men had ridden the rails to Syracuse, hoping for a job. Dad was a pretty good judge and I don't recall any tragic situations by bringing a man home to work. I do recall Charlie Elwell as one of the men from the agency. He was a wirey man and a great worker and also helped Mother. He drove the milk route to Homer.

Unfortunately he was involved in a car-truck accident on the old Kenney Brook bridge. A Mr. Rindge, who was traveling to Truxton from Cortland to work on the construction of the new school, was killed. Charlie was not at fault. Today, even with the new bridge, it is difficult to see vehicles

approaching on that stretch of road.

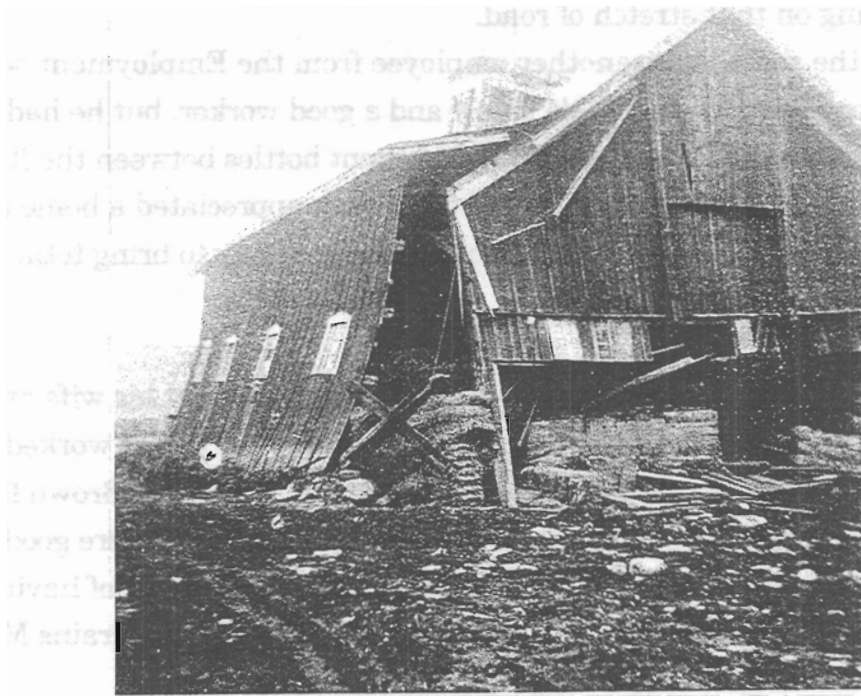
At the same time, another employee from the Employment service was Jack Keene. Jack was a likable fellow and a good worker, but he had a hankering for the bottle. We would find spent bottles between the floor joists and the plate of the cow barn! All of these men appreciated a home and good food. It would be out of the question in today's society to bring total strangers, with no referrals, into our home.

Another early employee was Arvin Brown. He and his wife and family moved to this area from DEEtroit (as he would say). He had worked in auto industry but was out of a job and ended up on our farm. The Brown family lived in the house on the Woodward farm (George Poole's). They were good people. He also drove truck for us and he too suffered the misfortune of having the engine of the truck sliced off by a Lehigh Valley train on the Crains Mills crossing. He escaped without injury.

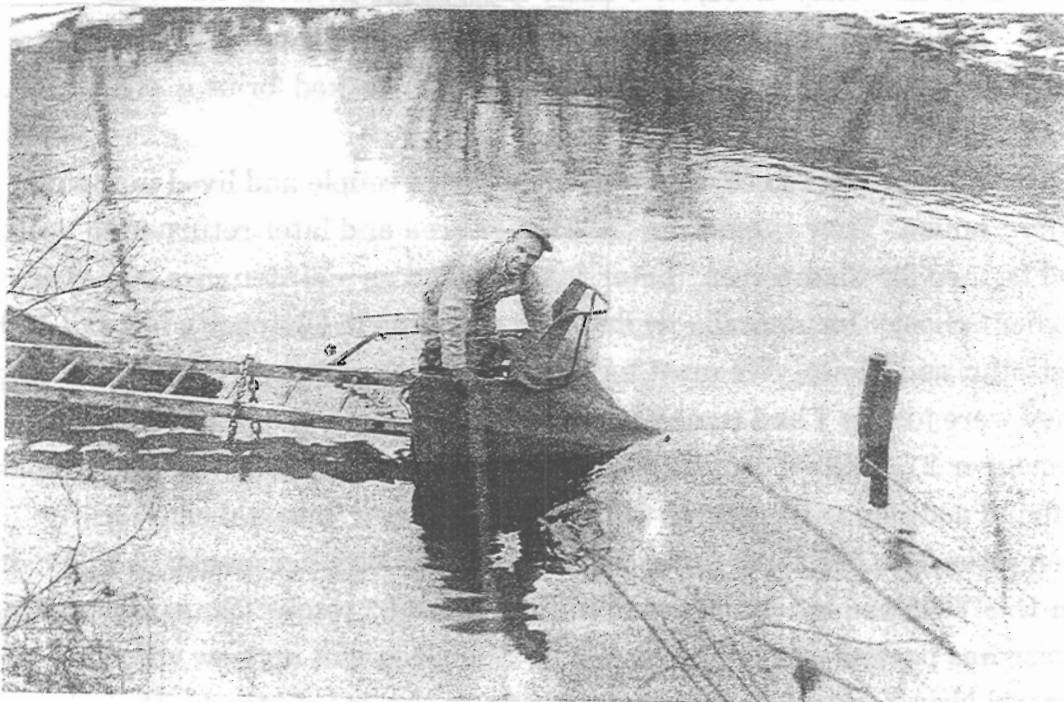
Two of my favorite hired men were Leo Newton and Stanton Wall. Leo and Laura were a young couple who came from DeRuyter. Laura was a daughter of a farmer--Orresta Paddock. The tenant house burned when they worked for us. They lived, for a short time, in the house at the Woodward farm. Leo and Laura operated a farm in DeRuyter for many years. They were always good friends. Leo's brother, Arnie, worked for us a short time.

Stanton and Eloise were a newly married couple and lived in the new tenant house. They came from the Homer area and later returned to Scott and farmed for themselves. Later Stan worked as maintenance supervisor for Homer School. Incidentally while I was shopping in Chappell's last fall, 1992, I met Stan and Eloise. We must have visited for a half hour--just reminiscing. They were just as I had remembered them fifty-eight years ago! (Update--December 21, 1993--Yesterday I met Stan Wall at the hospital. Eloise has suffered a stroke earlier in the fall and is in the new hospital care facility. Stan attends to her three times daily to help her with her meals. I will visit her this Wednesday. Stan is well, but lonely, at 82 years. (Since this writing, Eloise has passed away) (More update! Saw Stan and his new wife at the Central New York picnic in Eustis, Florida on the 3rd of March. He looked great and has a lovely wife--both of them were very happy).

I met Ben Bolt in Florida March '93. Ben worked for us a short time in the '30s. He married Camilla Dennison. He farmed for many years in the Tully area. (since this writing Ben has passed)



The horse barn had been adapted to a free stall heifer facility. The manure pack pushed the 10" by 10" plate off the stone wall, the barn collapsed, the haymow floor dropped and the roof caved. Lee Kibbee from Solon Pond, an old time barn builder, helped us raise the roof and rebuild the barn. A story in itself!!!



Willard was spreading manure with the JD G tractor when he drove over the riverbank into the Tioughnioga at nearly flood stage in the spring. Bernard is getting ready to anchor a log chain to the drawbar. A large tow truck from Brockway in Cortland was called to winch the equipment from the river.

MORE HELPERS

I visited Harry Bartholomew last week (1-93). For those who haven't met Harry, I can assure you that he was a most loyal, trustful, ambitious, hardworking, friendly, happy, and more hired hand. He and Minniebell raised four daughters and a son. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Harry had two stints working for Potter Farms. The first was around 1942, for two years. The second time was starting in 1955 was for eleven years.

Harry was eighty one on June 29th, 1993. He always reminded me that he had eleven years ahead of me. Harry's physical health was not the best, however his mental health was as sharp as ever. Our hour plus visit was nowhere long enough, I must return sooner next time. It's hard for me to get started to make calls, but once I've visited I feel good all over and I hope that the called on feels good. The called on, regardless of his or her condition always seems lifted by a friendly visit.

Minniebell is now in Valley View Nursing Home in Norwich. Prior to that she was in the Cincinnatus rest home. Harry lives on South Hill. He purchased the Ed McNeil farm at the time he left our employment, which if I figure right should have been around 1966. His daughter Ruby and her son Burdett live with him. (Since this visit, Harry has also gone to the nursing home in Norwich--1995 and has now died--1997.

Harry and I reminisced about some of the helpers of that period. For now, I'm just going to get them on paper and perhaps later we can recount some gems about their stay. The order of appearance has nothing to do with their effectiveness! So, to name a few:

Del Fox, Francis Leonard, Bob Newell, Henry Brown, Charles Brown, Ed and Ginny Wirtley, Jack and Sylvia Mitchell, Lester and Louise Dains, Harry Dains, Merwin and Bessie Barrows, Bob St. Hilaire, Dick and Myrtie Smith (1936-1953), Roy and Frances Shaw. That's pretty good for starters.

Since my first notes about Helpers on the Farm, I have thought of a few more of the early ones: John Rich, Harold Knecht, Joe Hall, Wilson Bennett, Mike Marron, Wallace Herald (deaf), Bennie Weishaupt. Some of the later ones since 1942 are: Newton and Norma Beardsley, Fred Croft, Charles and Barbara Holden, Ken and Inge Mauzy, Jay and Elizabeth DeGraff, Charles and Jessie DeGraff, Herb Harris, whose mother and father Lottie and Frank kept house for him. He was brother to Myrtie Smith. Joe Bowe (The Bowe brothers' story is a chapter). Still more: Dave Shirkey, Bill and Jean Mallory, Dave Kitts, Doug Bentley, Charlie and Andrea Streeter, Carole Ross Leach

High school students: Joe, Frank, Jack, Jim, and Vince Maher; Clayton

Crandall, Jimmy McCall, Jeff McCall, Jim Poole, Augie and Mike Frink, Hobart Nottingham, Jim Poole, Frank Schmit. College students: Bill VanNostrand, Andy Oliver, Gunn Rudquist, Anne Kulak, Tom Potter.



Cortland Holstein Bull Assoc. Officers:--circa 1947. rear: Fred VanSchaick, Don. Dutcher, Richard Anderson, Dick Padgett, Glen Alexander front: Frank Wavle, Clarence Harvey, Walter Burtis, Bernard Potter
Holstein breeders purchased \$500 memberships in this Assoc. 2 Sires (Historian and Climax) were purchased in Canada for \$30,000. They were used artificially to inseminate members cows. The Assoc. did not continue---for several reasons.



*Cortland Holstein Club Officers:
 Ralph Davis, Tom Lonergan, Francis Sears, Bernard Potter*

Family Farming in Truxton---As it Was and Is 1920 ----- 1976

Bernard W. Potter---May 1976

You know, I got to thinking about the farms and farmers in Truxton when I was a kid back in the 20s and 30s. They were all family farms.

To mention just a few, there were the Hartnetts, Jones, VanSants, Mullers, Comerfords, Rileys, Lynn Freeman, Caseys, Hayes, Frank Feeter, Schuyler Roberts, Ralph Smith, Elwyn Winnie, and more all to the north and east of Truxton. Down toward Cheningo was my father Doc Potter, Harry Reakes, Giles Beard, George Atkinson, Jim Bush, Dana Dennison, the Lockwoods, Clarence McCall, Charlie Gregg and more.

Toward Cortland was Judson Milks, John Bloomfield, Will Hildreth, Peter Peterson, Fred Curtis, the Kileys, Lonergan, Harry and Frank Young, Arlie Smith, O'Briens, O'Donnell, Burgett, Carrie Abbott Curtis Garner Curtis Henry!, Gilberts Warrens and more. In the west were the McCalls, McKendricks, Wallaces, Sheehans, Turners, Wells, Flaherty, Lillis and still more. These are just a few of the many farm families in our town back then. They all milked cows by hand for a living. The dairy cow and her production meant prosperity or poverty to most of these families.

Some added to the milk income by raising or producing apples, eggs, potatoes, cabbage, maple syrup, potatoes and later-- canning factory peas and beans.

The horse and wagon was the conventional means of hauling the milk to the plant. How well I remember my mother hitching up Tom and Jerry to the wagon and taking our cans of milk to the milk station or creamery, as it was often called. Probably I remember this so well because it was Tom that stepped on my face. One day after returning from his morning trip to the plant and mother had unhitched him to return to his stall as he knocked me down. The model T Ford and others soon appeared taking the place of the "Tom and Jerrys".

At one time there were seven milk plants between DeRuyter and East River. None today. I counted the farmers who once produced milk on West Hill and got fifteen--I can't think of any today.

The "filling of the ice house" was a fascinating winter project for us youngsters to watch. Ice cakes were cut and loaded from Labrador Pond, Muller's pond, Bells Mills, Sheffield's Pond and Cheningo Creek. These cakes were hauled on bob sleighs drawn by horses to the farm. The cakes were slid on a chute into the ice house and covered with sawdust to await use in the summertime to cool the milk--and for an occasional treat of making home made ice cream. This all came to an end with the advent of "high power" and then the milk would be cooled mechanically. Filling the ice house was a very dangerous task for sometime a cake of ice would break loose and injure a worker.

The farmer had his problems--the milk price got down below 2 cents a quart for the farmer. To add to his woes, disease struck the cows--TB in the twenties and brucellosis in the 30s. Oftentimes the entire dairy would be condemned and slaughtered. Fortunately the state recognized the importance of milk in the diet and thereby paid the farmer a little over slaughter price for the animals in order that he could restock his dairy.

The low price for milk caused some farmers to resort to violence. A milk strike was called. A milk strike is not asking the cows to quit milking! It was a "people deal"--they dumped or spoiled milk in an effort to dramatically point out the price problem. While there was no milk dumped in Truxton, there was at Sheds Corners to the north and in other parts of the state. State Trooper George Cowburn, long a Cortland County favorite, was injured while trying to insure the farmers their right to get their milk to the plant. Some trucks were tipped over, kerosene was poured in milk cans and other ways were used to spoil the milk. Dad hauled and other farmers milk to Homer at that time. He had men ride in the back of the truck to protect the load of milk.

These are only a few of the memories of those years. As a kid I remember the depression times--like wearing bib overalls with patches and older brother's or sister's hand me downs for clothes. We also ate lots of boiled potatoes and Johnny cake and salt port and milk gravy.

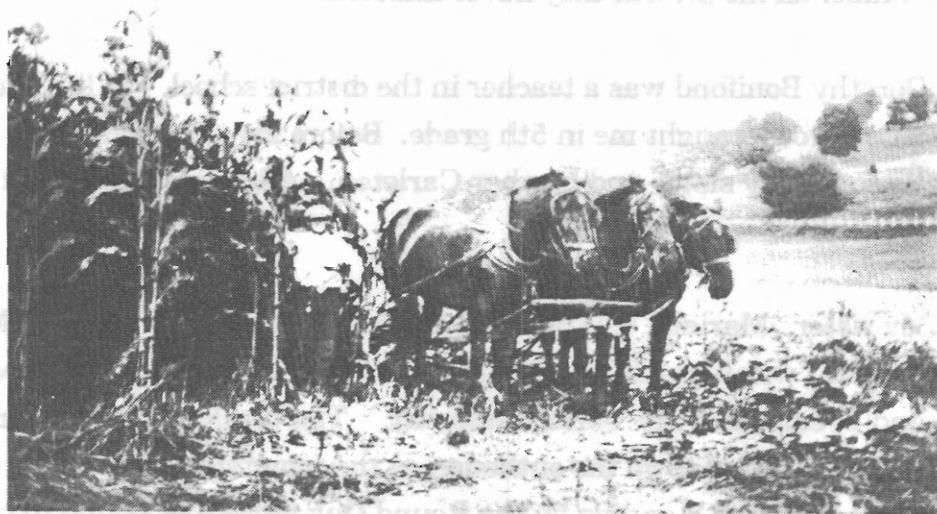
Maybe we didn't have things very fancy, but one thing for sure that we weren't short of was love and affection in our families. I believe that most of the farmers thanked Almighty God for giving them the opportunity to care for their families and being able to help feed others because of being farmers.

Many, many changes in our farming style have happened over the past fifty plus years. The important thing that remains in the Truxton farming style is that as before we are still FAMILY FARMS.

This writing about the Family Farm in Truxton was prepared in 1976 for a celebration of the Bicentennial of our country. Rev. Randy Ross wrote a dramatic piece of history which was presented in the school auditorium in May 1976. I was asked to do a short review of the farms in Truxton. My apologies to the reader as some of the material is repeated in this book. BWP



Harvesting oats--Carleton on seat, Galen Burdick, Bernard in front



Wilburn Potter harvesting silage corn--variety, West Branch Sweepstakes

SCHOOL DAYS

THE ONE ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE at "WICKSVILLE"

My first schooling was in the district one room school known as "Wicksville". It was down the road from our home farm on Cheningo Drive. Years past the Wicks family farmed nearby and their was a tiny creek passing by called Wicks Creek. Thus the name "Wicksville" for this little schoolhouse.

We walked to school, about 3/4 of a mile. I attended there for grades 1 through 5, then skipped the 6th and went to Truxton in the old brick school for 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th. Then we were in the new school for 11th and 12th, graduating in 1938.

I enjoy reminiscing about my experiences of attending a one room school. The district schools were operated independently of each other. We were district #3. There was an elected trustee by the property owners and he was really the school board. I don't recall at that time that there were any women as trustees. It was the trustee's responsibility to hire the school teacher.

Mabel Sawyer and Mildred Smith, the Sawyer sisters, from DeRuyter taught in Wicksville. Mabel was a friend of Schuyler Roberts. Schuyler farmed on South Hill, later known as the Sprouse Farm. Dad purchased the farm from Willie Paul Sprouse and now it's owned by Carl Hinkle. Schuyler courted Mabel all his life but they never married.

Dorothy Bonifond was a teacher in the district school. A life long friend, Mildred Lockwood, taught me in 5th grade. Before my time Katherine Casey (Cashel) taught my sister and brother Carleton. After my time Marcia Hildreth taught there.

My sister, Marian, was one of the older students. I went with Marian one day when I was just a little kid. It was a sad experience for me. I wet my pants, and I remember my embarrassment. The teacher didn't see my finger up indicating I needed to go the outhouse, so the inevitable happened. I had to spend the recess time standing by the Round Oak stove just trying to get dried out. I think the teacher was also living with Dad and Mother at that time. That made it twice as bad because she told them about my problem. Although

I wasn't reprimanded, it was embarrassing for me to have that happen. I mention the "outhouse". As I recall ours was "modern". Why? Because there was a covered walkway to it so we didn't have to go out in the elements to reach it. I also recall that years before some of the older boys had bored a peep hole between the boys and girls facility. Can't imagine why!

One of the highlights of the school year was Arbor Day. In Cortland County, John McDermott was the ardent conservationist. I can see him now, an older man, a bald head, round face, a hooked nose and wearing a well worn suit of clothes. He'd travel around to the district schools. He was also an old time fiddler. He would bring us a tree that we would plant and talk to us about conservation and saving our forests. Then he would play his fiddle. "Golden Slippers" was always played and he would say, "with variations". We just enjoyed hearing Golden Slippers With Variations. It was an exciting time when we planted that tree in the spring time and listened to Mr. McDermott.

I remember Mrs. Rathbun visit's to our school. Mrs. Ruth Rathbun, from Cincinnati, was the District Superintendent. She was responsible for the quality of education in the rural schools. She would observe how the teacher was teaching and how the students were responding to that teaching. She'd have encouraging words for us and always say nice things about our school. That made us feel real proud to be students at Wicksville.

At Christmas time, a party in the evening was a fun time. We all learned our pieces. At the appropriate time we would stand up in front and we'd say them sing-song like "dadedadedadededa". The older students had the longer pieces and the younger ones or the ones that weren't quite able, would recite the shorter ones. We'd always present a short play. Strings of popcorn and chain loops were made by us for tree decorations. A real hemlock tree that we'd cut on the hill would receive the home made decorations.

We needed lanterns for lights, and I guess we had lamps too. At one Christmas party folks said that there was 84 people crowded into that one room to see the evening Christmas exercises. It was an exciting event to have that many people see and hear us kids perform. At another party I can remember "bobbing for apples" which was real fun.

In the spring time we all were anxious to get out with our shoes off. We'd

play Annie Annie Over. We threw the ball over the schoolhouse roof and others would catch it on the other side and then reverse the procedure. Palm, Palm Pull Away was another game.

Earlier I recalled the bat incident while playing baseball, in first grade, at Wicksville school at noontime. I again include it here as a part of Wicksville lore. We played in the little field west of the schoolhouse. I had the ball but I didn't have the bat. Harold Singleton, a bigger boy than I, told me to give him the ball, and so I did. He was going to knock out flies to some of the kids.

When he swung the bat back I was in its path. It corked me right between the eye and the nose. I don't know where the ball went, but I know that I bled like a stuck hog. Harold's bigger brother, Ed Ryan, helped stop the bleeding and then walked me home, so I could be taken good care by mother. I don't recall any stitches, the bleeding evidently just stopped.

Because of Tom the horse accident at home and Harold's bat at Wicksville I've always had a crooked nose. I learned one thing, don't stand too close to the bat when your friend is hitting flies!

In the springtime the leeks (wild onions) were growing fast up in the woods. The big boys would go up and eat some leeks during their noon time. Of course that means that their breath stunk like crazy when they got back. They'd be sent home from school--exactly what they wanted to have happen!

There was always the bullies that were a bit bigger and stronger that took care of us little fellows--one way or another! I never was a fighter. We lived through some of those traumatic times. I remember staying overnight with other boys, in their homes. Most times I was happy to go back to my kind of home. That was a growing up experience to see others' home life.

One of the large families in our district was the Dennison family. Mr. & Mrs. Dana Dennison raised ten daughters, then a son was born and very tragically that little boy was killed by a car. It broke their hearts. Several of the girls were in Wicksville district school--Virginia, Evelyn, Marcella, Frances. Evelyn was in my grade. Virginia was three years younger than me with the same birth date. She later became Lynn Barrows' wife.

I remember giving Virginia a ride on my bicycle's handlebars, because my bike was a girl's type it had no crossbar. Coming down the schoolhouse hill, her foot caught between the fork and the tines on the front wheel. I really ached because Virginia was hurt. Nobody ever rode on the handlebars of my bicycle after that experience.

In the winter time we had the original hot lunches in school. Parents would prepare a kettle of soup, spanish rice or some other dish and it would be brought to school. It would be heated on the Round Oak stove for our noon time lunch. Sometimes we'd bake potatoes in the wood stove.

Emmett O'Donnell, our mailman, would drive his horse and cutter in the winter. Emmett was a wonderful, fine man. He would pick me up by the district school and put me up under the big heavy robe he had covering himself up by his mail bags and he'd give me a ride home. Emmett did that many times.

Georgia and Jim Bush lived down the road, where Horst and Klara Fuerherm lived. They were farmers like most every family in our community. Hessel Murray, Hilda Bush, Shirley Vickery and Hayden Bush were their children. She was a very friendly person. Many times Mrs. Bush would pick us up and give us a ride to or from school. Everyday she hauled milk to Truxton and oftentimes bring home bags of grain for the cattle. Everybody was neighborly.

I can't remember the names of everybody who came to Wicksville. There was the Shaws, the Ainsworths, the Warners, the Pudneys, the Potters and oh yes, Marjorie Graham VanDusen who grew up with her grandmother and grandfather Mr. and Mrs. Harry Reakes Sr. The Reakes farm was where Bruce and Carole Potter live now. Marge was younger than I. We walked to school together much of the time. More students were the Dennisons, the McCalls and the Knupps. Ed & Bill Ryan, and their younger half brother Harold Singleton lived up on South Hill behind our farm. Their father and step-father was Charlie Singleton. There was Arlene, Paul, Nora, Howard and more of the Button family. Jo McCall McGuire, her sister Pauline and their cousin Billy McCall.

Linus Reakes had people working for him on the farm by Wicksville

brook. His father, Harry Reakes, had a sugar house up back of the cow barn. When he was boiling the maple sap, we'd go in there and Mr. Reakes would give us some new warm maple syrup--boy did we like that! I also remember that he had a jug of hard cider on the wall of the sugar house. None of us kids got into it, but I think there were others that used it pretty freely!

At five years of age I started in first grade, as there was no kindergarten. Five years later, since I had done very well, Mrs. Rathbun thought that I didn't need to go the 6th grade and I could go to 7th grade. Probably my teacher and parents thought the same. So I skipped the 6th grade and went to 7th grade in Truxton. We had gone from 8 grades in rural schools, to 6 now that there was centralization of all the schools. The district schools were still open, waiting for the new school building to be constructed. In Truxton. I met new friends along with new challenges.

After eight grades at Wicksville, sister Marian, spent her four years at Cortland High School. I believe she went down there in 1929 through 1932. She and other students went by bus to Cortland. Today I guess we'd would call it a limousine, an oversized car. It came from Cazenovia, others would also ride. In bad weather Marian often stayed down all week with Grandma Emma Bean at 76 Lincoln Avenue. My parents believed that the opportunities were greater in the Cortland High School. At that time there was a basic four year course in Truxton.

With centralization, came the closing of district schools. The last one to close, in our centralized district, was the two room East Homer school. For a short time that building was used for special education classes.

Later, more consolidation took place. These high schools are no more-- Scott, Smyrna, Locke, New Woodstock, Virgil, Mclean, Truxton. Oh yes, Georgetown too, that's a combined school now, with South Otselic. So there's been a lot of changes from the old centralization to the present larger district. It's not all good, it's not all bad. It's open to debate as how far it should go.

THE OLD SCHOOL

Our old school in Truxton was originally the Dr. Nelson house. It was to the south of the present school, where the driveway and lawn are now. In back of it was another house where Charles and Mary Moore lived. Now with centralization approved Moores' house was purchased to provide more space. The lower level was renovated into a Shop and Ag room. Upstairs was the Home Economics room, typewriting and also one for a lower grade. This gave temporary housing for the influx of students from the outlying districts.

We would eat our lunches down in the basement of that old school. At noon time sometimes the fellows would put on boxing gloves. As I said earlier, fighting wasn't my game, it just didn't seem to be compatible with my physique or my personality. Brother Carleton was a pretty fair boxer.

The furnace was in the basement. We would put potatoes in the old furnace and have baked potatoes for lunch. The fellows sometimes got a little rowdy down there. If there were pieces of sandwiches left over, they were often seen as missiles going by some folks. So it was kind of the last of the old rough and tumble schools down in the basement of the old brick mansion.

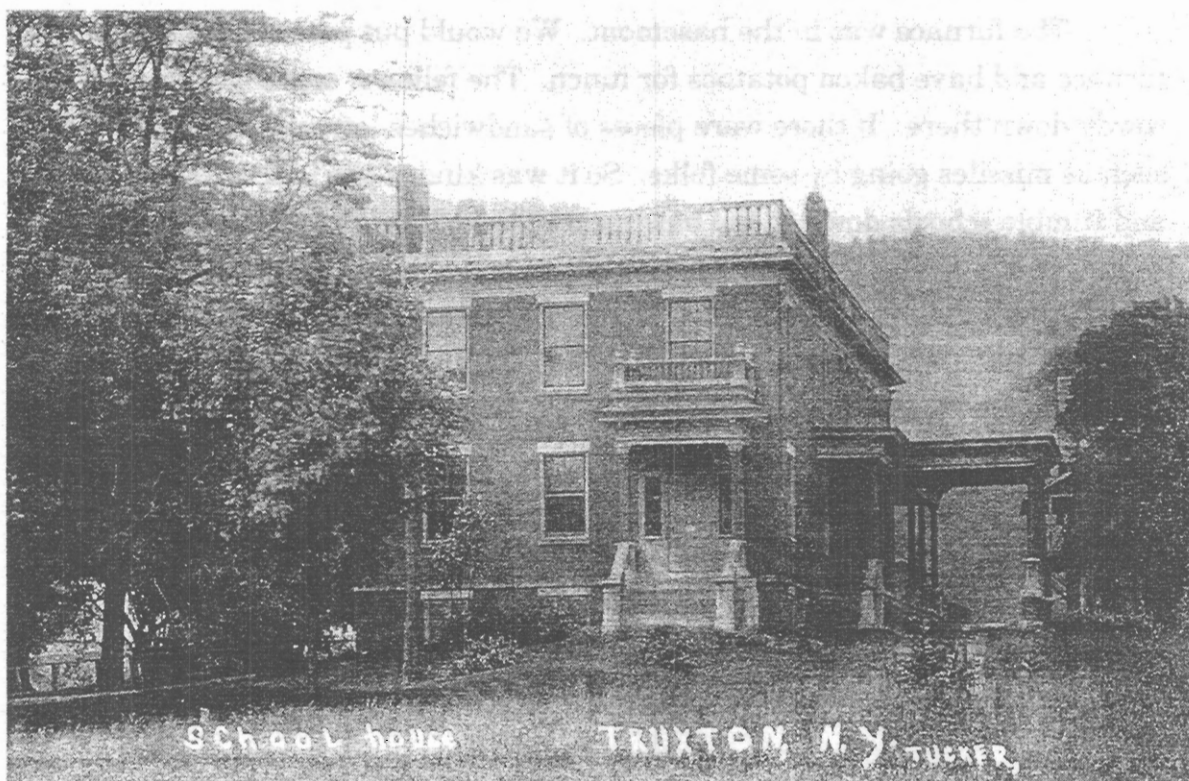
After skipping the 6th grade, I started 7th grade in this old brick Nelson house, in 1932, when I was 10 years old. Josephine Kenney (later French) was my teacher. The 7th and 8th grade classes were in her classroom.

Her younger brother-in-law Clayton French, Coy we called him, was in the eighth grade. Although a great guy, Coy was always a bit of a heller! He and Bob Young jumped out the room's first floor window when Jo wasn't looking. They were always up to some tricks which made life hectic for his new sister-in-law, Jo, as a young teacher.

I still remind Jo that she was my favorite 7th grade teacher--she was my only one! She was truly one of my favorites. She is our neighbor and over ninety years of age.

As a seventh grader I was befriended by Stuart Park, and another Bill Ryan, who lived in Crains Mills. They were older and kind of "fathered" some of us younger kids.

After the eighth grade we moved upstairs to what was called "study hall" -- the main room. There were two classrooms off of the study hall. I was good in Algebra but when I got to Geometry I had lots of trouble. Probably part of it was my fault. Our teacher, Martin Soule, was a wonderful gentlemen, a great church man and great in the Grange, but I always said he couldn't teach beans. There was only one of our class of 16 that passed Geometry regents that year. He just couldn't seem to pass the information on to his students. The only course I ever had trouble with was Geometry. I tell people that I liked it so well I took it two years.



Miller-Nelson home. Known as the "Old School" until 1935 upon the completion of the "New School". Built of brick and stone in the Federal style between 1818-1824 at a cost of \$8,000. Notice a building to the rear. It served as the shop, ag, home economics, typing and one elementary grade during the early years after centralization. Before that, the Charles and Mary Moore home.

CENTRALIZED SCHOOLS

A controversial period in rural living had to do with the centralization of the district schools. In Truxton this came about in 1930-31. There were advocates of the centralization and there were those who wanted to keep the district schools. My parents, Florence and Wilburn Potter, were very interested in improving the educational system in our community. Mother being active in the Home Bureau, had broader experience and had seen some of the other areas where educational opportunities were enhanced by centralization. Dad, as a very well respected veterinarian and towns person, felt that we should do all we could to improve the quality and breadth of education for our children.

Our parents shared the school progress with us. The vote on centralization was at a meeting in the old Methodist church. There was no other place large enough to hold the number of people that came out, so they met in the church. Ernest Woodward was elected Chairman of the meeting. The centralization proposal passed by a healthy margin that evening.

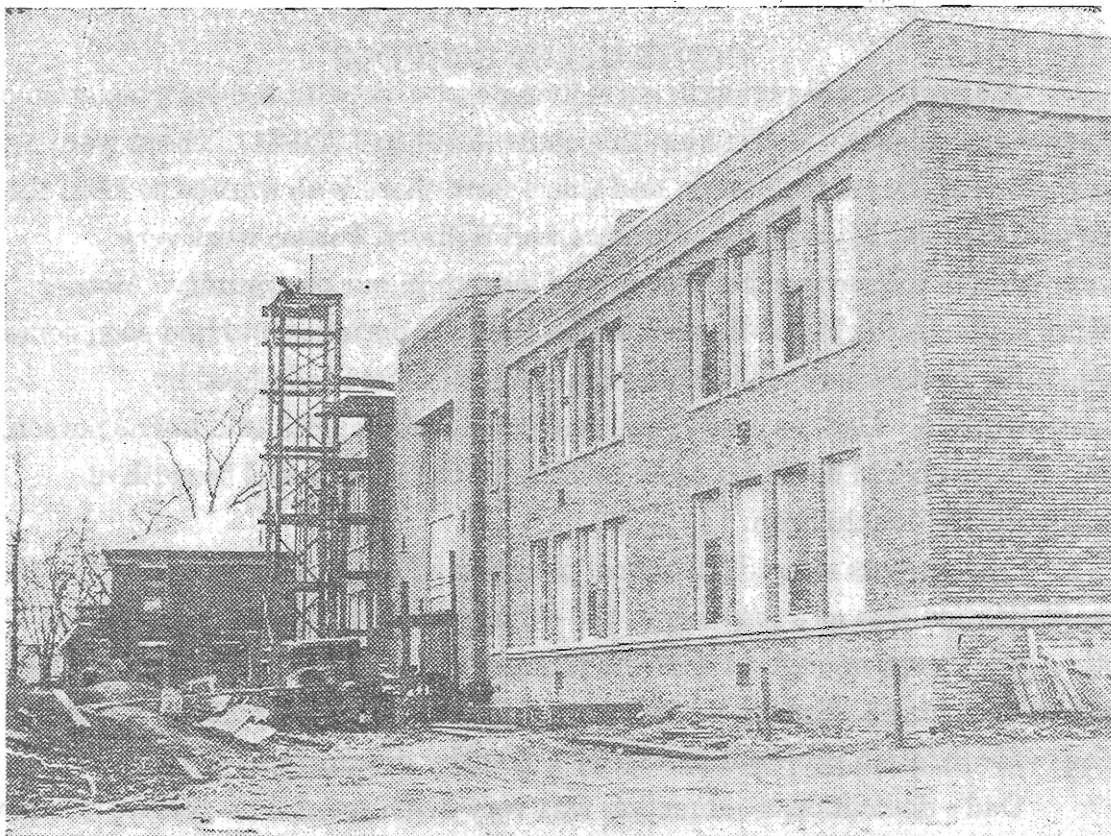
Dad's dedication to education was very instrumental in getting this new school. Truxton made the transition from district schools to a centralized school in orderly fashion. I should mention that the centralized district included all of the town of Truxton and portions of the towns of Homer, Preble, Cuyler, Cincinnatus and Solon.

The School Board moved ahead with the detailed organization plans for a central school. Needed immediately were some school buses, housing for the school buses and drivers to bring contract bussed students from Dog Hollow and Cheningo. One contract person was Edith Sutton, later Mrs. Tom Turner. Edith brought the children out of Dog Hollow. In the winter she used horses and a bob sleigh. Hilton's garage, where Maher's in recent years had their shop, was purchased. That became the school bus garage for many years.

We became part of an athletic league and all our basketball practicing happened in the school bus garage. I remember the boys shooting balls over the beam, in the garage, to the basket! The backboard was hinged so it could be pulled up by a rope for the busses roofs to clear. In sloppy weather the floor had to be swept and cleaned with sawdust before practice could begin.

As we didn't have any school gymnasium, all our "home" games were played away. We played in the old Smyrna church, over a garage in New Woodstock, upstairs over Stillman's store in DeRuyter and in a hall in Morrisville. This all passed with centralized schools and new buildings.

Truxton Central School, Soon to Be Finished



View of the front of new Truxton school.



Dr. W. H. Potter of Truxton, president of the board of education.

New Truxton School Takes Shape Rapidly

Building for Central District Will Be Ready for Occupancy February 1

CORTLAND. — Fine progress has been made on the new \$134,000 central school at Truxton. The building is more than 75 per cent complete and is expected to be ready for the opening of the spring term February 1.

Overcrowded conditions prevailing at the Cincinnatus central school are duplicated at Truxton where the new building will come as a great relief to both students and teachers.

More than 200 students are jammed into the more than century old Dr. John Miller residence and the overflow is housed in class rooms in the old tenement house in the rear of the school and in the grange hall. Music classes are held at the Methodist church.

The new building, of buff brick and modern in every detail, will have 14 class rooms with a capacity of 40 pupils to each room. Besides the science room there will be a domestic science room, library, and combination auditorium and gymnasium.

Locker and shower rooms will be

available for both boys and girls. Architect C. W. Clark of Cortland has combined modern requirements and practicability with beauty in planning the school.

Fourteen districts are combined in the central district at Truxton. Pupils from Truxton, Homer, Solon, Cuyler and Preble will attend the new school.

The central district at Truxton owns its own garage and busses for transporting the children. Dr. W. H. Potter, president of the board of education, is confident that when it is completed Truxton will have a central school of which it will be proud, with the best in educational facilities for all the high and grade school students of the district.

The senior class will be the first to graduate from the new building. Class officers are Alda Park, president; Esther Jones, vice-president; Mary Jones, secretary and treasurer; Marcella Denison, Alberta Yakraus, Jane Feeter, Robert Moore, Carl Dawson and John H. Abbott.

77-18-35

THE TRUXTON CENTRAL SCHOOL BOARD

Members of the original School Board were Ernest J. Hoffman, Edward Wallace, Frank R. Young and Lynn A. Freeman. Miss Marion Hartnett was our principal. Miss Hartnett was a very wonderful person who grew up in Truxton and spent all of her days teaching children in her home town. I will write about her in another chapter.

My father, Dr. Wilburn H. Potter, was elected to the Board and served some 20 years, many of those as its president. He spent hours and hours on school business. Other members during those years were Leon Parker, Earl Hill, Frank Young. Howard Parker, Newell Goddard and Otis Young served from East Homer.



Truxton Central School Board Members and Associates during Centralization and Construction of the New School. Pictured in Library c. 1936

standing:	Leon Parker	Marion H. Hartnett, Principal	Carl W. Clark, Architect
	Morse E. Ames, Attorney	Lynn A. Freeman	Frank R. Young
seated:	Earl D. Hill	Anna R. Wallace, Clerk	Dr. Wilburn H. Potter, President
	Ruth C.H. Rathbun, District Supt	Ernest J. Hoffmann, Treas	

NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

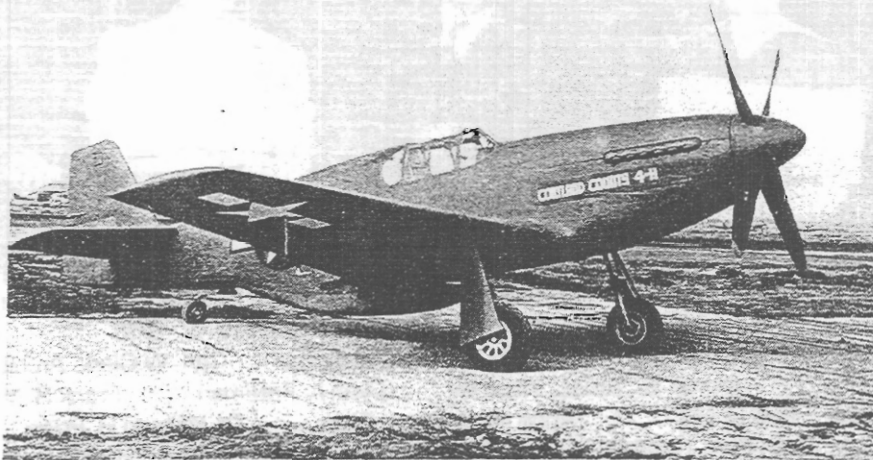
This was the era when FDR was President, the New Deal was on at the height of the Great Depression. There were many public works programs from Washington trying to stimulate the economy. Aid through the Works Progress Administration, the WPA; and the PWA, the Public Works Administration, provided financial help for site preparation of the new school building.

The school architect was Carl Clark, from Cortland; attorney was Morse E Ames who later became Judge Morse Ames of Cortland County. Mrs. Ruth Rathbun was district superintendent through all of the centralization process and Marion H. Hartnett was our principal.

Because of Dad's school board activities, our entire family followed the school construction with great interest. Many Sundays after church we would wander through the new building to check the progress. The new school was next to the old school, so as students we could look out and watch the day by day progress of the construction.

At that time Carl Clark also had the contract for the DeRuyter school. These schools are very similar. The high quality of construction in these schools is evident today. In today's market a school like we have here in Truxton would cost a mint. Today more economical practices are used and a cheaper building is the result. Our school building was built for the ages.

The class of 1936 was the first class to graduate from the new school building-- even before construction was finished.



This W.W. II P-38 Trainer Plane was dedicated to our Cortland County 4-H for its Victory Garden program as an aid to the War food supply.

FACULTY --- CLASSMATES

In our new "big" school in Truxton, Marion Hartnett continued as principal and also taught any subject needed. Mr. Edsol was a shop and ag teacher, also Don Huddleston taught Agriculture. I didn't take Ag in high school because I wanted a broader course of study. Anna Saxton was English and Librarian. Mrs. Huff, a wonderful person, taught Latin for a short time. Corinna Devine came to town to teach Latin and French. A great teacher--she saved me in Caesar.

Charles McConville came as a Commercial and History teacher. We could all learn from Charlie. He helped us organize a chess club. Us kids had a lot of fun with Charlie. He was a tremendous friend. His students responded by doing good work with their studies. After a period in Truxton he married a local girl, Kate Crandall.

Another teacher was Sterling Mitchell. He taught Physics, Chemistry, Intermediate Algebra and Trigonometry. Chemistry was tough for me for some reason or other, while Physics was easy. Us kids had a lot of fun playing ping pong with Sterling Mitchell, I'd like to see him again.

Another member of the faculty was our Librarian and English teacher, Anna Saxton. Miss Saxton was also a very accomplished pianist. She came from Fredonia State University. I believe she is living in Fredonia to this day. She was a real wonderful person and teacher.

One of the legends in Truxton has become Andy Tei. Dad was on the School Board and Andy came to our home applying for the job as physical education instructor and coach. I was in the 7th grade at that time, so I knew Andy from then on. A tireless worker, he taught Phys Ed and instrumental music. He taught me the saxophone, he was our coach, led operettas, and I don't know what Andy didn't do. Considering the student potential, Andy Tei got more from his teams than any other coach in the area.

One of the plusses in the small high school in those days was that the teachers all lived in the community. It was an unwritten rule that if you taught in a community, that's where you should live. The teachers became a part of the community. Every teacher brought a special talent to the small town. The townsfolks were lifted by those talents. Not so today.

Our high school class was a close knit class, nine girls and four guys. I like to remember them as a class that had very little friction in it. The four guys were Bill Goddard, Carlton Fred Woodward, Lloyd Sutton and myself. We were surrounded by those nine girls; Louise Tuttle was our Valedictorian, Ruby Curtis our Salutatorian; also Virginia Root, Genevieve Angell and Pearl Oliver, Rosalia French, Josephine Crandall, Doris Young, and Christine Woodward.

At graduation time, I was number 3 in my class--my average was just extraordinary--it was almost 86! Now days it would be impossible to enroll in Cornell with that average. Some went on to higher education after high school.

In June 1938, I was 16 years old. I found out when I was a junior in high school that I needed more languages to get into Cornell. Cornell required

two years in two languages, or three years of one. Well I wasn't about to try Cicero in Latin. As a senior I started French under Corinna Devine Park, and I liked it so much so I stayed another year and took my second year of French. I also took some bookkeeping, typing and trigonometry. So my post graduate year was not wasted.



Rosalie French, Louise Tuttle, Pearl Oliver, Lloyd Sutton, William Goddard, Genevieve Angell, Josephine Crandall
Virginia Root, Bernard Potter, Ruby Curtis, Christene Woodward, Carlton Fred Woodward, Doris Young
Class of 1938 --- Truxton Central School

EXTRACURRICULAR

In my post graduate year I took part in the senior play, Silas Marner. Maude Cody Burnham was our coach. She descended from Wild Bill Cody. She was a great dramatic coach, because of her I became active in the Cornell Dramatic Club in college. Her husband was Horatio. He helped her in the final stages of play preparation. He was cross-eyed and it was hard for us kids to know who he was looking at or talking to! They made a great team.

Charlie McConville, our teacher, helped us form a chess club. We had a great time. Some of the fellows who played were Frank Bosworth, Gerald and Ernie Young and Carl Parker. I don't remember any girls playing. In our school we had small classes; personal attention; and fun together.

I played the violin in the school orchestra. Later, as Andy Tei wasn't a string instrument teacher, the band took its place. As a junior or senior in high school I decided to play a band instrument. Brother Carleton played the clarinet in the Big Red Band at Cornell. That was a cheap way to see the Big Red football games. I made up my mind to do that, so I took some of the money earned from showing cattle at the State Fair to buy a tenor saxophone. Andy taught me how to play it, and I did play in the Cornell band for a short time. When someone asked me about playing in the Cornell band my answer would be, "I was an excellent marcher"!

Andy also helped us organize a dance band. We played many of the popular songs of the times. It was fun, and occasionally we'd play for a special occasion, but as far as dances we didn't do many. I was a decent saxophonist, nothing that anybody would have me play a solo for them.

In baseball, I was an fine fielder, but only a fair hitter. I loved to play center field. I remember the following when we were playing at South Otselic. In left field was Alton "Fat" Robbins. I was playing center field. Alton wasn't the fastest guy on his feet--I could run like a deer. I ran into left field for a fly ball, caught it on the run, in front of "Fat" It was the third out. I kept running toward the bench. Coach Andy Tei, whose famous saying was, "Judas Priest" came running out to me and hollered "Judas Priest Bernard, if you ever dropped that ball you could have kept right on running back to Truxton". I knew I was in the wrong place, but it was so much fun. I just loved to shag flies--wherever!!

I didn't have much opportunity to play basketball. I was short, also there was no boys junior varsity teams in our league. There was a girls and boys league. The girls team was 6 players--3 forward and 3 guards. Neither set could cross the center line.

I might as well say that, being as young as I was, I never had many dates or girlfriends at that time of growing up. I always thought they were too old for me, or that I wasn't old enough for them or whatever. I still had a good time in high school, but no steady girlfriend.



*P. Soule, E. Robbins, M. Young, R. Soule, A. Root, M. Robbins, Coach Tei
R. Coon, A. Robbins, B. Goddard, J. McGraw, F. Bosworth, A. Parks, R. Porter
G. Young, K. Gibbons, B. Potter, M. Kogut, R. Ackerman, S. Robbins, J. Knupp
G. Ackerman-----H. Goddard
T.C.S. Baseball Team 1939*

MARION H. HARTNETT

Miss Marion H. Hartnett was the beloved teacher and principal of our school for forty one years. On June 10th, 1995 our former Truxton Central School was rededicated and named THE MARION H. HARTNETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT TRUXTON. At the same an endowment in Miss Hartnett's name has been established. The earnings from the endowment will be (1) to provide a scholarship to a college bound graduate of Homer Central School who attended The Marion H. Hartnett Elementary School and (2) to present an award to a sixth grade student who has attended the Hartnett Elementary School in Truxton. As of June 30, 2001 the endowment was \$28,635.55. A complete documentation of the donors and procedures for realizing this rededication is a story in itself. For the purpose of this writing I have attached the following:

MARION H. HARTNETT⁽¹⁾

Born December 18, 1895 Truxton--Died June 14, 1974 Truxton

Miss Hartnett was the daughter of Daniel and Mary Daley Hartnett. She graduated from Cortland Normal School. In September 1919 she joined the faculty of Truxton Union School. She was responsible for a 20 pupil eighth grade home room and the teaching of English 8, Math 8 and History 8, also High school English I, II and III, Elementary Biology and American History.

In 1928 she was made Supervising Principal. At that time she started studying for a B.S. at Syracuse University by attending Summer Sessions. She also attended extension sessions held in Cortland and taught by Syracuse and Penn State professors. Miss Hartnett completed this work in 1935 and continued studying, at Syracuse, until the required credits for a Master's Degree in Education were earned.

Marion Hartnett served as principal during the controversies of centralization and the eventual building of the new school. School population was increasing and new courses of study, i.e. agriculture, shop, home economics and commercial, were needed. Miss Hartnett steered this transition period with unlimited care and understanding. The class of 1936 was the first class to receive its diplomas in the new building.

In the centralization process most of the one room rural schools were closed. The East Homer School, a two room facility, was the exception. That school continued to house and teach pupils, grades 1-6, for several years. Marion Hartnett's duties included the supervision of the satellite schools until their closing.

In 1945 the Homer school on the Green burned and about 40 pupils, from East River and Health Camp Road were taught in Truxton. To handle the increase in students and

course needs, a war surplus Quonset hut was acquired, also the Jones house, just to the north of the main school. These facilities helped meet the needs for art, kindergarten and a dental hygienist. This expansion program was also capably administered by Miss Hartnett.

The time had now come for BOCES, Adult Education and closed circuit TV. In her history Miss Hartnett says that TV cannot replace the classroom teacher, also that adult education wasn't too successful other than photography, and cake decorating.

Miss Hartnett retired on October 10, 1960. A testimonial dinner was held, in her honor, on June 1, 1961. It was a gala affair and a fitting tribute to a beautiful person who devoted her entire life to the children and community of Truxton and the surrounding area.

(1) Edited summary, Miss Hartnett's writing, "In Retrospect", for "Historic Truxton"
10-26-93 bwp



Marion Hartnett.

CORNELL DAYS

A VETERINARIAN----ALMOST

During my freshman year at Far Above Cayuga's Waters there were many times when my mind wandered and wondered if I should be where I was on the campus, in the College of Agriculture. I could never lay claim to any top academic achievements, even in high school. I was just a good middle of the road student who never really got down to business of studying. If this is a confession, so be it. I know now that I took the way of least resistance and did remarkably well with that kind of effort. This all changed at Cornell, my high school lack of intensity was carrying over into college. I had received bust (failing) notices in some courses and it scared me.

I remember one spring afternoon on campus when Dad, DVM '18, met me at Balch. Balch was the girls dormitory where I worked for my meals. I was telling him about my poor grades. All he did and said was slapped me on the shoulder and told me that I had the stuff to pass the courses. It turned out that he was right. I buckled down and somehow I passed although the grades were in the seventies. I stayed off probation and was ready for a second year.

That was one dilemma as a freshman. The other was that I was torn as to whether or not to try for admission to the veterinary college. I really felt that Dad wanted another "horse doctor" as a son--having Carleton with a DVM in 1940. I realized also that I would have to turn my grades around to enter. I had also pledged Alpha Gamma Rho agricultural fraternity in the spring of my freshman year. Well, I decided that I could still put off the decision. To keep my options open I enrolled in Zoology in the fall as a sophomore. Zoology was a requirement for entrance into vet school. That fall I also started Livestock Judging in Animal Husbandry and did I ever eat it up! Dr. John I Miller, our teacher, was some special person and I liked the guys in the class.

My marks were improving and I applied for entrance in the College of Veterinary Medicine for the fall of '41. I had my interview before the college's entrance committee and continued my studies as before. Along in the spring, before the names of those being accepted were announced, I began getting an uneasy feeling. I remember Mother telling of the experiences which she and Dad had in his college days. Mother often told us children that she studied with Dad and probably could have passed physiology, or anatomy, or bones, just as

well as Dad because they worked together. I wasn't sure of my ability. Also the work in animal husbandry and the great bunch of guys in the fraternity meant a lot to me.

These seemingly trivial reasons weighed heavily on me. Finally I made the major decision to withdraw my application from vet school. I did not wait to hear the report from admissions. My mind was made up to go into Dean Hagan's, Veterinary College, office and tell him of my decision. His office I never reached as we met in the hall. I said, "Dean Hagan, I have decided to withdraw my application for entrance to vet college". The Dean visited with me. He wanted to be sure that my mind was really made up as there would be no return tomorrow. I assured him that I had thought this over and over and had made my decision. He shook my hand and wished me every success in my career.

The story didn't end there. Dr. Stevenson, head of the small animal clinic, was also chairman of the admissions committee. At this same time our pet shepherd farm dog, Peggy, was at the small animal clinic for some treatment. The evening of my decision, Dad called Dr. Stevenson to find out about Peggy's condition. In the course of the conversation, Dr. Stevenson told Dad about my visit with Dean Hagan. Evidently the Dean had wasted no time in communicating with his admissions chairman! I had not, as yet, shared my decision with my father.

It is apparent that Dad had no more than hung up the receiver with Dr. Stevenson than he rang me at the AGR fraternity house. His first question, "What do I hear from the vet school?". My answer, "Dad, I have decided to stay in agriculture". There was a long pause, then from my father, "Son, whatever you decide is right".

We all have made tough decisions. This one turned out almost a miracle. I eventually came back to the newly purchased Bloomfield Farm. Margaret came to Cortland County to work and we found each other. Dad and I were partners on the farm for over twenty five years and never a harsh word was spoken between us.

I'm sure Dad didn't really know, at that time, how prophetic his answer would be down the road. I have thought, so many times, about his

understanding and confidence and love which he had for me. I am also sure that he had some disappointment at not have another veterinarian son. When I came to a fork in the road, I made a decision that would have to be lived for a lifetime. Call it luck, smart planning, or God's will, it sure changed lives by my not studying to become a veterinarian.

We tried chopping dry hay around 1950. It was a disaster--needed to be too dry--was dusty--chopper could not chop fast enough--blowing into barn messy--feeding in winter labor intensive. Never again, a learning experience!!



The Papec Chopper hitched to our Case SC tractor.



*Dumping into the augur blower
--belt powered by Farmall M.*



YOUTH CLUBS SCOUTING

I am thinking about the clubs that we be longed to as kids. The 4-H was my favorite club and I have many experiences that I wish to relate. Boy Scouts was also of interest to me and I'll tell you why, as I look back, it was a more or less a selfish interest.

I believe my Scout troop was 104. Many of the members were not from farms. The real reason I joined the Boy Scouts was because they were going to take a trip to Washington and I wanted to be a part of it. A boy had to be 12 years old to be a Boy Scout, and I had just come to that age, so I joined the Scouts and became a Tenderfoot, and then earned my second class badge. We raised money to take this trip to Washington DC.

The Scouts also had a camp up on the South Hill, up above the Roberts farm. The old district schoolhouse was given to the troop and we made that over for camping. My camping experiences were very limited. This particular day the troop was planning an overnight at the camp. I started walking up over the hill from our farm to the camp. It was raining and I got really soaked right to the gills. More than half way to the camp, I stopped at Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Smith's house. They were friends of our family so I didn't hesitate to go in. Mrs. Smith helped me get dried out. I think my folks drove up and took me home. I never made it to the overnight at the camp!

Here are some memories of the Boy Scout trip to Washington. We drove three cars and a van. Mr. Oral French, the local undertaker, owned a small Ford van with which he used to do all the preparations in getting ready for a funeral. We called it his "dead wagon". Coy French, a Scout, who was Mr. French's son had a driver's license. We put all our tents and equipment into the van and Coy drove it. Bird Freeman, Jack Roberts and Rev. Ernest Devine, our leaders, and us fellows rode in the autos.

So we headed off to Washington. The first night out was one I'll remember forever. From Truxton we followed routes 13, 14 and 15 toward Harrisburg. We decided to pitch our tents at McKee's Half Falls, on the shore of the Susquehanna River. It was a warm, warm summer night, bright moonlight and we all went swimming in the Susquehanna River around midnight. It was a memorable experience.

We drove on to Washington and camped on the mall within sight of the Washington Monument. A number of the scouts were going to visit the Washington Zoo. Some of us fellows wanted to see the Washington Senators play baseball. So part of us went over to see the Senators play the New York Yankees that day. That was a great thrill for a young kid, who knew all the baseball players, to see Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Tony Lazzeri, Lou Crosetti, Red Rolfe, Bill Dickey, Lefty Gomez and the rest of the Yankees. Babe Ruth played right field and hit a home run. Earl Whitehill pitched for the Senators.

I didn't go to the zoo. My Aunt Anna Potter, who was divorced from my Uncle Wendell Potter, was living in Silver Springs, Maryland. I didn't go see her--brother Carleton did. When we returned home my family thought I should have gone to see my aunt rather than go to the baseball game. Frankly to this day I'm sure the ball game was much more memorable!

On the trip we traveled through Frederick, Maryland and saw Barbara Fritchie's house. In the Civil War did she say to the Confederates, "Take if you must this old Greyhead, but spare my Country's flag"? It was exciting to see the home of this famous loyal Union supporter. My Scouting membership didn't last long--my real interest was 4-H club work.



Truxton Boy Scout Troop 97 at Lincoln Memorial, Washington, DC -- 1934
 L-R: Albert Park, Fred Woodward, Milton Robbins, Harold Coye, Clayton "Coy" French, RD Smith, Frank Devine, Ed "Red" Robbins,
 Jack McGraw, Carleton Potter, Alton Robbins, John Feeter, Bernard Potter, Alton Root
 Front--Leslie Moore, Jack Roberts--scoutmaster, new friend, Bird Freeman, Rev Ernest Devine

MY 4-H YEARS BEGIN-----WILLARD'S BORNING

Years later, as we were sitting around the supper table on New Year's day, 1993, the conversation skipped from story to story, tale to tale and more. Pat, Brenda, Joanne, Lee, Margaret and I were the gathering. Just don't know how it came up, but I remembered brother Willard's borning back in the summer of '31 at Money Sunk. In case it hasn't been mentioned before, Money Sunk was Dad's endearing name for the home farm on, what he called, Cheningo Drive. I was nine years old. This is the story.

It was something different for a nine year old boy to have a new baby in the house. I want to tell you how it really disrupted my whole day when my Mother told me of the coming blessed event. We were of the old, conservative school, and parents never told us anything about the facts of life, or the birds and the bees. We had to learn them on our own. I didn't know I was going to have a baby brother or sister at all until the day before the baby was to come here. It had been hush, hush.

On this particular morning in July 1931, Mother was in the kitchen. She sat me on her lap, or what lap she had left, and started visiting with me. I don't remember any of the preliminaries but I do remember, and it hit me like a bolt of lightning, when she told me I was going to have a new baby brother or sister. Not next February, not next November, but today was the day. In those days information such as this was kept very close and private. I wasn't learned enough to recognize any difference in my mother's configuration. With any smarts at all, I'm sure it wouldn't have been hard to identify as mother never weighed over 110 and was of slim build.

With my brains spinning I left the house and hurried down the hill, past the barn, past the ice house and out into the garden. That summer I had planted a garden for my first 4-H project. It was a vegetable garden. I had not taken very good care of it. Things changed that July day. I pulled weeds and hoed like never weeded before. All the time trying to figure this whole thing out, how a new baby could be coming to our house.

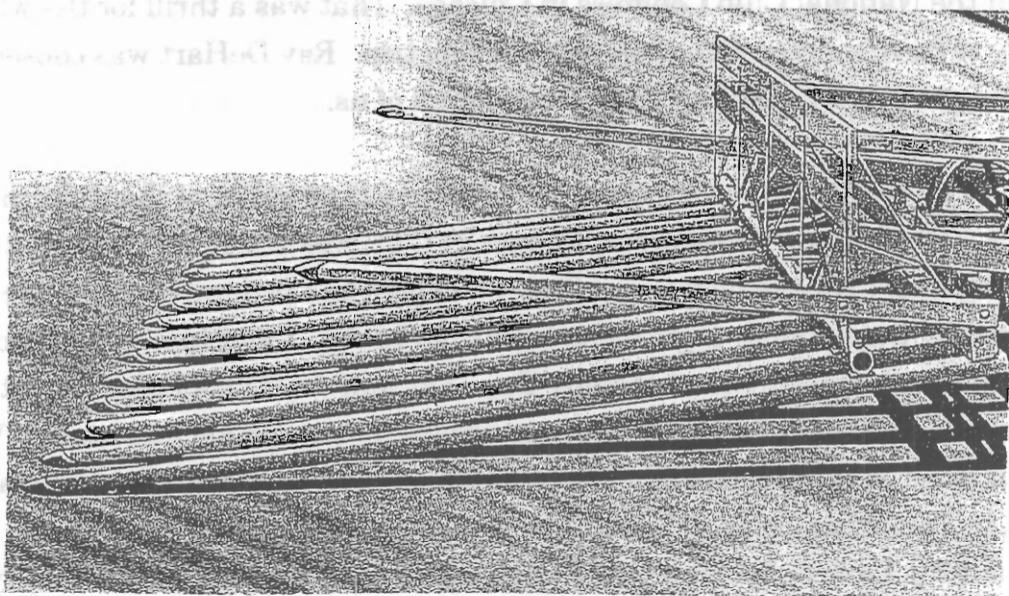
Later in the day, after the initial shock had worn off for me, Dad announced that he was taking Marian, Carleton and me to Chautauqua that evening. Chautauqua's were traveling stage shows or plays. The tent was

set up on a lot off Miller Street in Cortland. The play for that evening was "All Quiet on the Western Front", a World War I story. Anyway, that play didn't help matters with me as there was lots of shooting and war scenes which didn't quiet this nine year old's mental frustration at all.

Well, back to the borning. Dad had seen that Dr. Padgett, from Cuyler, was on hand at our house and there was a midwife or lady assistant there also for help. The going to Chautauqua was just used as an escape to get us all away from the house. In those days or even in my days, the father didn't stick around for the arrival of his heir, or wasn't expected to. Incidentally, Dr. Padgett was known for his occasional use of spirits from a bottle, so Dad had made sure that he was on hand in good time and free of any unneeded toddy. This country doctor was very qualified and highly respected in his profession.

When we returned from the show, the good news was that a baby brother had arrived. His name was Willard Harmon Potter, July 15, 1931.

Except for a new baby's cry, it was "All Quiet on the Money Sunk Front"!



The Buck Rake--We used in World War II. Mounted on rear chassis of old Ford truck. A differential was mounted on the chassis--a drum fixed to the wheel lugs, driven by pto from truck transmission--Backed up a windrow of hay until full. Rope attached to drum lifted the load---off to the barn. Oftentimes the front end of the truck would leave the ground because of the load on the buckrake!!!

4-H CLUB WORK

4-H Club work was started to help rural boys and girls grow and develop into good citizens. The vehicle to make this happen was a club and a project.

A green four leaf clover is the backing of our 4-H Club emblem. A capital H is placed on each petal of the leaf. The H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands and Health. The 4-H Motto is--"To Make the Best Better". At every 4-H Club meeting we would recite the club pledge, "I pledge my Head to clearer thinking, my Heart to greater loyalty, my Hands to larger service and my Health to better living, for my Club, my Community and my Country". The pledge now includes "and to my World" at its end.

A 4-H Club consists of at least 5 members. An adult volunteer leader guides the work of the club members. Age requirements when I was growing up was 10-21 years (some joined younger). Today I believe it is 8 to 18. Probably what whetted my appetite most for 4-H was the influence of my sister. Marian was an early member in 4-H. Because of her homemaking work she was selected as the first girl representative from Cortland County to attend the National Club Congress in Chicago. That was a thrill for the whole family to have a sister and daughter win this trip. Ray DeHart was chosen the boy delegate. It was a proud experience for all of us.

A professional County Agent guided the 4-H program of the clubs in the county. Chalmers C. Henderson, known as C.C., was the first Agent that I knew, in fact, I believe he was the first 4-H agent in Cortland County. He was followed by Dave Fales. Dave came here from Idaho. I met him at the old Cortland High School, at a 4-H Rally Day. On that day Dave Fales taught us, how to make willow whistles! He was a wonderful inspiration and leader. We were friends all during his life. Ralph Higley came to Cortland after being an agent in Tompkins County. I had met him when I was a 4-H camper at Cincinnatus Lake 4-H camp. So I knew him before he came to the county. 4-H Agents were successful because they took an interest in us young folks. They were easy to know and positive examples for us kids.

Early 4-H Homemaking Agents were Elizabeth Wooley, Stella Gould Fales and Pauline Young. Stella Gould married Dave Fales. It wasn't to be the last romance made when 4-H Agents came to Cortland County! Joe Taylor

was here when my Margaret Bell Smith came on board in June 1943. Bob Blatchley came when Margaret was agent. Adelaide Kennedy Underwood followed Margaret. Bob and Addie were here for years. Betty Penoyer followed Addie. Tom Dumas, who retired in 2000, followed Bob Blatchley. Today a fine product of Cortland County, Sydney McEvoy, is leading our youth as agent.

Cortland County 4-H Boys and Girls Off to World's Fair



CORTLAND COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL members, snapped at the D. L. & W. railroad station, Cortland, just before leaving on the train yesterday afternoon for the New York World's Fair. Another group met the party at Marathon.

Party of Farm Youths Leave for Metropolis in Private Day Coach and Will See Wonders of Great Exposition

Cortland, Sept. 8.—The Cortland County 4-H Council, reserving an entire coach of the D. L. & W. railroad, left for the New York World's Fair yesterday afternoon in as gay a send-off as Cortland station has seen in some time.

Their itinerary took them to Hoboken, N. J., and they crossed the Hudson River on the 23rd Street ferry, taking a special bus to the Hotel Imperial which will be their headquarters during the trip. The trip included a tour last night to the Radio City Music Hall show.

As parting instructions their mimeograph sheets told them: "Don't hurry. Go with traffic. Watch out for

pocketpockets and ignore any stranger's advances. For directions if lost, ask a policeman. Try to be in bed by midnight."

They were up early today, having the experience of taking breakfast in an automat opposite the hotel. The party left the hotel lobby at 8:30 o'clock, taking the Long Island railroad from the Pennsylvania Station for the fair.

The party broke up into small groups for their round of the fair, after suggestions were given on eating places, sights to see and instructions for meeting at night.

Tomorrow's itinerary will be similar to today's. The party will return to Cortland on Sunday morning.

Older 4-H members belong to the Council. The 1939 World's Fair was a memorable experience. For many of us it was our first trip to NYC. I'm at the right--also chairman of the planning committee. We had a great time!

THE "TRUXTON BUSY HELPERS"

We were fortunate to have Alfred Bowe as our local 4-H club leader. Alfred Bowe was the Herdsman-Manager for John Bloomfield whose farm eventually became our farm on Route 13 by Kenney Brook. Alfred was a super person, a bachelor, he came from England to work for Mr. Bloomfield. The children, as well as the older folk, in the community idolized Alfred Bowe. He was a true gentleman, I just can't say enough nice things about Alfred.

He was our leader for all the time we were in 4-H club work. He also was very active in the Grange, the Methodist church and the Cortland Holstein Club. He spent hours with us boys. It was strictly a boys' club, we called ourselves the Truxton Busy Helpers. The girls belonged to a homemaking club.

Members in our club included Lloyd Holdrege, the Robbins boys, John Feeter, Carleton, myself, Thaddeus Milks, Leonard and Ronald Morgan, Gordon, Harold and Leland Gilbert, and more whose names I don't recall. There were always ten or more of us young boys in that club.

An incentive to be in 4-H was the opportunity to win prize money at the County Fair. The county fair was the place to show off the results of your project efforts. We made rope halters, crafts, assembled weed and tree leaf collections and identified them. In our club meetings, each year we'd have the Hoard's Dairyman judging contest (picture judging of dairy cows). At the end of the season we would take our projects and our produce to the County Fair.

The first year that I had the garden, I also raised a calf. I thought she was the most beautiful calf in the world. I showed that calf, Betty, at the Cortland County Fair. She placed 8th in a class of 8--on the bottom. "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder" was never truer. I wasn't discouraged about that. Dad said "Son, we'll do better another time". We went to a Holstein club sale and we purchased a calf. That calf, "Snowball" was 16th in a class of 16--I still wasn't discouraged.

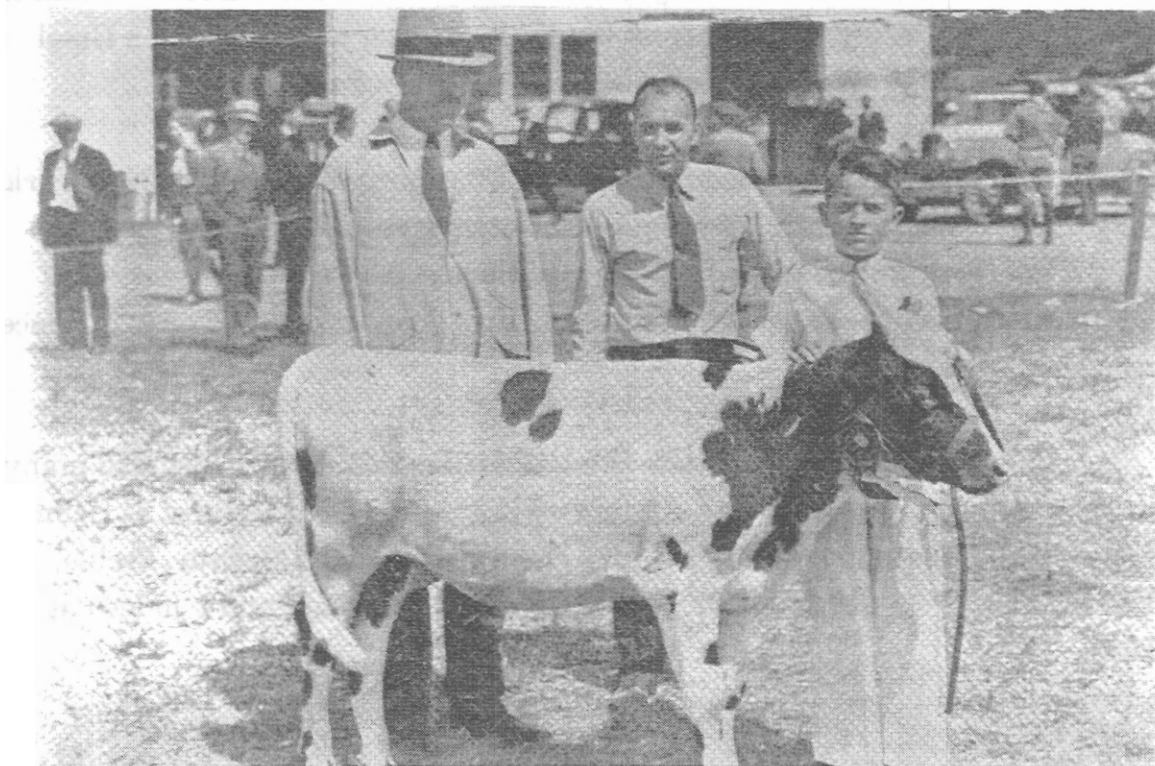
At the same time I started a poultry project with some chicks from Ray and Boyd DeHart's father, Fred DeHart. They owned the Cloverdale Poultry Farm across from the County Farm at Lorings Crossing. They raised White Leghorns. Judging was a part of 4-H, and learning to judge chickens or cows or

vegetables was important in order to understand what constituted acceptable quality and type. We also learned to grade eggs.

When I was around 10 years old, we went to Delhi to the agricultural school to grade eggs and judge chickens. I scored very well. A news article in the paper noted that the judges were surprised at the poultry knowledge of this 10 year old 4-Her. Everyone needs some luck!

After the disappointing experience in the showring, with the Holstein calves, I looked farther. Dairy cattle in our state were infected with brucellosis. We were buying replacement cattle from Canada. We bought some Ayrshires. They were pretty, those red and white Ayrshires. I thought maybe that would be a better animal to show. I did show another Betty-- pictured below with 4-H agent Dave Fales, judge Prof. J.P. Willman and me. She took first prize. However when she became a milk cow, she was a dud. My Ayrshire interest declined in a hurry as the real reason for milking cows was to sell milk!

The original Fairgrounds was where the former Philadelphia Sales, P&C Market, and Fays are now along Homer Avenue in Cortland. Our cattle were housed in tents by the old grandstand which would back up to Wheeler Avenue. Later on the Holstein Club built the big cattle barn, off Fisher Avenue. That's when we moved out of the tents into the cattle barn.



FAIR EXPERIENCES

The Cortland County Fair filled us kid's with excitement. Albert and Mrs. Twentyman met me on the grounds when I was about 10 years old. Albert grew up next door to the Bean farm on the back road to East River. He knew Mother and Dad very well. Albert asked me if I had my lunch yet and my answer was, "No". He said, "Well, come with us". We walked over to a tent where one of the churches was serving meals where he bought my dinner. It's a remembrance that stayed with me all these years---their kindness and generosity to this youngster. It was always a pleasure to see both of them. They were the parents of our friends, Gerald and Tom Twentyman. Mrs Doris Twentyman celebrated her 103rd birthday--she died this fall, 2001.

As we grew older some of us 4-Hers joined the 4-H Council. It was a separate county-wide club which met once a month. We had various activities teenagers would be involved in. I remember being one of the two selected to show Tom Dewey around the Fairgrounds. It was a thrill to visit with Governor Dewey. He was a great governor and of course a Republican!

The World's Fair in 1938 took place in Flushing Meadows on Long Island. The Council earned money and we went on the DL&W from Cortland to Hoboken, New Jersey, ferried across the Hudson River and stayed in a Hotel In New York City. We took a train out to the World's Fair.

That was some experience for around 30 country folks to visit New York City and the World's Fair. I was one of the members of the Committee that helped get ready for the trip. It was one of the learning, growing experiences which all led toward responsibilities ahead as we grew older. A 4-H experience as it should be.

I have a complete scrapbook of my activities in 4-H that included many judging contests. For a number of years we judged a regional contest at Delhi. We went there mostly for dairy judging. One year Richard McEvoy, Preble; Bob Sweeney from Cortlandville, Gerald Young, East Homer and I judged at Delhi.

WE LOOKED UP TO OUR ELDERS

In those days at the fair we had the pleasure of visiting with Mr. James M. McDonald, vice president of the J.C. Penney Co. He was the owner of the McDonald Farms, home of some of the best Guernsey cattle in the world. My Grandfather Bean's farm in Cortlandville was home base of the McDonald Farms. Here was one of the wealthiest men ever in the community and he was sitting there on a bale of hay talking to us young folks, encouraging us to do our best in our work.

I remember when Mr. & Mrs. Blake Bickford came to the Fair. Blake through a farm injury had become blind. Mrs. Bickford took him out in the cattle ring as they were being lined up. Mr. Bickford would feel over the cattle and without sight he could judge the animals because he was such an outstanding cowman.

The Goodwin brothers, Charlie, Dick and Ward, brought Brown Swiss cattle from Guilford, NY to the County Fair. They were like big brothers to us as they taught us much about the cattle showing business, and so we were learning all the time from these folks. Incidentally, Charlie was the father of Ingrid Fox who lives and teaches in Homer.

Fred Saltsman and his wife, the parents of John, Roy, Mary and George went on the show circuit. They traveled, with their family, from fair to fair with their Holsteins from Saltland Farms in Virgil. They, too, helped us youngsters at the fair, giving us tips to make our animal look best for the show ring.

From the Ayrshire breed there were the Stimpsons from Spencer. Orson Smith worked for Stimpson in the beginning, later he owned Smithland Farms Holsteins at Chittenango. We all thought the world of Smitty.

The Pendergast girls also showed Holsteins at the Cortland County Fair. Agnes and her sister called their farm Pender Acres. Baker Farms Holsteins came here from Exeter, New Hampshire. Jerseys were shown by the Luchsingers from Onondaga Hill and the Rich's from Delaware County.

We learned so much from K.C. Sly and Henry Thomas. K.C. was the manager of McDonald Farms. Henry was the herdsman. They came with the

beautiful Guernsey cattle from McDonald Farms. It was a big cattle show at the Cortland County Fair. As we 4-Hers mingled with these folks we picked up helpful information about the handling of dairy cattle.



Raymond DeHart



Marian Potter Kitts

First Cortland County delegates to Club Congress in Chicago -- 1930

My inspiration for 4-H club work stemmed from sister Marian. She was six years older and my idol. As pictured, she and Ray made 4-H history for Cortland County in 1930. Our entire family was excited for her as she took the long train ride to Chicago to attend the 4-H National Club Congress. She received the award for her outstanding work in homemaking.

Ray DeHart was a long time successful farmer and Ayrshire breeder in Cortland County. He and his family were great friends of ours for years and years.

STATE FAIR DAYS

I exhibited White Leghorn poultry at the Fair. That was the egg producing breed. My hen was exhibited at the State Fair. Later on exhibiting poultry ceased at the State Fair because of disease problems.

The experience of trucking the cattle from the Fairgrounds to the State Fair was a real story. Mr. Knapp, the trucker, had one good arm and the other one just had a hook at the elbow. However, he could handle cattle. Us kids rode in the back, with our animals, of the open stake body truck to Syracuse, something that would be unheard of in this day and age.

As 4-Hers we had the opportunity to exhibit at the State Fair, if our animals, or produce was superior quality. I attended as an exhibitor and as a delegate to Camp Pyrke. Delegates to Camp Pyrke were chosen from each county to spend a week at the State Fair. I believe that the selection was made on the basis of contributions to the county 4-H program.

Margaret and I have a picture of the delegation at Camp Pyrke in 1938. It's one of these spread out long pictures. We are all standing or seated on the front steps of Camp Pyrke. At one end of the picture is Margaret Smith, who was a delegate that year from Saratoga County--I was on the other end, a delegate from Cortland County.

We have had much fun about that picture. It was before we ever knew each other and our first opportunity to be in the same picture. Miracles do happen--- later we would be pictured much, much closer together!

Our Busy Helpers 4-H Club had a softball team. In the days of Agent Ralph Higley a 4-H softball league evolved. We played Solon, Virgil, McGraw and the River Valley team. The River Valley team from the Little York--Preble Valley, was the best 4-H softball team in the state. More than once they were champions at the New York State Fair. We never had that quality over here, but we had a lot of fun playing against them. Roger and Russell Coon, Stan Weddle, Gerald Burgett, Max LeFever, Ed Lonergan were some of the River Valley players.

Those were some of my experiences in 4-H and I treasure them. I should thank my parents for the encouragement given us children as we were growing up. We shall never forget and we hope that we are passing some of those ideals on to our grandchildren growing up in the difficult times of today.

THE BOWE FAMILY

This would be a good place to write more about our local 4-H leader, Alfred Bowe and his siblings. He lived on the Bloomfield Farm with John and Margaret Bloomfield. He came from England with his brothers, Joe and Andrew and sister Mary. They were from Workington, England. After we purchased the Bloomfield Farm in 1942, he went to help Frank Wavle on the beautiful O.U. Kellogg Farm near Cortland. That farm was sold and Alfred helped friends, Bob and Cora Webster formerly from Truxton, with their greenhouse in Homer. Later he went back to his homeland, England. Before he left for England, a countywide party by the Cortland Holstein Club was held at the Cortlandville Grange Hall in his honor.

Joe Bowe also worked on the Bloomfield Farm, later for George and Helen Beard. George owned the farm where Eddie and Lori Poole live now. When the Beards sold to Merton and Gertrude Poole and moved to Quaker Basin, Joe came to work for us on the same farm that he worked for years previously for John Bloomfield. Later on Joe went back to England. All this time Joe had a wife and family in England. He would send them money at certain times.

One of my favorite stories about Joe took place on a Christmas morning. He had come in for breakfast after chores and our little Joanne was there, perhaps three or four years old. The children all loved Joe with his white hair and mustache. Joe spoke to Joanne in his very English brogue,

"Did yee see Santy last night"?

Joanne shook her head "No" as she looked up at him.

Joe: *"Well I did".*

Joanne's eyes opened wide with wonder.

Joe: *"I saw him right up back of the heifer barn with his sleigh and his reindeer. A jolly little old fellow with his white whiskers, Yess sireee.*

Here he was and then he took off in a flash".

I'm sure Joanne thought about Joe and 'Santy' Claus most of that Christmas morning.

Joe was getting along in years and I began to wonder what his plans were for the future. One evening he and I were in the kitchen eating popcorn. I asked him, "Joe, have you ever thought about returning to your family in England?" Shortly after that he came to me and said, "Bernard, I'se going".

He, too, had many friends. Margaret and I planned a going away party for him. Soon after, May 3, 1958, Dad and Mother drove Joe to LaGuardia Airport in New York City. He flew to Scotland. When he arrived at his family

home in Workington, England, it was a complete surprise to them as he had not sent word of his coming home. Sad to relate, Joe had little time to enjoy his return. One day he started to cross the highway and was hit by a car. He died soon afterwards. We visited his family in Workington, England in 1980. We met Joe's children, Billie and Mary. They brought out the autograph book that was given to him at his going away party. That party met much to him and his family. He spent over 20 years in this country working on two farms. Alfred, as a bachelor, never had a family. We visited his grave in Workington.

Andrew, a third brother, worked on some farms around Preble. He later married, lived in Nedrow and is buried in the Truxton cemetery. A sister Mary Bowe Young, wife of George, is in the same cemetery. On Andrew's gravestone, is also the name, Joseph Bowe. However, Joe lies in England.

Pictured below are Joe and Alfred Bowe. These quiet, kindly men remain indelible in my memory.



Joe



The Bowe brothers



Alfred



1956--A new 4-H Club in Truxton--Patty Arnold, Bernard Potter (leader), Stuart Young, Louie Sharpe (president), Billy Potter, Bobby Arnold, Linda Scott



1958--4-H agents and leaders celebrate 30 years of 4-H Club work in Cortland County. Ralph Higley, David Fales, Jane Burchell Dever --(leader, baked the cake), Stella Gould Fales, Joe Taylor, Margaret Smith Potter, Richard Brooks--president of 4-H alumni

TIME FOR CHURCH

Church was very much a part of our family life. Dad and Mother and us kids were busy with various church activities. My grandfather Potter was a Universalist minister. Grandpa Potter preached at the Cobblestone Church in Cortland. So my Father was raised Universalist. My Mother was raised a Baptist. The Bean family attended the First Baptist Church of Cortland. When Dad and Mother moved to Truxton the Protestant church was the Methodist and so we all became Methodists. The Methodist church has been a cornerstone of our lives, even at the present time. I'll write about our youth days first then some about our church

YOUTH GROUPS

In my day the Junior League and the Epworth League, were the clubs or organizations for the young people of the church. The minister whom I remember as being most respected at that period in our lives was Rev. Clytus Mowry and his wife Mary. She was the daughter of a Methodist missionary in China. Clytus was a farm boy from Apulia. How they became acquainted I'm not sure, but anyway they were a terrific couple, and were fine examples for us young folks to follow.

During my high school years we belonged to the Epworth League. Some young folks in our group were Lloyd Holdrege, Serena Porter, John Feeter, Rosalia French, Thelma Vincent, Christine and Carlton Woodward, Virginia Root, the Robbins brothers, myself and others. Many of the same people that we palled with in school. There wasn't the competition from outside activities as there is today, so it seemed only natural that we'd get together with our friends from the church. We tried to show our faith and were always helped by Clytus and Mary Mowry's guidance.



*Rev. Clytus and Mary Mowry
Cazenovia Institute--1938*



*John Feeter --- Bernard Potter
Best friends as kids--picture--circa 1988*

PREACHERS IN THE PULPIT

The following are some of the preachers who have served our Truxton Methodist Church. Baden Mudge was pastor about the time Dad and Mother moved here in 1920. He married John Feeter Sr.'s sister, Marian Feeter Mudge. We became well acquainted with Baden over the years as he returned to see the Feeter family who were our good friends. The first minister family I really remember was Paul and Mrs. Eberly. Their son, Robert, has been a highly respected physician in Cortland.

Rev. & Mrs. J. Wayne Hunter were here when I was in the 5th grade and 7th grades. In 1932 Mrs. Hunter gave me a bible for perfect attendance at Junior League. Two of their children I do remember well, Harold and Naomi. Naomi was a very pretty girl. Years later we heard that she died of leukemia following her marriage. Sad. Harold became a medical doctor. Later a son, Jack, was born to this family

After the Hunters, Rev. Ernest Devine was our minister. I recall his children as daughter Clarice, her older sister Mabel, a brother Frank and another brother. Rev. Devine was one of our Scout leaders.

Clytus and Mary Mowry. Mary was a missionary's daughter. I wasn't baptized as a little kid and therefore could not join the church. Clytus baptized me on a Sunday afternoon at the church by myself because I was too shy to go before the congregation. Later I joined the church when Clytus was still our pastor. Clytus was a handsome man, over six feet tall. In a neighborly conversation I heard Anna Feeter say, "He doesn't need to preach, I could just sit in the church pew and gaze at him"! In February of this year, 1998, Margaret and I visited Clytus and Mary in their retirement home in Lakeland, Florida. Now in their eighties, they are both in excellent health and Mary is just as pretty as I remember her when I was a teenager. Clytus still plays nine holes of golf each week. (Since the above writing I have learned that Clytus is now in nursing care in Lakeland).

We were in high school and I remember going to the Cazenovia Institute. That was at the Cazenovia Seminary (now College) where teenagers came and spent a week of learning and fun. It was a church camp like Casowasco is today.

At the institute I became a friend of Paul Illick. Paul was born in China. His father was a missionary, later after returning he became a professor at Syracuse University. I lost track of him, but then he came to Cornell and we became reacquainted. He wanted to play soccer, but had no money for soccer shoes. I loaned him some at that time. He was a fine fellow-- I'd like to know where Paul Illick is today.

Clytus Mowry owned a Willis Overland rumble seat car. John Feeter and I were riding in the rumble seat on our way to Cazenovia Institute. On Route 20 going down the hill to the Delphi Road, Clytus must have put it in free wheeling. It seemed like it was going 100 miles an hour, anyway we got a thrill out of it and survived.

Later Rev. John and Thelma Lewein came to Truxton and became our dear friends. John and Thelma invited Margaret and me for dinner at the parsonage soon after we were engaged in the spring of 1944. He was here at the time I got out of college. They moved in the summer of 1944. I have more to say about John Lewein when recalling the burning of our church.

Leonard and Mary Alice Hackney, also great friends, came here in 1944. Margaret and I were just married. Leonard, Mary Alice, Margaret and I played cards many times at the parsonage and at our house. Leonard's parents immigrated from England via Canada to settle in Erieville, N.Y. where they were farmers. Leonard later was Deputy Grand Master of the Masons and was also Chaplain for the State Grange. How fortunate we were to have them as our church leaders in Truxton. In fact we thought so much of them that the community raised enough money so he could buy a new car!

Frank and Jean Congdon were one of the last pastor couples to live in the brick parsonage in Truxton. Jean had been in nursing and Frank worked for Black-Clauson in Fulton for a number of years. After being a very active layman, he decided to go into the ministry. He and Jean were with us a number of years. They had three children. Howie, their son, helped us on the farm and then went on to college. Howie survived a tipped over tractor accident on the farm, which was a miracle. He had hauled a load of manure up into the meadow above Route 13. We were backing up to the steep bank overlooking the road to spread where we could not drive. The Ford tractor did not have good brakes. The heavy spreader pulled the tractor back down the hill and the tractor flipped. Howie crawled out with only a scratch on his head

and some cracked ribs. We really believe the Lord was looking after him.

Rev. LeRoy and Helen Schultz, Rev. Tom and Bodwin Kline, Rev. Milton and Mildred Sweet, Rev. Randy and Carol Ross pastored our church. Other pastors were here for brief periods, but Bob and Alice McCune occupy special place in our hearts. Elsewhere I have a letter chapter about them.

For ten years Clara and Ralph Faulkner ministered to us. Truxton-East Homer was Ralph's first charge at close to fifty years of age. He was a dairy farmer and had little or no church leanings. By his own words he says that his life and marriage were in jeopardy. One evening as he was walking from his cow barn to the house, he was struck by a "great power". He fell on his knees, gave himself to the Lord at that moment. That is really being "born again". Clara was his strength. He sold his farm, cattle, entered Community College and studied and later became ordained. Clara was a professional with the Girl Scouts. She is a beautiful singer. Ralph and I went to the State Fair several times. He loved cattle and we watched the judging. We had some great times, other than being our minister. From Truxton, Ralph moved to Oneida church and is now retired living in Virginia. Margaret and I were thrilled that he and Clara drove from Virginia to attend our golden wedding party. We have had the pleasure of visiting them in Charlottesville.

Sandy McGrady, our first lady pastor, was here for six years. She has tremendous talent. She left here to preach in the Deansboro and Oriskany Falls churches. Pastor Nora Jerzak followed Rev Sabin who was here for one year. She also came to the ministry after years of lay experience. Her husband Ed is an excellent lay speaker and an EMT. In June 2001 she became pastor in Ogdensburg.

Pastor Norma Fellows and her husband Pastor Art Fellows moved into our parsonage July 1, 2001. She is serving East Homer-Truxton; he, Cuyler-South Otselec. She brings a bible based worship experience to our congregation. We eagerly welcomed them and look forward to their being members of our valley community for years to come.

All of these pastors we've mentioned have been important in our lives and the church which has stood us many years. We've had our highs and lows as far as the activity in the church, but the Truxton United Methodist Church has continued. We hope we've been a part of helping it continue. The spouses of our pastors were much a part of the ministry. Thelma and John Lewein returned for the 150th anniversary of the East Homer church along with Randy, Bob and Alice and Ralph and Clara.

The parsonage, when I was a kid, was where Wallace Seamans lives on

Correction

Page 75, *A Country Farm Boy Remembers*, Bernard W. Potter, 2001.

Add this line at the top of the page:

Main street in Truxton. Later we bought the brick house where Steve and Pat

Thames now live which was the parsonage for a number of years. Later on, Otis Young Sr. gave money for a parsonage which was built in East Homer. The moving of the parsonage to East Homer has left a void in our Truxton community which, in my mind, has never been filled.

TRUXTON CHURCH BUILT IN 1818

First Used By Presbyterians But
By Methodist Since 1879

FINE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

Many Visitors Each Year to In-
spect Colonial Design

By Rev. Clytus F. Mowry

The first sermon was preached in Truxton in 1801. The church was organized as a Presbyterian congregation on October 11, 1811, with the following members: Jonathan Severance, Elizabeth Severance, Joseph Harrington, Ann Harrington, Jeremiah Wicks, Jane Wicks, Nathaniel E. James, Calvin Putnam, Nancy Pierce, Lois Hooker, Jeremiah Taggart, Mehmetibel Forbes, Angelis VanNess, Ann Hitchcock, Rhoda Trowbridge, Patty Hedges, Patty Smith, Desire March, Betty James, Hugh Stewart, Anna Stewart.

The first meetings were held in

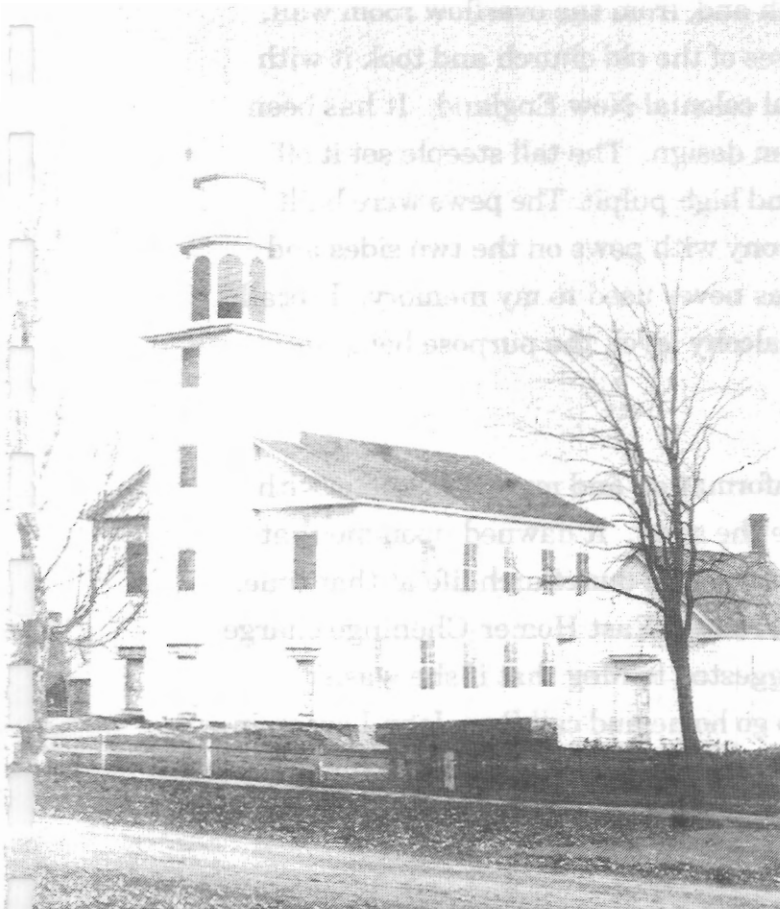
the little white schoolhouse which is the present residence of Mr. and Mrs. Guy Hollenbeck. Work was begun on the present building in 1818 and it was completed in 1821. The architecture of the church edifice was patterned to a very large degree after a plan designed by Sir Christopher Wren. Joel Atkins of Plymouth, Madison County, was the architect and builder. It was dedicated to the service of the Lord in the following January. The dedicatory sermon was preached by Rev. John Keep of Homer, N. Y., and music was furnished by a group of singers led by Daniel Clerk of Manlius, N. Y. Land for the building was given by Dr. John Miller.

The little chapel to the right of the church was built in 1859 and is used for suppers, socials and other purposes.

In the early days of the church history two large stoves were used for heating, but about 1895, through the efforts of A. H. Bryant, and the cooperation of other workers, a furnace was installed. The large chandelier was a gift of Mr. Bryant. When electricity was available it was utilized by wiring in 1927.

In 1879, through the work of Rev. William H. York, the pastor at East Homer, Methodist services were held. Since that time the Methodist denomination has used the building. Since 1879, 26 men have been pastors of the church.

Many people visit the church each year as it is one of the beautiful expressions of the church architecture of the colonial era.



Truxton Methodist Church and Session Hall

OUR BEAUTIFUL CHURCH BURNS

When Margaret and I arose on the 21st of December 1992, there was a light covering of new fallen snow. Soon it dawned on me that this is the shortest day of the year. I always look forward to this day, not because it is the first day of winter, but because it is the first day of more daylight and an eventual spring.

As we were eating our oatmeal, the telephone rang. It was from Meg at the Cortland Standard. She had been assigned to search out a story on the fire that destroyed our church on Christmas Sunday, December 20, 1942. Skip Chapman, news editor, had directed her to me. Probably he thought I was the most elderly person in Truxton! I assured Meg that I was very interested and had some of the history. I would stop in the Standard about 11 and we could visit. That was fine with her. Margaret and I talked with Doris Lockwood, dug out a scrapbook, a church cookbook, some dedication programs and off I went to Cortland.

On the way I stopped at the church and, from the overflow room wall, lifted the frame containing several pictures of the old church and took it with me. The structure was what I call typical colonial New England. It has been mentioned that it was a Christopher Wren design. The tall steeple set it off. The interior featured a raised choir loft and high pulpit. The pews were built with doors at the ends. There was a balcony with pews on the two sides and the end facing the pulpit. The balcony was never used to my memory. I recall that a temporary ceiling was placed at balcony level, the purpose being to conserve heat.

After going through the printed information and my recollections with me, Meg had enough information to write the story. It dawned upon me that there was a living person who was a key player in our church life at that time. Rev. John Lewien was our pastor of the Truxton-East Homer-Chenango charge of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I suggested to Meg that if she wasn't working on a deadline that I would like to go home and call Rev. John Lewien in Baldwinsville and get from him a first hand accounting of that tragic fire. She agreed. I returned home and got on the phone with John and his wife, Thelma, who resided in a retirement complex in B'ville.

John, at 88 years, had not lost any of his mental sharpness. He shared with me his vivid memories. These are very close to John's words as we talked on the telephone.

"It was a bitter cold morning of about a minus 25 degrees. In fact it was so cold in the church that I stood on the register of that pipeless hot air furnace, with my overcoat on, as I led the worship that Sunday morning. The Christmas Cantata was to be sung that evening in the church and I told the janitor that we sure needed it warmed up by evening. I really didn't wish him to overdo it!

After noon I was at Cheningo for their service and someone came in during the service and excitedly told me that a church in Cortland was burning. I finished our worship and proceeded back toward Truxton, all the time wondering why I was told about a fire in Cortland. As I neared the village, I could see smoke. There were so many cars around that I had to park by Fred Applegate's barbershop (where the post office is today) and run, still not knowing where the smoke was coming from. As I ran around the corner by the old hotel I saw the source. I threw my hands in the air and cried, "It's our Church".

Prior to my arrival, Jean Emery, choir director, who had entered the church for choir robes and music, discovered the smoke. She hurried to the parsonage and told Thelma. She and Thelma went to Karl Muller's house, across from the Church. Karl took one look outside and shouted "call the fire department". The fire truck went down back, thinking the smoke was coming from the cellar. The truck got stuck in the snow and had to be pulled out. By that time the whole interior was ablaze. Thelma saw the windows blow out, as she was with Carl and Hazel Vincent (who also lived across the street). I saw the steeple fall on the Session Hall and immediately that building started burning.

Next morning Emmett O'Donnell called me and said new flames had started. I went over and timbers in the cellar had flared. We then pushed in some of the timbers that laid on the ground and they also burned.

It was still terribly cold and when I walked home I had frost on face. It started melting and running down my cheeks like tears. Little Dawn, who was six years old, grabbed on to me and said, "Don't cry, Daddy, we'll get some money and build you a new Church". I also recall that Billy Feeter, who was about 11 years old, gave me his dollar bill that he had received for Christmas. That was the first gift to rebuild our Church.

In the front of the church was a metal penny box. That box was found later with coins all molded together. The church silverware, used for suppers, was in the session hall. That silver was found after the fire and was in usable shape. The water and ice had kept it cool."

Those are John Lewien's thoughts on December 21, 1992, fifty years after this tragic loss. As John was telling me, over the phone, about little

Dawn's offer, he began crying. I'm sure it was a cry of joy and pride. How true the scripture, "and a child shall lead them", as I listened to Rev. John Lewein recall his daughter Dawn's promise and Billy's gift.

TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1943

Truxton Church Goal for Building Set at \$20,000

TRUXTON.—Goal for the coming campaign fund for the erection of a new Methodist church at Truxton will be \$20,000, it was announced Monday by Rev. John W. Lewein, pastor and chairman of the building committee.

The Truxton church was destroyed by fire shortly before the Christmas season as a result of an overheated furnace which caused an explosion.

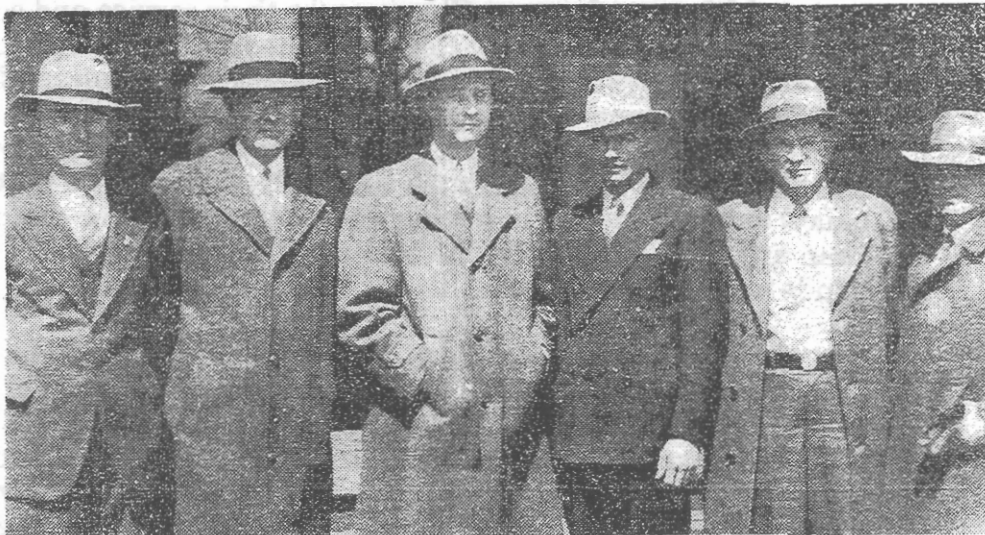
Members chosen for the building committee besides the pastor are: R. E. Webster, R. Douglas MacPherson, Karl P. Muller, Dr. W. H. Potter, E. I. Woodward with Clarence Donley acting as consultant.

Sunday afternoon the members of the building committee were in Cortland viewing the comparatively new Memorial Baptist church in Tompkins st. This stop was one of three the committee visited Sunday in the effort to acquaint themselves with the best features of the churches more nearly within the range of their \$20,000 building goal.

This goal, it was pointed out, is for an equipped church. In other words the cost of the equipment is figured into the total for the church campaign.

After looking over the Memorial Baptist church in this city the committee next visited the new Presbyterian church in Dryden before going on to their final visit of the day in Smithville Flats. Elbert M. Conover of New York city, consulting architect, is to meet soon with the building committee to talk over features of the proposed new church.

Church Building Committee at Truxton



Members of the building committee for the proposed new Methodist church, Truxton: Left to right, Clarence Donley, consultant; R. E. Webster, Rev. John Lewien, pastor; R. Douglas MacPherson, Karl P. Muller and Dr. W. H. Potter. (E. I. Woodward was not present).



Truxton Methodist Church and Session Hall burning--December 21, 1942

SEATS AND SIDEWALKS

Otis Young married Hazel Henry from East Homer. Brother George married Mary Bowe, who came to The United States from England with her brothers, Alfred, Joe and Andrew. Sons and daughters from these partnerships attended our school and we were all great friends. Both families were farmers.

In our sanctuary is a plaque which reads, "The Pews in this Sanctuary are Dedicated to the Glory of God in Memory of Fannie E. Young". Fannie Young, whom I never knew, was the mother to Otis and George Young.

It seems at this point the similarities went in different directions. Otis and family prospered and George's family struggled. The reasons are not the point for this story.

Rev. Leonard Hackney and I visited Otis and Hazel at their East Homer farm home. We talked about the physical needs of the new church--one of those being the pews. As I recall, the pews would cost about \$3000. Very quickly Otis said that his family would like to give the seats. Otis and Hazel were strong supporters of the East Homer and Truxton churches.

George Young and family had lesser connection with our church, although he felt that the Truxton church was important to the community. I guess he would be called a nominal Protestant.

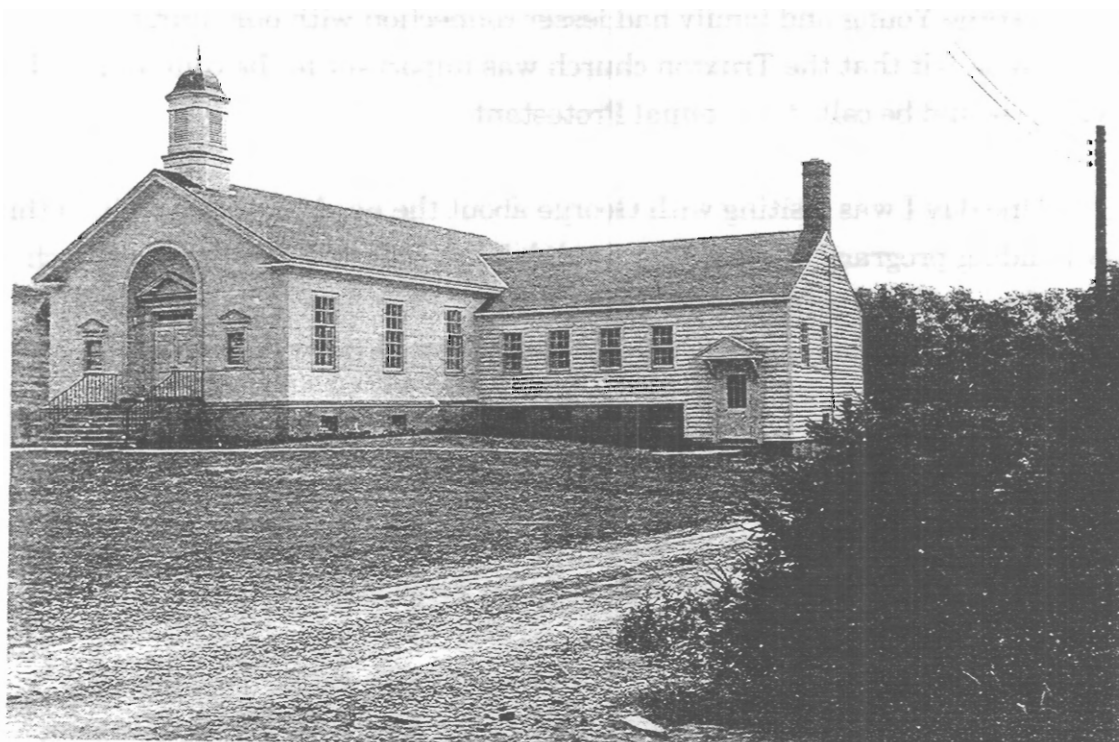
One day I was visiting with George about the needs of the church, in this new building program. I noted that we didn't have any funding for the church sidewalks. George said he would think about it. Now George had personal difficulties and I'm sure money was not easy to come by.

Nevertheless, in a very short time I returned to George, as he had requested, to hear his decision. George had made up his mind and quickly said, "Bernard, if they are going to sit on Otis's seats while they're worshipping, they're going to walk on my sidewalks as they come to worship"!

George was true to his word--he funded the sidewalks. I'm sure God remembers him for his generosity even in his troubles. The Young brothers, Otis and George, are among the many who helped rebuild our church.



*Rev. Leonard Hackney with trustees--viewing plans for our new church.
l-r--- Rev. Hackney, Walter Arnold, Charles Murray, Karl Muller,
Mildred Lockwood, George Beard, Dr.W.H. Potter*



*Our new church before the brick siding. It was a period of time before we
had money enough. Funds raised from steak dinners paid for the siding.*

ALICE and BOB MC CUNE

The following lengthy letters were directed to Bob and Alice McCune at separate times. These words only scratch the surface of our love for these two special friends. Bob is now known as Pastor Emeritus of the East Homer and Truxton United Methodist Churches.

May 2, 1974

Dear Bob, Alice and Family,

Time has flown since that damp morning when we first met. You, Bob, were blowing up a tire on your car at Briggs' Garage in Truxton. Charlie Murray drove up at the same time as he was coming from the milk station and the three of us had a fine get acquainted visit.

That arrival and shaking of hands ushered in an era of good fortune, not only for our family, but for literally thousands who have felt the touch of your forthrightness, sincerity, friendship and faithfulness--in happiness and adversity, as you and Alice pursued your commitments to Christ.

We well remember the pleasures of meeting Grandmas and Grandpas Romig and McCune and feeling the pride they exhibited for their family. Mr. Romig steered a fine used camera our way, with which most of our picture treasures were captured.

Do you remember borrowing our truck which you and Dad McCune took to the sawmill and brought back loads of slab wood which helped cut down fuel costs in the high ceiling hard to heat brick parsonage?

For a boy from Pittsburgh, you became very agricultural. When we still housed cows in stanchions you used our raw milk to be pasteurized at home. There were many visits in our barn. While I milked, you squatted on the stable floor. Boy, we sure covered a multitude of issues and problems. We, with our vast storehouses of wisdom, solved them all and were ready to take on more!

One issue that evaded resolution was your liberal oriented professors' teachings at Boston University and my more conservative philosophy as nurtured by the basic tenets of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Needless to say, the extremes of both thought they were following God's principles for His creatures.

One day your understanding of animal husbandry increased dramatically when you observed, as you drove out of East Homer, Gerald Young milking "a dead cow"! I assured you that every thing you saw appeared true except there must be an over-sight in your observation of the cow being "dead". I told you that I would check the cow. The answer was that the cow was temporarily paralyzed from what we call "milk fever" and had chosen that spot by the highway to have the attack. Gerald was only drawing from the

udder a part of the accumulated milk. Bob, I understood that the cow was "born again" and lived a long and productive life.

Bob, because of a snowstorm, you nearly neglected Alice in her hour of need before Jimmy was born. It was a privilege for me to be standing by the parsonage late in the evening in case she needed to proceed immediately to the hospital. True to the end, you arrived in the nick of time to carry out your fatherly responsibilities.

I recall your interest in restoring the old English Austin and especially the hand turn signals which appeared from the roof. You and Ray Curtis struck up some sort of an acquaintance in this venture.

Your ministry in our Tioughniogia Valley was productive. Not only did you deliver meaningful sermons and services, you were behind other developments. It was with your guidance that Released Time Religious Education took "wings". Margaret felt privileged to be your aid in that program. The Lord's Acre project of the Men's Club was successfully carried out. Lenten services with guest preachers continued to highlight in our parish. We remember with thanks the quartet of Marcia and Ernie Cady, Alice and you at some of the special services. The MYF flourished with active youth and plenty of participation at Casowasco.

Alice, through your teaching of piano and flute to Patty, Bill and Joanne, you have left in us our eternal gratitude and love. It was you who urged us to encourage Patty to learn the pipe organ. The results are with us now. Joanne, then in junior high, started on the flute. Your teaching and her practicing uncovered a remarkable talent for which we are also grateful.

Not all the happenings were the "happy" type. We led the opposition to the Bingo Law in our town. To some, you will always be remembered as "Bingo Bob". I recall the sensitive issue of Catholicism vs. Protestantism. One time, referring to a priest, the comment was made that he should be called Reverend or Pastor, as he's not my "Father". Your energy and enthusiasm brought many new members into our churches....not always did the volume of names reciprocate by implementing their vows.

I recall these experiences for a purpose. The result was growth, maturity, understanding and willingness to adjust, and a broader, deeper commitment that should be a part of all of us as we try to fulfill God's purpose. You achieved this with dignity and with it all, gained a well deserved respect from all of your associates.

To illustrate, I well remember that it was you, as a member of the Cortland County Council of Churches, who initiated a resolution urging the development of a plan to engage in dialogue with local Catholic Churches to implement what today is known as ecumenism. Your proposal has gone a long way down the road to bring Christians of different theologies together.

Following your pastorate at Homer Avenue you again reached a need as chaplain to the State Teacher's students through the Council of Churches. Your transfer to Elmira left a void in our community which could only be filled by a deeper understanding of your service. Later we received the glad tidings of

your returning to be our District Superintendent. Your concern for us in this parish had never left. We hope in some small way to have reciprocated.

Margaret, as President of the District United Methodist Women, has served the post with more confidence because of your being available for guidance. She relates that most recent example of your "devotion to duty". Only last Wednesday you mounted your bicycle, pedaled across Syracuse with a film that was to be a key part of the UMW meeting, and arrived in time for the program to go on without a hitch.

A final happy experience happened last summer when you and Bishop Yaekel were part of the County Cluster Service in Cortland First Methodist. Margaret thought it would be nice, if you, the Bishop, Randy Ross and your families would come out to the farm and enjoy a swim in our pool with friends. So it happened and what fun. You and the Bishop in the water and with Randy's feet soaking, we decided that indeed the pool was now filled with "holy water"! Janet and Ernie Young thought so much of it that they took a jar full home!

As you return to your parish ministry, we thank you for placing before us a Christian example for life. We feel that somewhere down the road, that you will become one of our Bishops, and when that time comes, your friends in Cortland County will say the loudest, "AMEN".

Sincerely,
Margaret and Bernie

(letter from Margaret to Alice and Bob)

August, 1994

Just read Bernard's 1974 words to you, Alice and Bob. Of course I remember those, or most of those incidents, but I have other memories as well. I remember being a counselor at a Casowasco camp when you were the Directors - the wonderful experience of working with the youth in a truly Christian environment.

I also have fond memories of helping with a MYF group. The Maxson boys, Alice Heath, Georgienna Murray are some of the group that have always been good friends. Remember going to a retreat at Casowasco with the group and finding when I arrived that I had forgotten my pjs. The girls got a big kick out of my sleeping in a slip!

Syncopation was a favorite game we played after many of the stimulating discussions that the groups had. Georgienna and I always laugh about what is middle age? She expressed it as around 35. That was about my age at the time. She in time reached that age and has gone far beyond!

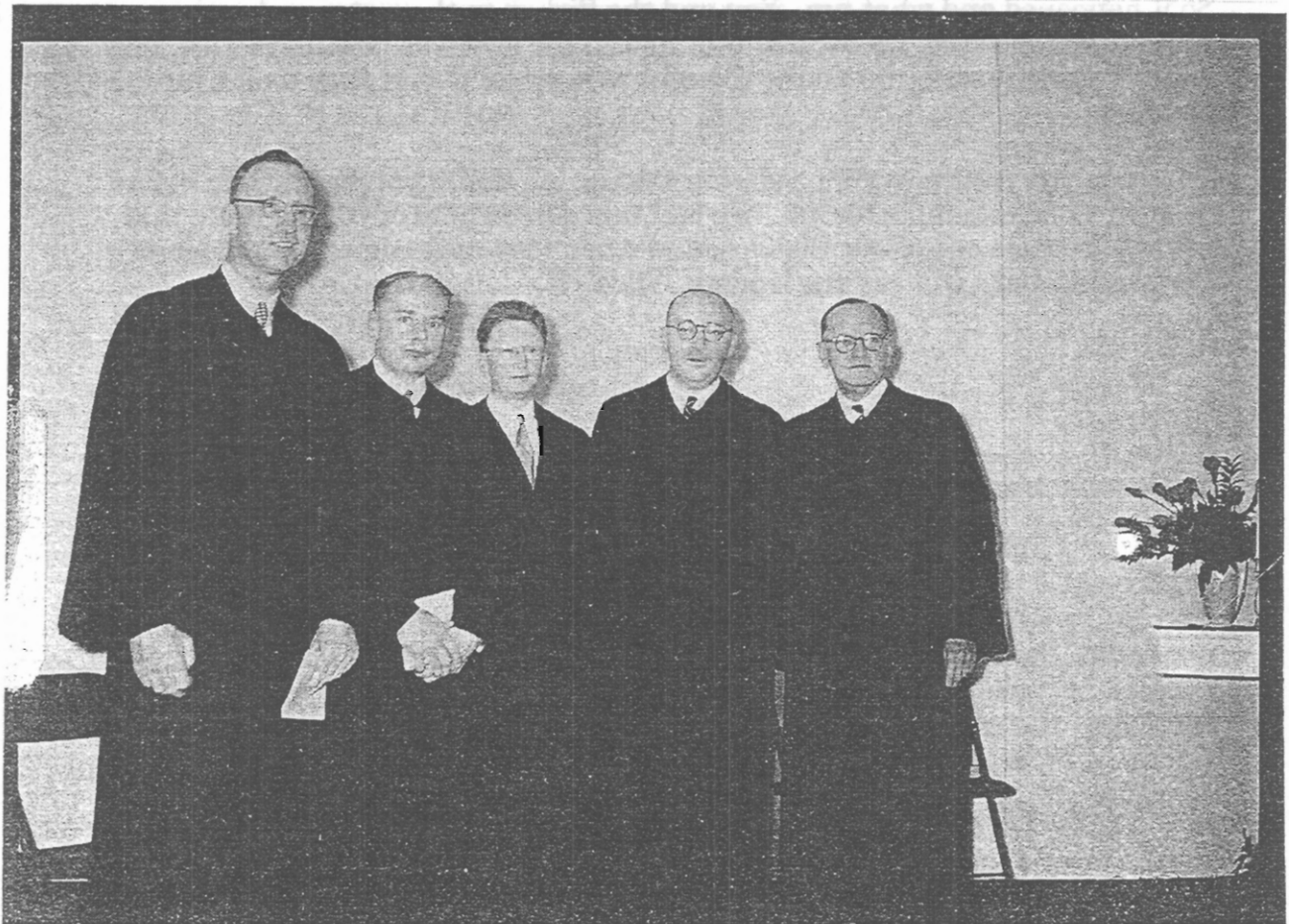
Bernard mentioned Released Time. That was a challenge for me. I learned more than they did, I am sure. One of the students at that time recently said to me that he thought he gave me a hard time. I assured him that I didn't remember it that way.

