

MARCH 1988

THE CLINTON INDEPENDENT

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

UNCLE HENRY'S NEW GREEN RUG

Uncle Henry Hempstead wasn't stingy. And, when Grandpa Jim and Dad said, "Uncle Henry still has the first dollar he ever made," Mother said that wasn't true. It was just that Henry was a business man of the Depression and he needed the cash in his ample wallet to run his store and grocery wagon.

Buying groceries at Uncle Henry's store at Round Lake was fun. Mother bought double loaves of "store" bread, and Aunt Liza sometimes gave Jean and I an orange slice from the glass candy counter -- if Uncle Henry wasn't there.

But the best summer days were when we went to Uncle Henry's to get ice for ice cream. A fifty pound block of ice with the sawdust rinsed off could be handled with tongs, and just fit on the rear corner bumper of the old Essex.

We always paid only 5¢ for the ice. The sign said 10¢. But Dad explained that he and Grandpa Jim helped Henry put up the ice. I wasn't sure what that meant but one year I found out.

One day in the dead of winter three generations of Black "men" took out the sleighs and a team of horses. However, instead of heading for the woods to cut fuel, we went down the road and turned towards Uncle Henry's lake.

The ride was cold but the sun was shining and the horses were in good spirits and I was with my favorite men. When we arrived a large group of men and horses were working on the lake and a lot of ice had already been taken out. Dad directed me to

stay on the shore and watch. He said one man had already fallen in the water and had to be fished out. The process was fascinating--to see the huge ice blocks cut, scored and packed in sawdust, layer on layer. But, after a while I was getting cold.

About this time Aunt Liza spotted me from a window in their living quarters behind the store and yelled for me to come in. She knew when young boys needed warming - and just maybe an orange slice. Well, no orange slice, but a warm chair near the stove by the parlor door was OK too. The warmth made me fall asleep and when I woke up Aunt Liza was not around.

I studied the parlor door. Then I remembered where I was and the ice operation. Maybe I could look out the parlor window and see how the men were doing.

As the parlor door opened I stopped in my tracks! Covering the floor, wall to wall, were more greenbacks than this farm boy had ever seen or knew existed! Ones, fives, tens all laid out drying.

Dad explained later that the earlier casualty had been Uncle Henry and his fat wallet.

Henry Hempstead married twice, sisters Mary and Eliza Black, great aunts of Jim Black who lived in Victor Township as a boy.

Jim Black, who we thank for this story, and his wife June, live in Perrington, Michigan. Mrs. Black has also written a history of the Paine family.

We would appreciate anyone who would like to share their family stories with the Society in this Newsletter. Please send to Catherine Reed, 581 W. State RD., Lansing, Michigan 48906.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Genealogy Meeting of the Clinton County Historical Society will meet March 7, 1988 at the Capitol Federal Savings and Loan Bank building at 7:30 pm. Mrs. Phaff will talk on Computers and Genealogy.

The regular Meeting of the Society will be March 17, also in the Capitol Federal Savings and Loan Bank building at 7:30 pm. Program will be announced later.

There will be a meeting of the Archives Committee March 8, 1988 at 7:30 pm at the Archives in the DeWitt Charter Township hall.

Some of the Agenda items are as follows: Copy machine report, Acceptance and transfer of records from the Clinton County Treasurer, report on the Clinton County Humanities Center, missing Westphalia Newspapers. Under new business, Photo-negatives from the

Clinton County News, Inventory of the Archives- Review of the Bylaws and Procedual Manual, Clinton County Sesquicentennial Certificate Project and Revenue Ideas for some monies for basic operation and projects.

Anyone that would like to attend this meeting, is more than welcome.

CLINTON COUNTY HUMANITIES CENTER

Discussion of the Clinton County Humanities Center at the February meeting of the Clinton County Historical Society brought out many views of the project. The members present felt they needed more information to make a responsible decision. It was voted and carried to report back to the Center Committee and indicate our interest and ask the questions we felt needing answers.

BRING IN A NEW MEMBER CAMPAIGN

In this election year, let us all campaign for a bigger, stronger Historical Society. Janet Tiedt is taking memberships, even after I gave her a new name.

Catherine Reed



Clinton County
Historical Society

P. O. Box 174
Saint Johns, Michigan 48879

ST. JOHNS, MI.
PERMIT
No. 104
Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID