



Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum
3839 Main St.
Strykersville, NY 14145



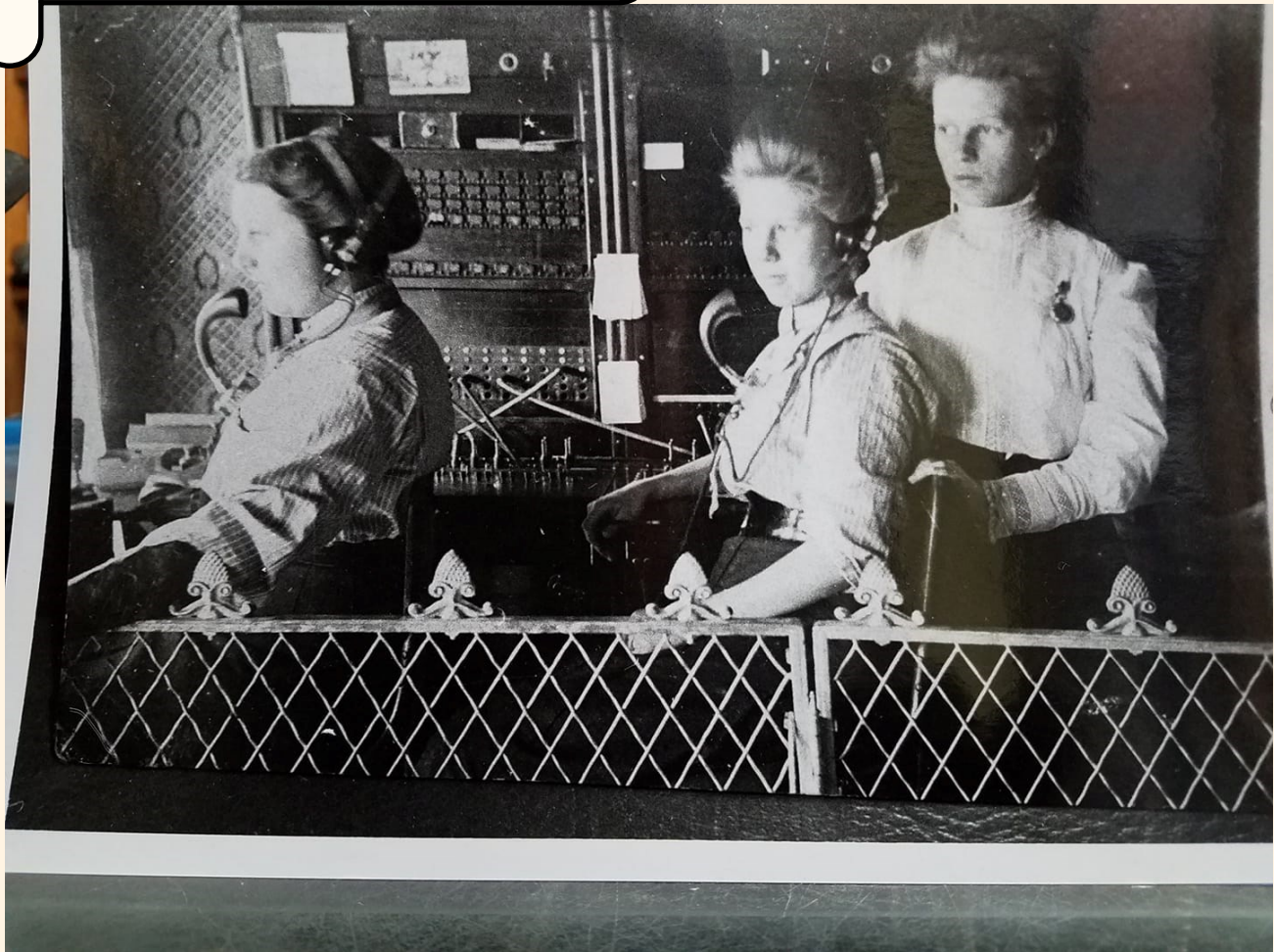
Sheldon Historical Society Schoolhouse Museum Newsletter

An update on our progress as a Society and a Chartered Museum "A New Look at Old News From our Town"

Welcome to our April 2026 issue of the Sheldon Newsletter. Some interesting events are coming up. Join with us for Orangeville's "An Evening of History" May 26 and on May 30th for the Dedication of our Revolutionary War monument at the Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum. Then it will be time for the Annual Town Wide Yard Sale, June 6 to 7, and we will be open all day, both days.

Telephone Service

About 1885, the first telephone line was erected through the village from Attica to Warsaw. It was a one-wire ground circuit line, and a pay station desk phone was installed in the Dexter S. Davis General Store. In the early 1900's the phone office was moved in the front rooms of the Watson house and was operated by Margaret Parker, assisted by Blanche Davis, daughter of Dexter S. Shortly after the office was moved across the street to the store of C.N. Davis, who operated in competition with his father. About 1905 William Salisbury and his wife came as manager and chief operator; later Charles Wilcox served as manager and his sister Alice as chief operator.



Early Telephone Operators in Varysburg.
Photo courtesy of Scott Almeter

TOWN OF SHELDON CELEBRATES

America's 250th Birthday

The Semiquincentennial

Calendar



May 30, 2026: Sheldon Schoolhouse
A Community Celebration
Dedication of Sheldon's New
Revolutionary War Monument
Time Capsule, Refreshments & fun

June 6 & 7 Town Wide Sale
 Sheldon's Historical Schoolhouse
 3859 Main St., Strykersville
 250th T-Shirts, Books & Gifts
 Available at Schoolhouse Museum

Some of our plans for celebrating America's Semiquincentennial have changed, and they are going to be better than ever. Our original plan to honor the residents of the Town of Sheldon who fought for our independence at Sheldon Center were just not working out. We are going to have an amazing day, but it will be held at the Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum. We will be dedicating a new monument listing all 32 names of soldiers in the Revolutionary War who called the Town of Sheldon home.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO
A Special Semiquincentennial Commemoration
Honoring Sheldon's Revolutionary War Patriots
In Observance of America's 250th Anniversary

Saturday, May 30, 2026
1:00 PM
Sheldon Historical Society Schoolhouse Museum
3859 Main Street
Strykersville, NY 14145

Program Highlights

- Recognition of the Sheldon Bicentennial Committee, whose efforts helped lead to the founding of the Sheldon Historical Society and Schoolhouse Museum
- Special Remarks by Kevin Proper, Mark Herman and Anita Ripstein Hayes
- Recognition of Sheldon's Revolutionary War Patriots
- Unveiling and dedication of the new Revolutionary War monument
- Reception with refreshments, while listening to patriotic musical selections by Don Dwyer

Join local leaders, historians, descendants, and community members as we commemorate Sheldon's Revolutionary War heritage during America's 250th Anniversary. By honoring the past, we hope to inspire renewed interest in history and a lasting legacy for future generations. We would be honored to have you attend.

FROM THE SHELDON SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM AND HISTORIAN, JEANNE MEST

Some of the special guests at our May 30 Dedication will be: Gregg Torrey, on behalf of Senator George Borrello; the Strykersville American Legion Six Star Post #637, Wyoming Co. Historian Kevin Proper, Chairman of the Wyoming Co. Board of Supervisors James Brick, Eric Szucs, Mark Herman and Anita Ripstein-Hayes. Members of Attica's FFA have volunteered to assist and participate in the program.

We received two Patriot Burials signs from the Sons of the American Revolution, which will be dedicated on May 30, and later installed at Frink's Corners and the Strykersville Pioneer Cemetery, where many of our Revolutionary War soldiers are buried. We have invited the SAR to our Dedication and hope they will attend.

Some other upcoming Semiquincentennial and patriotic programs are:

April 28	"Lexington & Concord", with Greg Kinal, 7:00pm at Bennington Town Hall
May 25	Memorial Day Observances by the American Legion at local cemeteries (see page 12)
May 26	"An Evening of History - Mary Jemison & the Senecas", Graceful Gatherings, 6:30pm
May 30	Revolutionary War Monument Dedication at Schoolhouse Museum 1:00 pm
June 6	DAR Liberty Tree Dedication, Gardeau Overlook, Letchworth State Park, 11:00 am
June 6-7	Strykersville Town Wide Yard Sale

FEDERATION NEWS:

We welcome a new member and volunteer, Rebecca Ryan, who recently retired from the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors. Becky loves history and will be helping with the Wyoming Co. Federation of Historical Societies, as well as some of our Semiquincentennial programs. 50 guests attended the Federation's Annual Spring Workshop on Saturday, April 25, at the former Village Pub, which is now open for special parties and events. Speakers were Joyce Thompson Hovey and Anita Ripstein Hayes. Warsaw Historical Society assisted Sheldon and hope to assume responsibility for the Federation later this year.

SHELDON CENTER:

Part of our Semiquincentennial efforts will be to clean and restore the original bronze plaque on the Bicentennial Boulder at Sheldon Center. We hope visitors will stop and see this important part of our town's history. Thank you to Jill Barvian and Wally Bohlen for mowing and maintaining the beautiful patriotic flower bed, which has been tended by many, including Paul Rambino and Mrs. Janet (Paul) Kirsch. If you know of others, please let me know.

AMERICA'S 250TH QUILT RAFFLE



A beautiful handmade quilt and quilt rack have been made and donated in memory of Josephine Almeter to raise funds for our America's 250th events. Josephine was the author of our Bicentennial book on Sheldon's history, 200 Years of Freedom.

Thank you for your Generous Donations to the Sheldon Historical Society

In Memory of:

Job Winslow, by Kenneth & Jean Tucker Winslow

Robert Barvian & Mary Barvian Conrad, by Thomas & Elizabeth Reisdorf

Sylvester and Leona Mest Meyer, by David and Diana Meyer

Memberships, Memorials & Donations to the Sheldon Historical Society may be sent to:

PO Box 122, Strykersville, NY 14145

MORE UPDATES:**VARYSBURG HISTORY**

Thanks to Laury Lakas, Orangeville Historian, and Scott Almeter, we are able to share some photos and articles about Varysburg in this issue. Varysburg seems like its own town, but is actually a hamlet in the Town of Sheldon; just like the hamlet of Strykersville. But we seem to hear much more about the history of the rest of the town. I would be so pleased if anyone interested in Varysburg's history would connect with me. We have included an article written by Norma Donnelly and Mabel Spink, telling the story of how Varysburg observed the Bicentennial.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR MONUMENT DEDICATION MAY 30**The Time Capsule**

Kathy Granger Kowalski is gathering ideas and items to be stored in a time capsule. We will bury it at the Schoolhouse Museum, not to be opened until 2076, our nation's **Tricentennial**. Please contact Kathy with your thoughts. One idea she had is to write down our memories of Covid; or to write down some stories that you would like someone to read in 2076. Other ideas are newspaper articles, USB flash drive with photos, or with a recording of music of the last 50 years, local restaurant menu, shopping receipts, etc.

Email: mkgranger@live.com

Dedication of benches—anyone interested?

Three park benches have been donated, to be placed at the Schoolhouse Museum and the Strykersville Pioneer Cemetery. Two will be dedicated in memory of individuals who hold a special place in our town's history, made possible through significant family donations. One bench is still available for memorial dedication, if there is anyone else who may wish to honor a loved one in a similar way. Contact Historian, Jeanne Mest.

PIONEER CEMETERY - CLEAN UP DAY MAY 2

We will be having a **CLEAN UP DAY** at the **Strykersville Pioneer Cemetery on May 2**. Some will be picking up sticks, others will be digging out foundations, filling in holes, cleaning stones. There is something for everyone if you would like to help. Some may just want to donate and take part that way in helping care for this pioneer cemetery. It has been improved so much and we look forward to having a Cemetery Tour later this year.

ANNUAL STRYKERSVILLE TOWN WIDE YARD SALE, JUNE 6 - 7!

The Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum will be open all day, both days. Come in, sign up for or renew your membership & see the historian for a prize. While there, you can browse through our America's 250th Semiquincentennial memorabilia and T-shirts, available with donations. We hope to have our new history book available in time for the Town Wide Yard Sale.

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATES

It is time for high school seniors to fill out applications and submit them at your guidance office, to compete for our Sheldon Historical Society Memorial Scholarship in 2026. All of our 2025 scholarship recipients are studying in the field of medicine. **Charles Kolasny**, our scholarship recipient from Pioneer H.S., has completed his first semester at Jamestown Community College, and sent us this thank you note: *"After much discernment and consideration, I stuck with pursuing medicine over math. Although math is a great hobby and field of study for me, I couldn't see myself pursuing it full-time. With my upcoming education at JCC, I anticipate starting work at a hospital as an RN just two-and-a-half years from now!"*

*****SOMETHING NEW— YOUR ANCESTORS' NAMES *****

We would love to know what brought you to us and how we can help you! Please share how you became interested in the Sheldon Historical Society, or in membership, and the names of your ancestors. We will gladly keep an eye out for them in our records and share any information we discover.

VARYSBURG HISTORY

*Excerpt from A Village in the Valley, by Anita Ripstein
Hayes, Historical Wyoming, Vol. 26, #3, October 1979*

A requirement for more abundant water power lead them to excavate the clogged up logway race and in doing so uncovered the grave of an Indian of great size with all his relics including iron kettles, pipe and a cannon ball.

This account of the grave site was written about 1930 and it read that Clark Wilcox, son of William and Harriet Wilcox, who was 12 years old that year of 1856, was among the group of small boys who were there watching. He related the sight years later about Fayette Richards, a large man himself, lifting the large skull over his head and slipping it over his head resting it upon his shoulders. In a later source which was published in this journal, Hiram Powers, then a resident of Johnsonburg at the time of the excavating, related that the laborers excavated a mound, described as 10 feet by 2 rods by 1 rod. They removed three human skeletons believed to be Indians and one was surmised because of his unusual height. Also two guns, greatly corroded, 18 lead balls, a brass kettle and 2 balls excavating the logway a stone's throw from the Tonawanda.



West's Sawmill as it falls into Stony Brook



Original Varysburg Hotel & Wolf Brothers Store Before Fire of 1908

THE BICENTENNIAL AS IT WAS CELEBRATED BY THE PEOPLE OF VARYSBURG

**BY NORMA DONNELLY AND MABEL SPINK, 1976
COURTESY OF LAURY LAKAS**

In 1976, Varysburg celebrated its country's Bicentennial, thereby participating in the national celebration, which was joyously held from coast to coast, and in our newest states, Alaska (1959 - 49th State), and Hawaii (1959 - 50th State).

Varysburg, being part of the Town of Sheldon, took an active part in the town's celebration, which was held May 30. Many floats from this small village had been entered in the parade. The signatures of all the inhabitants of Varysburg, along with those of all the rest of the people of Sheldon, were in the sealed capsule which was buried at the dedication site of the flagpole and boulder at Sheldon Center. Many Varysburg people worked on preparing and assembling the History of Sheldon. A section in it was devoted to Varysburg.

The Firemen's Days in Varysburg honored our country. On Thursday night, June 17, children could be seen everywhere dressed in very clever costumes, for it was the night of the Kiddie Parade. It was interesting to see the ingenuity the children had used. Their little wagons had been converted into covered wagons. One very good one drawn by a Lakas boy with their little sister, Sally, peeking out of the rear opening. Other children rode their bicycles or tricycles, which were gaily decorated in red, white and blue. Many of the children were in colonial costumes of the era of George Washington - the girls with their long dresses and pretty caps, the boys in black with short pants, waistcoat and ruffles and of course the three cornered hat. Many had worn these at their school Bicentennial exercises, which were given at night so all the parents could attend. It was truly a happy night for the young, future citizens of tomorrow and the older folks, who were so proud of their children. After the parade, everyone could be seen enjoying all the rides, from the merry go round of long ago to the moonrock of today. Children's happy faces are always a joy to behold; as true today as it was in 1776.

On Saturday night, the Bicentennial Parade was held. Patrick Donnelly was in charge, dressed in Colonial costume. His great grandfather, Edward Donnelly, came to Varysburg at the end of 1901 and was the village blacksmith for many years. It was an excellent parade with many interesting floats. The Sunday School class from the Community Church was on a large truck. Helen Lewis Riber (great granddaughter-in-law of Fred Riber, a Civil War veteran) the church organist for many long years, played on a small organ as the children sang. Lisa, Michelle and Yvonne Bashlin were on that float; granddaughters of Hayden and Mabel Spink. It won a prize. Two little boys, sons of Don Almeter, were in a float which represented an old fashioned school. The Senior Citizens from Perry amused the crowd with their bazooka band. The Little League Baseball Team, in their new blue uniforms supplied by the Kiwanis Club, received plenty of applause, as did the Cub Scouts and Brownies, some dressed in Colonial costumes. A huge team of work horses drawing a lumber wagon, reminded some of the old folks of long ago days. Bert and Ethel West waved as they drove by in their restored 1911 Overland. Bert, 83 years old this year, a native of Varysburg is, I believe, the oldest man in Varysburg. He is a regular treasure house of information about Varysburg, for he has watched it grow and change during the years.

Again after the Parade, everyone went to the picnic grounds to enjoy the rides and sample some of the delicious clam chowder which had been prepared and was being served by the ladies of the Firemen's Auxiliary. They all looked very pretty too, in their Colonial costumes.

One of the Judges for the parade was Edison Hathaway of Johnsonburg, born in 1894. He was always a great favorite of the older people of Varysburg, for he had taught school here 1918-1920. He was called "Prof" by all his students and to this day that is the name by which he is still affectionately called by many. Friday the weather was perfect. On Saturday night the annual Fireman's Parade was held. It was led by James Lakas and Don Corwin, dressed in Colonial costume.

Don Corwin's Colonial costume was made by Mabel Spink, Varysburg. A great many of the firemen from neighboring towns joined in the parade. It brought back memories of long ago and also showed how improved firefighting apparatus has become, when the first fire engine that Sheldon ever had, passed by. As usual, the Attica High School Band thrilled the crowd with their fine rendition of patriotic arias. All in all, it was a grand parade, ending just as the rain began to fall, but that did not stop the crowd from thronging to the church grounds to spend money to help the Volunteer Firemen.

This was truly a small town celebration with everyone taking some part in it, be it large or small. It has been said that the small towns are the backbone of America, and it was shown all across the nation in this Bicentennial year. July 4th, our Nation's Birthday, was a beautiful day. At exactly 2:00, all the bells from St. Joseph's Catholic Church and the Community Church rang out, as did the bells from all the churches in the country. Many people, young and old, rang their own bells. As I was out on the porch, ringing my little Liberty Bell, I saw the children and teenage Lakas children from across the street ringing theirs - an experience I hope they don't forget. In the distance, the boom of a cannon could be heard.

This is added by Mabel Spink: *"My grandchildren and I were sitting in the yard when the bells began to ring, so we had some heavy iron horseshoes, and if you clang them together just right they will sound like real bells tolling. So we joined in the celebration and bell ringing."*

As the 4th fell on a Sunday, it was observed fittingly in the churches with special prayers and sermons. I know in our Church, St. Joseph's, we concluded our service by repeating the pledge to the flag and the singing of God Bless America, led by Father Borusjewski.

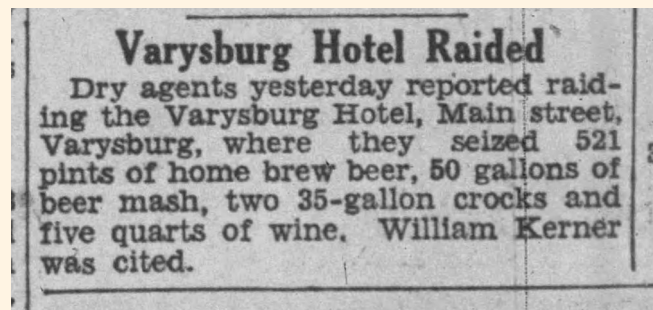
On the 4th, the people who weren't celebrating in other ways enjoyed watching T.V., which was devoted to the celebration in all parts of the United States from the time the sun first rose in Maine till it set in Hawaii. Many people thought that was one of T.V.'s finest days. The 4th was really the climax of the nation's observance, but on the 5th, the legal holiday, many parades were held. People from Varysburg took part in the county one at Warsaw.

To sum it all up, I think when we in Varysburg look at the flags waving over so many homes every day - the Betsey Ross flag, Bennington flag and our own 50 star flag, we will all say, *"Thank God for the U.S.A. and all the brave people who have helped to keep it free. Amen."*

~ Norma Donnelly

"Another addition to this, the Colonial dress & cap and apron, white background with little George Washingtons on it and long plain blue apron were made by me. I wore it to the July 4th celebration in Warsaw and to the Wyoming County Fair in August." ~ Mabel Spink

BUFFALO COURIER-EXPRESS, THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1930



From 1920 until 1933, the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages was banned in the United States under the policy known as Prohibition, an experiment that outlawed alcohol and led to illegal parties, organized crime and a rise in drinking.