Also remember the monthly fellowship meals that we had on the first Thursday; also the Mission studies that ran for several evenings and included classes for all ages. We were a busy church with a huge debt for our new building.

With sincere thanks,
Margaret and Bernard

Edited 8-8-94

It's always a thrill for us to recall the "McCunes period" in our lives. We have watched this young couple grow to be lofty messengers for Jesus Christ. They are now enjoying a well earned retirement. God bless them.



*Formal Opening of the new Truxton Methodist Church--October 5, 1952
Reverends: John Lewein, Leonard Hackney--pastor, Alfred Taylor--council of
churches, Warren Odom--district supt, W. Earl Ledden--bishop*

MILLER GRANGE -- A COMMUNITY LEADER

In our lives, day to day activities usually follow a routine and this routine rarely gets upset except for vacations, accidents, illness and the like. Such was the history of our Methodist church. Sunday school followed by church service, set special services and and suppers, all following a pattern. When the tragic fire, on Christmas Sunday 1942, occurred which destroyed our beautiful colonial edifice and session hall, some of this changed in our church routine.

Miller Grange #442 quickly offered its first floor hall for church services. Grange meetings were moved to the upstairs in the Grange hall. Rev. John Lewein was our preacher at that time and he was followed by Rev. Leonard Hackney. Leonard became master of the Grange. In fact, as years went by Leonard served in many capacities in the state Grange, finishing as State Grange Chaplain. Many church members were also active in the Grange.

Previously the upstairs of the Grange Hall had been used for first grade classes for the expanded centralized Truxton Central School. The Home Bureau had its meetings upstairs as well as the Truxton Busy Helpers 4-H club. So you can understand that this Hall, formerly a drug store, was a very important center for community activity in our rural hamlet. I remember when a community fair was held upstairs. All sorts of crafts, baked and canning goods and even chickens were displayed at this event. I believe it was organized by Don Huddleston, ag teacher.

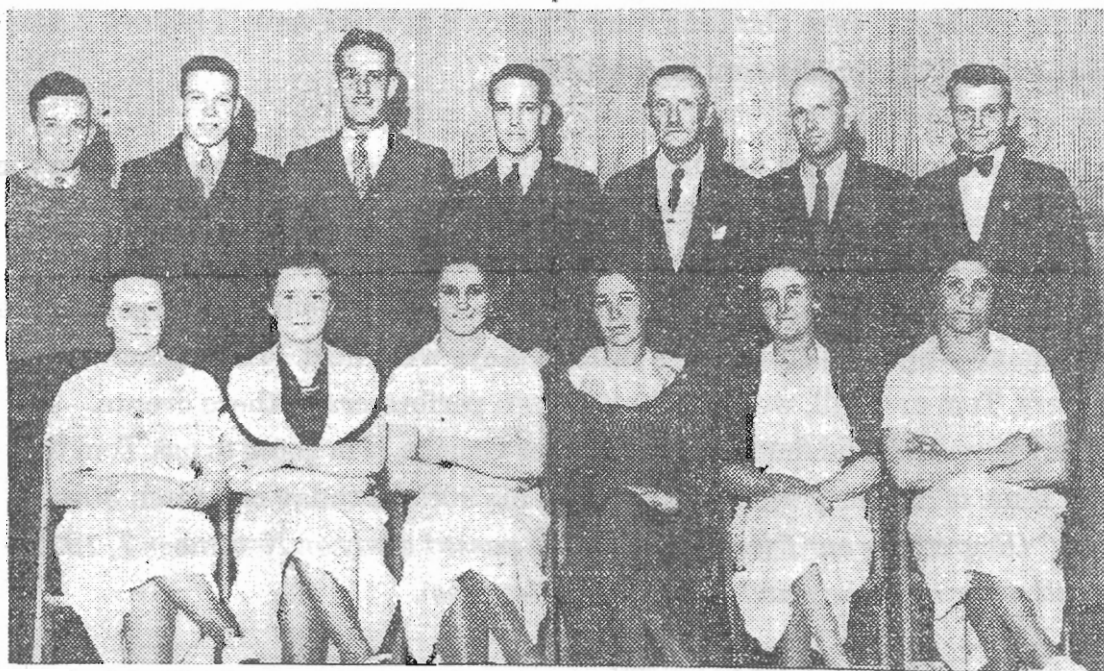
As I remember the building, as a small boy, there were two rooms on the main floor. A partition was removed to make the one room. I also remember the original Truxton Central School orchestra having a concert in the hall. I'm trying to think of the conductor's name (1998-- now I have it, Mr. Gage). There was a small stage and often times skits or plays were held. The Turner brothers, Tom and Bill, were our best known performers at these events. The Turners were the solid foundation for Miller Grange. I'm going to ask Tom to recall some of his early activities. He had his 90th birthday on March 30th.

(Regretfully our friend Tom Turner passed away on November 7, 1995. We will never have the privilege of his recollections).



Miller Grange 442 Drill Team circa 1941:----- Marian Applebee---Mary Moore---Marcia Hildreth
 Alfred Bowe, Thomas Turner, Harry Parker, Albert Park, John Lewein, Walter Arnold,
 Robert Park, Clarence Donley, William Turner
 Betty Comerford, Eloise Parker, Marion Law, Elizabeth White, Edith Sutton, Ada Turner

Officers of Miller Grange 442, Truxton JUNE 1935



Seated, Miss Louise Baldwin, lecturer; Miss Alda Park, flora; Miss Camilla Sutton, cares; Mrs. Mary Moore, secretary; Mrs. W. H. Potter, pianist; Miss Edith Sutton, lady assistant steward. Standing, Carlton Potter, gatekeeper; Robert Moore, assistant steward; E. G. Roberts, Jr., overseer; LuVern Walker, master; Bert Freeman, chaplain; Dr. W. H. Potter and Thomas Turner, members of executive committee.

WORLD WAR II

BLOOMFIELD FARM PURCHASED--CORNELL COMPLETED

The Bloomfield Farm situated across the river valley, to the west from our home farm, was to be sold. To get the setting, I will provide some background. At John Bloomfield's death his heirs were five nieces and nephews. None of them wanted the farm and to settle the estate, a complete dispersal was on Nov. 9 & 10, 1942. Margaret, his wife, had predeceased him.

In my mind the farm which dad purchased, November 9, 1942, will always be the "Bloomfield Farm". John Bloomfield and Margaret O'Brien Bloomfield were the "salt of the earth". They loved children but had none of their own. In her later years Margaret became blind--consequently no changes were made in her house so she could continue to do her housework. John Bloomfield was fortunate to have Alfred Bowe as his herdsman and manager. I write about Alfred later.

My Professor of Farm Management, Stanley W. Warren, at Cornell had often taken his class on field trips to the John Bloomfield farm in Truxton. He used it as an example study project for his students. I had taken his Farm Appraisal and Farm Management courses. Stan knew that our home farm was adjacent to the farm to be sold. So he invited me, Jerry Bowne and John Turrel, all students and friends, to accompany him to the auction.

Upon arriving at the farm, the first person I remember seeing was my father. He wanted to speak to me. We walked over by the shed at the rear of the house. When he asked me if I would like to buy the farm, my head filled with high expectations. Dad had never previously talked with me about this possibility. With the usual formality the auction was called to order. The people were all seated in the tent which was set up between the driveways in front of the barn and beside the house. R. Austin Backus was the auctioneer and sales manager. Mr. Backus was the auctioneer of choice for most of the registered Holstein dispersals in the northeast. We sat on the left side.

Bids were taken. Dad would bid and then Mr. Otis Young, seated on the right side, would bid. Mr. Young and Dad were good friends. Also Mr. Young was a very successful farmer. He and Mrs. Young were the parents of six sons and a daughter. He owned more than one farm at that time and would and could purchase more for his family. It was later learned that, early in the morning,

he had walked the entire perimeter of the Bloomfield farm. As the spirited bidding reached \$13,700, Mr. Young abruptly stopped. After some calling for other bidders and urging Mr. Young to bid again to no avail, Mr. Backus struck off the farm to Dad at that final bid of \$13,700.

Why did Mr. Young stop bidding? He had the resources and the price was right. Some time later, Prof. Warren had a class at the Young farm. Prof. Warren relates this story to me and it answers the question posed above.

Prof. Warren: "Mr. Young, why didn't you buy the Bloomfield farm for your sons to go into farming."

Mr. Young: "There will be other farms. If Bernard wanted to go into farming I didn't want to stand in the way to keep this fine young man from getting started."

Mr. Young was an astute and successful business man. He cared for young folks. Especially his neighbors and friends. He could have continued his bidding, resources were not a question. He cared enough to help this one receive a start as a farmer. His generosity is written in my other writings in this reminiscing. The Young and Potter families continue to be close friends to this day, nearly sixty years later.



*Teacher and Farmer --forever Friends
Prof. Stanley W. Warren and Bernard W. Potter--1986
I'm holding picture of Bloomfield farm from 1876 Cortland County Atlas*

To continue this saga of my exciting life, read on---The following is a letter which I wrote to my family on Thursday, 11-12-42 three days following the purchase of the Bloomfield farm on Monday. I was a senior at Cornell. It was found in some of the memorabilia my parents saved. ----

Thursday Evening

Dear Mother, Dad, Willard & all,

I am now in Willard-Straight Theatre getting ready to rehearse for the play. It's taking more time than I ever anticipated, but guess I'll be able to weather it. It goes on next Friday & Sat; then 3 times after that.

Last night I was very glad to be able to conduct the most successful Round-Up Club Smoker in years. Don't mind if pat myself on the back. Have gotten H. E. Babcock to speak at our A.G.R. smoker next Wed. evening. This smoker is for the Profs as well as the fellows---the Profs really jump at the chance to hear Babcock. I'm going down tomorrow and meet him. --Ought to be a good experience.

You don't know how good I've felt since Monday. I might not have mentioned it before, but ever since I knew anything about a farm, I've want to work the Bloomfield Farm. It also makes me feel good to know that you've got enough confidence in me to take on the farm. I realize that it will be tough but I'm sure that we'll be able to work out of it.

I really made a mess of things by not taking those extra hours, but I believe there is a way I can get the other hours and still be home next term. Of course if I have to come before this term is over, it wouldn't make any difference anyway.

I'm just home at 11:45. If I don't bust out it'll be a wonder.

I haven't read anything about the meeting in Utica, Mother, but suppose everything turned out all right.

Well, I've got to do a little studying then go to bed. Please write if you get time.

Love,
Bernard

To finish the story, read on.-- I was in my seventh term at Cornell. I needed 5 hours college credit to graduate. World War II was on, farmers were short of help and the war effort needed farmers to produce food. Prof. E.S. Savage, chairman of Animal Husbandry, was my advisor. I sat down with Prof. Savage and we visited about my "dilemma". In short, my Dad needed me on the farms and I wanted to receive my degree.

Prof. Savage was a very understanding gentleman. He proposed that I do a research project in the dairy herd at Cornell. I would research 25 clock hours for each hour of University credit received. He made this plan to Prof. John Hertel in administration and was given approval. My Christmas vacation was spent at Cornell researching for Prof. Savage. With 125 hours finished I received the five hours university credit at a grade of 85! and with it the awarding of the B.S. I still have a copy of my research. I returned full time to the farms in January 1943.

This research project also had a light touch. Prof. Ed. S. Harrison, Savage's son-in-law and outstanding in dairy cattle management, later made this comment to me. "Bernard, I'm very pleased that you received this credit but why couldn't the "old man" have you research something we could use"!

Mr. J.P. Hertel's confirmation letter follows on next page ---



The Bloomfield farmstead before building changes---c1945.

NEW YORK STATE COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

ITHACA, NEW YORK

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OF ADMISSIONS
J. P. HERTEL, IN CHARGE
OF STUDENT ADVISING
H. S. TYLER, IN CHARGE
OF GUIDANCE AND PLACEMENT

February 18, 1943

Mr. Bernard W. Potter
Truxton
New York

Dear Mr. Potter:

This is to confirm our conversation several weeks ago in which I told you that your petition to register for five hours of credit last term in Animal Husbandry 200 has been approved.

The Petitions Committee has also given permission for you to graduate with seven terms of residence instead of the eight ordinarily required.

I suppose by this time you are up to your neck in farming. I should like to take this opportunity to wish you success.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary

JPH:JP
CY:GDH

FARMER--SCHOOL TEACHER

'Twas 1943, World War II, Rationing--sugar---tires--fuel--new farm machinery nonexistent and more. Teachers of agriculture had been called to Serve in the Armed Forces. The agricultural training at home was in trouble. Soldiers need food. That was the situation in many places and so it was in Truxton in August 1943.

I had graduated from Cornell in January 1943 and was working with Dad and Mother on the farms. I was just 21 years old. Dad had purchased the Bloomfield Farm in November 1942. Miss Marian Hartnett the Principal of our Truxton Central School called me to come to her office. Miss Hartnett had been my principal and sometimes teacher when I was in High School. She was a role model for any youngster.

Miss Hartnett very quickly came to the point, "If we are going to keep the Agriculture Department open we will need a teacher. Bernard, we would like you to teach." Wow, 21 years old, green as grass, a farm military deferment, cows to milk, crops to harvest, no teaching experience, no professional education courses taken in college, and more---. And still she gave me an invitation--she knew that many of our farm boys in school needed courses in agriculture. To make the matters more complicated my father, Dr. W. H. Potter, was president of the school board.

My head was spinning. Dad, Mother and I immediately visited about this "call". The decision was if I could handle the chores and milking on the farm, I could give Miss Hartnett a possible "Yes". Dad very positively said that as school board president he would have no part in any discussion with the board of education about my employment. He would not be present in any of the deliberations. Dad was a "straight arrow" and would not have any conflict of interest.

I returned to Miss Hartnett and indicated that I was ready to accept, if-- The Selective Service Board felt this was in the war effort as well as being in production agriculture. Miss Hartnett approached the Draft Board and without any hesitation it approved and lauded Miss Hartnett's request to keep the department open in conjunction with the War effort.

Miss Hartnett and I set out the schedule guidelines. I would teach 10

months at \$200 a month. The usual practice was for teachers of agriculture to work the year around. In the summer when school was not in session, the teacher would visit the student's farm and advise him of improved practices for his project. No way could I do this with haying and all to be done on the farm. I would do classroom teaching only. A teacher-trainer from Cornell would visit me occasionally to help in classroom procedures and organization.

So starting in September 1943 I was a farmer and a teacher. I was teaching under a temporary teaching certificate from the Department of Education in Albany.

As I recall I was to teach Agriculture I and IV every year and Ag II and III in alternating years. I was also to teach 7th and 8th grade Shop. So I had 5 classes 5 days a week. Boy, was this ever a learning experience for me! In shop I taught what I remembered from my own teachers in 7th and 8th grades. I think I stayed one day ahead of my students. In agriculture I used existing syllabi and gradually added my own ideas and goals for my students. We also took field trips copied after Prof. Stan Warren's Farm Management course in Cornell.

An evening farm machinery repair course was established for helping farmers keep their machines in running order. The program was called Rural War Production Training or RWPT and was funded by the government. At different times two local men were employed for technical help. Gene Lindsay who had operated garages in both East Homer and Cuyler was one and the other was Bob Ossont from DeRuyter. He later taught agriculture in Fabius. My responsibility was to administer the program. It was very successful as it served wartime need for our farmers.

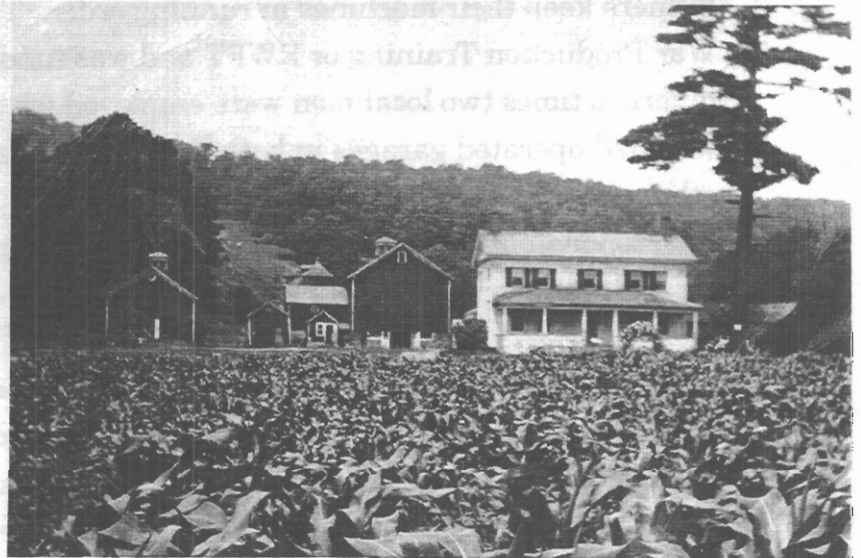
Soon Margaret and I were dating and I had a pretty full day. But I was young, eager and the work was all exciting and so I enjoyed most of my days. The students were great. Even today, 1996, some of my old students and I talk about those good old school days and how we worked and played together.

Miss Hartnett was a great support for this rookie. My new friend, Prof. Roy Olney, from Cornell was my advisor. He and I became close friends. The faculty in our school was very supportive also. Coach Andy Tei even got me to officiate in J-V basketball games. I quickly found out that it was not my bag!

During the War the older children were often released for fall harvesting to pick up potatoes into bushel crates. Also students were released to pick milkweed pods. The fibers in the pods were used in parachute manufacture.

I taught 1943--1946. In the spring of 1946, the war was over and some of the teachers were coming home from the Service and looking for jobs. I advised Miss Hartnett that if one came along that she wanted to hire, I would go back to full time on the farm. About the 1st of May 1946, Hartley Martin came to Truxton. He was hired, started immediately and finished the spring session of 1946. Hartley and Jane Martin moved into the north side of our farm home for a few months. Our friendship with them continues today.

Teaching agriculture was an enjoyable and learning experience which I never regretted. I sure liked the students and guess the feeling was mutual. I was asked to consider going in teaching as a career. I didn't accept as I knew dairy farming was my love. We wanted to have our family grow up on the farm. We enjoyed the partnership with Dad and Mother. Margaret and I were happily settled into the "Bloomfield Farm", Patty was one year old. We didn't seriously consider the teaching field for our lifetime work.



1948 and '49-- field views: l.--Patty Rae Potter and "friends" munching alfalfa. r.--Note--Lusch corn, porch on house, big pine, rambling rose arbor, horse barn, 2 wood silos, ice and milk houses. A November 1950 wind storm felled the pine on the house--16 broken rafters!! Neighbors labored, successfully, way into the night to keep the rain from damaging the interior of our home.

COURTSHIP, LOVE AND MARRIAGE

MARGARET BELL SMITH

It's really hard to know where to start a recounting of Margaret's and my courtship and marriage. As mentioned earlier, my first introduction to Margaret Smith was via a photograph taken on the steps of Pyrke House at the State Fair--probably 1938 although it could have been '39, before we both entered Cornell. Of course we didn't speak to each other in the picture, but we were in it. Margaret on one end I on the other, of the panoramic picture!

I do remember our first meeting. It was early in the fall of 1939 when we were both Cornell freshmen. The University 4-H Club held a get acquainted party for new students. We were there. We must have shook hands or whatever college freshmen do when they meet.

Shortly thereafter we met at the corner of Tower Road and Garden Ave, as we were crossing in opposite directions. Her smile had infected me at the 4-H party and apparently she hadn't forgotten the meeting. As we passed, at the street crossing, we smiled at each other and went about our business. To this day she will swear that she doesn't have the faintest recollection of smiling and meeting at Tower and Garden--but I do!

During our college years we never dated. We knew each other through various campus activities and as I recall I always thought of her as a casual college friend. I was always kind of shy with the fairer sex and not very aggressive. Margaret was active in upper campus life and the Ag-Domecon board. I was well aware of those activities. I also knew that she had friends at Alpha Zeta which was a scholastic agricultural fraternity. As I was not one of the most intellectual students on the hill, perhaps I was not in her class. Also later on, and I could never figure this one out, she was wearing an AGR pin and I knew it was not one of my Cornell brother's! So, I never asked for a date. Margaret did come to an AGR Christmas party, with Gordon Jones who was AGR's Noble Ruler. However, for the record, Gordie had a broken leg at that time and I'm sure that she thought it would be safe to accompany a broken legged AGR to their party!

The summer of 1943 changed everything. Dad had purchased the Bloomfield Farm in November 1942. I had graduated in January 1943 and came home to the new farm to help Dad and Mother with the entire farm

business. World War II was on, help was scarce and food was needed. Margaret graduated in June 1943 and was hired as Associate 4-H Agent in Cortland County beginning July 1. Apparently there were two candidates for the job and I knew both ladies. Norman Brown of Lapeer and Frank Wavle of Cortlandville liked Margaret's credentials, of which not the least was her attractiveness and happy personality. They encouraged the Board to give her the job. I learned later on that Margaret might have liked to go to another county, but her Mother urged her to take the job that was offered. Praise the Lord, for Katherine Smith and her infinite wisdom.

Margaret Smith took a room, in Cortland, with Irvin and Kay Perry. Irv was Farm Bureau (now Extension) agent and he also came from Saratoga County--Margaret's home. The Perry and Smith families were friendly.

July 1st came and I realized that here was a young lady on her first job in a strange environment. She ought to have someone welcome her. So I thought a visit by me might alleviate some of the anxiety and tension in her new surroundings.

During this particular week, there was a carnival going on on the county fair grounds. I thought that would be a nice relaxing atmosphere so I gave Margaret a call, after work--5-6 o'clock-- and asked her if she would like to take in the carnival that evening. As I look back, I guess it was rather short notice! She accepted and I picked her up at 8! We had a good time except I was sick after riding on the "Whip" and left my supper in back of one of the rides. I don't recall anything else about that evening, our first date.

I guess I was rather embarrassed about the carnival incident. I did not ask for another date with Margaret during the summer. Also I wasn't smart enough to think that a nice young lady might take it as an insult that she wasn't being asked out again. This all came to my attention in early September when Margaret's landlady, Kay Perry, met my mother in Cortland. Kay, who was never short for words, said to mother, "Margaret's wondering where's Bernard?" Of course my mother told me of the conversation and I immediately thought, "Humm, she is lonely".

During the war, Colgate and Cornell were to play a football game in SU's Archibold Stadium. It was to take place shortly after the Mother-Kay Perry

visit. My good friend and roommate Jim Cochrane and his fiancé Dottie O'Meal were coming to the game. I asked Margaret if she would accompany me. She graciously accepted. She and Dottie were very good friends at Cornell. I could have had a slight reservation about the date as seeing Dottie might have been the big reason for Margaret accepting my invitation. The game day came and the four of us had a great time in Archibold and following the game we went to the Mizpah Hotel for dinner.

After a fine dinner and visit, Jim and Dottie went their way. Margaret and I drove back to Cortland. I remember like yesterday, walking Margaret to Perry's door. I thanked her for the great day and evening. She thanked me and I kissed her on the hand as we said "Goodnight". That was the last time I kissed her on the hand!

During October and November we had a number of dates. I can't begin to describe how our love grew, it seemed so spontaneous and real. Our companionship was exciting and purposeful. Just before Christmas I gave her my pin and she wore it with pride.

We made a trip to Charlton where Margie introduced me to her parents, Katherine and Rey Smith. This meeting was the beginning of a wonderful relationship with two of the finest parents a son-in-law could wish to have. I suspected that Mother Smith might wonder if this young man might be just another! Father Rey Smith, the quiet one, just smiled, "OK".

Early in January 1944, I was sure that Margaret and I were meant to become married. I purchased a diamond ring at Woodworth's (not Woolworths) Jewelry store on Clinton Avenue in Cortland. Shortly thereafter, after a lovely evening together, without asking, I placed it on her ring finger as we kissed "Goodnight" in Irv and Kay Perry's porch hallway. Margaret still says she was never proposed to.

Soon after that Margie and I made a Sunday trip to Norwich. Gilbert, Margaret's brother, his wife Phyllis and one year old Beverly lived there. Gil was Assistant Farm Bureau agent in Chenango County--just before moving to Penn Yan. We have a picture taken on that special day. On that day little did I realize that this was the beginning of a lifetime relationship with two more wonderful people, Phyllis and Gilbert Smith.

Of course the inevitable question arose, "When are you two getting hitched?". Margie had advised me, when one enters into Extension work, that person should work at least two years to pay the "dues" for the training. I didn't argue that point but I did feel that some may be able to pay their "dues" quicker than others. So she suggested eighteen months which would make it January 1945 for a wedding. I couldn't see a winter wedding and I suggested maybe we could pay the "dues" in 12 months and have a June wedding. It became real and so the date was set for June 10, 1944 at Sage Chapel on the Cornell Campus.

Time went fast that winter, Margaret with her 4-H work and my farming and Ag teaching. Weekends Margaret would spend at least one night at Dad and Mother Potter's. After Sunday morning's chores I would go upstairs, to the middle room, and wake Margaret. In sleep she was also beautiful. We then would have breakfast with Dad and Mother. Dad and Mother loved Margaret as their own daughter.

Margie occasionally remarked that sister Billie was supposed to marry a farmer! Yet Margaret never gave me the slightest thought that she wanted to change her mind. I gave her plenty of opportunities. During the war, the buckrake was a tool that farmers could assemble. It was then used to move hay from the field to the barn. In May I was making one, with some other farmers, down at the county highway garage on Miller Street. Late in the afternoon I headed for home to do chores. I decided to go over to Perry's to see Margie. I was a mess from the shop. We sat on the front steps at the Perry home on North Main Street and visited. I thought afterward about how dirty I was-- my dear Margaret just didn't seem to care.

Planning our wedding was the main topic. I was soon to learn Margie as a pro when it comes to organizing. I remember when her wedding gown came. The groom was not to see it until the day, however I convinced her that one peek wouldn't upset the plans. She took me upstairs to her room and showed me her dress--wow

We also had much to do in home preparation at the Bloomfield farm house. I remember Margaret coming home from Mr. Alexander's auction where she had purchased dishes, silverware and a rug. I'm sure Margaret could write chapters about all the preparations that I haven't the foggiest idea.

In 1944 neither Margaret or I needed a "trial" period to "find" ourselves. Neither of us asked the other to compromise her-his rich heritage and values. We knew what we wanted in a marriage and we promised each other that it would be just that. Our courtship story goes on for life, however, I'll end this phase and continue at another time with our wedding.

12-8-93



*Margie Smith --- Bernie Potter
at the Norwich, NY home of Phyllis, Gilbert and Beverly Smith
January 1944*

WEDDING BELLS

Probably Margaret should write her own chapter on the details leading up to our June 10, 1944 wedding. However, the groom remembers some things. They maybe sketchy but I'll give it a whirl.

Let's see, we had to have a minister. As we both wanted to be married in Sage Chapel at Cornell and as Margaret was well acquainted with the Presbyterians in Ithaca, it seemed logical to ask the local pastor to do the honors. So we went over to Ithaca and met with Rev. Walter Dodds, the pastor at the First Presbyterian Church. We asked him to marry us and he consented. Reverend Dodds was a square jawed feller who looked like a Cornell fullback. He took down the details of date, time, etc and that was the last we saw of him until the wedding day. You see, wedding and marriage lessons? just weren't done in those days.

We had to have attendants. Jim Cochrane my good friend and roommate at Alpha Gamma Rho was glad to be my best man. He asked me to reciprocate for he and Dottie at their wedding which was to be two weeks after Margaret's and mine. Margaret had already asked her sister-in-law Phyllis Smith to be her matron of honor as her only attendant. Margaret's brother Gilbert Smith, my brother Carleton Potter, Roger Bradley and Gerald Young brother AGRs and dear friends accepted as ushers.

Little Evelyn Barrett, niece of Margaret's sister-in-law Isabel Ketcham Smith, was our flower girl. Maybe she carried the ring also. I say ring in the singular. My father never wore a wedding band and mother's and his marriage had been bound by love for years. I guess I copied my father for whom I had so much affection and admiration. I often wished that I had received a ring at our wedding. Margie and I took care of that omission on our anniversary thirty years later.

Our wedding day came and frankly I must have been in a fog as I remember very little of the ceremony. The beautiful Sage Chapel organ must have played, Rev. Dodds must have said the words and we must have exchanged our vows and promised "to love and obey till death us do part", but I don't remember a thing. Forgive me, Margaret. Margaret reminded me tonight that Phyllis Dittman, played the Clocktower Chimes for us before and after the wedding ceremony.

Most of our family was present, many neighbors from Charlton and Truxton, Margaret's and my college friends including many of my fraternity brothers, and some of our professors. Among those who couldn't make it was Margaret's brother, Harold Smith, who was serving in Italy in World War II.

We do have some pictures of the receiving line outside of Sage Chapel. There must be more somewhere. If any of our family has some we would like to make copies of them. Today, the conventional picture taking would be done in Sage. Not so, in 1944. We went to Trevor Teele's photography studio to have formal pictures taken. It seemed to take forever. Margaret had planned a wonderful reception up in Martha Van Rensselaer Hall. I should add that the formal pictures are treasures for us to this day.

We finally arrived at Martha Van Rensselaer where the party was well in progress. I remember that younger brother Willard had more than a little fun at the reception. It was at the reception that my Uncle Edmund Hazzard approached us and asked where we were going on our honeymoon. My uncle was to be trusted and we told him we thought Toronto. He took his house key out of his pocket and offered it to us for our first night. Uncle Edmund and Aunt Emma lived in East Rochester and I had often visited them in the summer. Our money was not too plentiful so we jumped at his offer.

As we started to leave Ithaca in our 1940 maroon Chevrolet coupe, a hose to the radiator broke. Late Saturday afternoon is not the most ideal time for auto repairs, but somehow we were able to get it replaced.

After a long day and a late start we finally arrived in the East Rochester area. I believe we ended up at a Howard Johnson's in Pittsford for a bite. We found Uncle's house at a late hour. The rest of the evening was uneventful except my loving brother Carleton had the telephone operator ringing my Aunt and Uncle's number every thirty minutes all night. We didn't answer the phone. Later when I found out what was up, I kicked myself for not answering and make him pay for the call!

The next day, Sunday the 11th, we drove to Niagara Falls which was the usual destination for honeymooners in those days. I remember that I was so green about worldly things that I asked the desk clerk, "If we stayed two nights, would it be any cheaper?". Can't remember if we did stay one or two nights. We went on to Toronto and found a lovely tourist home, Barbara Barnes, where we stayed during our visit to Toronto. I had been in Canada several times with Dad for the purchase of cattle and I felt really comfortable with the Canadian people--just like us.

We left Toronto on the automobile ferry to Rochester across Lake Ontario. When we arrived at the Hazzards at 115 Woodbine Ave Aunt and Uncle greeted us with hugs and laughs. It seems as though they had a school teacher roomer who had a bad back and her mattress was reinforced with a sheet of plywood-- that was the bed we had chosen. Margaret and I never knew the difference!

We arrived back in Truxton later that evening and enjoyed the "tourist home" of Dad and Mother Potter for about one week until we finally settled into our honeymoon sixteen room home at 3455 Route 13. Forty six years and eight months later Margaret and I moved to our second honeymoon home on 6351 Prospect Terrace in the hamlet of Truxton.

The light of our love for each other, lit at a carnival in 1943, has never shown brighter than it does today--fifty years and five months later.

12-8-94

MERRY CHRISTMAS to MARGIE

*At this special time of family and gifts I'm
trying to think special
Words for yours*

*Perhaps because of your cherished Scotch
ancestry
An oft used line from another famous
Scotchman
Might be appropriate*

*"Oh wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!"*

*View the under stair closet from the inside
Now you see my Love for all the years*

*anonymous
revised by Bernie
December 28, 1993
inside the closet--a full length mirror!!*

To Margie on Our Golden Wedding Day

*If I should buy a silken gown to make you lovely look,
or hustle 'round the town to buy some fiction book....*

*Or if by chance a lovely chair I'd buy for you today,
or maybe hose, or have your hair done up the nicest way....*

*It wouldn't be the very thing I'd give to you this day,
for temporary joy they bring could then be cast away....*

*I've seen our little girls and boy growing up so splendid,
your loveliness in them has shown now all their play has ended....*

*And proud indeed I've always been when friends, one or the other,
greet me with, "Your children are all pictures of their mother!"*

*My gift for you is in our girls and boy all grown today,
and all the loveliness you've been, is in each one to stay.*

*Anonymous
revised by Bernie
June 10, 1994*

IN PRAYER

Occasionally I am asked to give an invocation or grace prior to a meeting or meal. One of my favorites is the following. I try to make this prayer a piece of myself, even though inadequately. Wouldn't life be more beautiful if each of us would endorse these words of "An Anonymous Prayer" to their fullness?

"Slow me down, Lord! Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me, amidst the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills.

Break the tension of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Help me to know the magical restorative of sleep.

Teach me the art of taking minute vacations--of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book. Remind me each day of the fable of the hare and the tortoise, that I may know that the race is not always to the swift;-- that there is more to life than increasing its speed.

Let me look upward into the branches of the trees and know that they grow tall because they grew slowly and well. Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of Life's enduring values, that I may grow toward the stars of my greater destiny. Amen"

by Rev. Dr. Kenneth Roadarmel at a State Fair Agricultural Dinner, circa 1969.

Memories

As this book of memories comes to a close, I become a little sentimental. We have lost to Heaven members of our family and dear friends. The remembrance of them is our treasure. The list is long. By name I only mention dad and mother--Florence and Wilburn Potter. It was they who had so much trust and confidence in Margaret and me that we received our start with the Bloomfield farm. We were partners in the farm business for twentyfive years. They both died in 1967. Mother very suddenly on September 26 with a heart attack, almost in my arms---Dad slowly November 28, after a stroke in July. It was painful, at the time, to see him in the hospital. Today, however, I only remember the many beautiful years we enjoyed together. Never in that period did Dad or I ever speak an ill word to each other. "How sweet it was."

It hardly seems possible that seven years have passed since Margaret and I celebrated our fiftieth. We continue to share our unending love and joy for each other and with our wonderful family. We are blessed with good health and able to enjoy the opportunities which are presented to us for service to family and to others. Each day we live laughter, humor and a closeness which cannot be defined--- we look forward to each tomorrow. We know not what the future holds. In the meantime, as real golfers do, we will keep our heads down, slow the backswing, then follow thru with all our might straight for the "pin"!!

June 10, 2001
Bernie



Margaret and Bernard--February 2000

*Nancy Potter, Susan Potter,
Larry Kitts, Billy Potter
All set for the B. and W. Show
Brockway Truck--purchased
from Halstead Canning Co.*

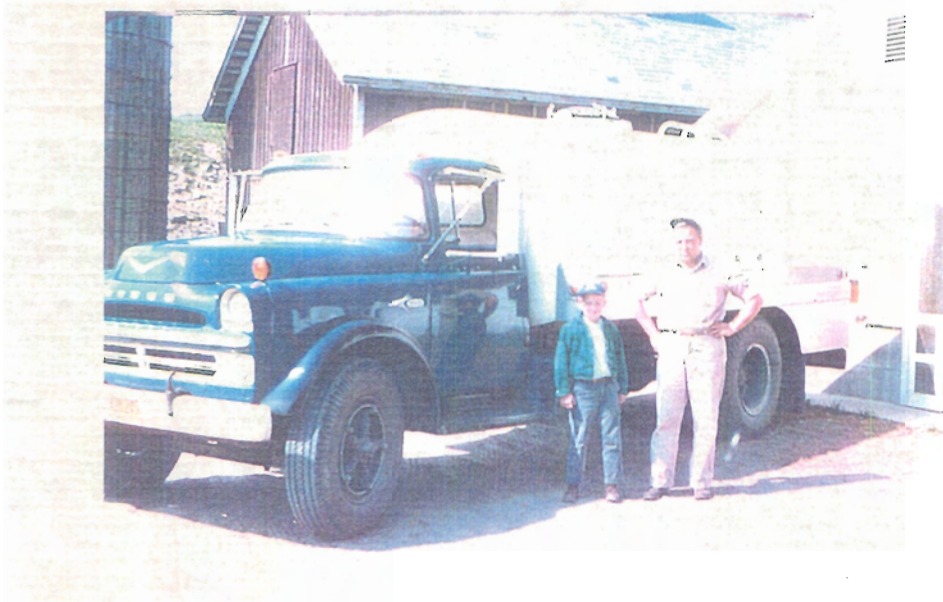


*4-Hers Billy & Nancy Potter
at Cortland Jr. Fair
with their calves*



*Joanne Potter & her mother
Margaret--4-H Sheep Show
Cortland Jr. Fair*





*Bulk Milk Haulers
Replace Cans --- 1960
Stan Nye and son Don*

*Baled Hay, loaded by
"Muscle power"*



*Cows from Pasture
for pm Milking
3455 Rt 13
Locust Tree---only a
Sapling circa 1955*



*It's winter and cold
outside our beautiful
1816 home
3455 Route 13*



*It's warm and festive inside
set for Christmas dinner
Margaret is a hostess of
perfection--1987*



*The Ole Swimming Hole
in Tioughnioga River
Bruce Potter, Joanne &
Nancy Potter; perhaps
Mary Jane Potter, others?*





"Wicksville" schoolhouse today. I couldn't find a picture from the "old days"



I remember a similar picture, in the American Agriculturist during W W II It was captioned "Sabotage" No implements were being made. That farmer was sabotaging the war effort by leaving his equipment out in the weather.



Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity my Cornell home. A treasured experience--many of my lifelong friends passed through that home away from home. 1940-1943

*The Truxton United Methodist Church
A Spring Snowstorm - 1996*





Our "Star-Spangled Banner"

"Long May Our Land Be Bright With Freedom's Holy Light"

Fall brings the beautiful maple foliage

View from the deck of our now home in Truxton - 1998