Barbara Durfee, Carol Durfee Eck, Helen Durfee, Bertha Glor, Katherine Durfee Lamitina, Joan Guertin Schubert, Barbara Cornish Neeley, Monnie Bauer Lakas, Bea Keenan, Ethelbert Almeter, Ella Cornish, Eleanora Laird, Mary Grover Lakas, Ceil Laird, Phyllis Librock, Lois Rhebergen, Mabel Beglinger, Helen Guertin, Marion Conrad, Evelyn Switzer, Grace Kibler, Betty Hardie, Julia Bauer, Mabel Emmt

Jean Emmt Petre, Ethyle West, Bea Conrad, Eleanor Emmt, Emily Dychowski, Harriet Emmt, Lil Williams, Adeline Conrad,, Freda Glor, Marlene West, Bev Donnelly, Mary Perry, Carol Conrad Fugle

Date on back of picture – March 1955 (Bridal shower for Rochelle Bogoslowski Starkey held at Varysburg Hotel

Photo courtesy of Laury Lakas

Photos Courtesy Scott Almeter



**Decoration Day
Varysburg 1907**



**Apple Drying and
Cheese Box Factory
in Varysburg**

**Barrels for
Dried Apples**



The lower Hotel was the last structure to burn in the fire of 1908. It is believed to be the site of the first tavern hotel in the village. The building approximately 60 to 70 feet in length was constructed during the early history of Varysburg. During the 1850's it was operated, we believe, by Andrew Pettengill according to a Feb. 24, 1853 dance card which states, "Social Party at A. Pettengill's Hotel in Varysburg on Thursday, Feb. 24, 1853 at 5 p.m. - L.E. Barnum and Brother, Music." Jeffrey Thomas in his diaries mentions Loren Waldo & Frank C. Zwetsch. C.F. Prentice also was associated with this hotel in the late 1860's from an ad that he ran in the 1870 Directory of Wyoming County:

"No efforts spared to make this a comfortable Home for Travelers. Good Stabling Attached."

The next owners were the enterprising McCray Brothers - Horace N. and John, sons of William and Ann Button McCray who came to the village in 1836 from Ellington, Conn. Lott Shaw was the next owner operating under the name of Shaw's Hotel. It is said he was a thrifty old Yankee who did not believe in wasting anything or taking unnecessary chances in business. One day he had to go away on business and left Jim Bryson in charge and cautioned him not to charge anything. On his return he found the stock depleted, the till empty and everyone. He called Jim aside and asked what this all meant. Jim replied, "You told me not to charge anything and I didn't," Jim was always looking for a chance to pull a joke on someone and the McCrays and Shaw seemed to be his favorite victims. About 1886 Albert Briggs and his wife nee Cora Hatfield whom he had married in 1872, came to Varysburg from their Erie House in Warsaw, N.Y. The hotel became known as the Varysburg Hotel. They had first operated the Wethersfield Hotel at Wethersfield Springs. Following the Brigg's, Charles E. Kempston and his wife Elsie ran the old hotel and on Mar. 4, 1895 they sold to Barney Ripstein for \$3535.00. Shortly after he sold to Andrew Bauer and then in 1902 Thomas Murphy who also had previously operated the Wethersfield Hotel took over.

Hotel Rebuilt

It was during the ownership of Thomas Murphy and his wife nee Mary Campbell that the hotel burned. Mr. Murphy who was the son of Mathew and Margaret Rolph and was born in Java Nov. 7, 1860, rebuilt the Varysburg Hotel in 1909 under the supervision of the Broadbrooks Lumber Company of Attica. This hotel remains today. Mr. Murphy operated the hotel until his death in 1912. Since that time the owners have been William Kernan, Elmer Frisbee, Anthony Stark-ey and the present owner Robert Hirsch.



—A harvest ball is to be held at the Varysburg hotel on Friday evening, September 13th, Jefferson & McCray's orchestra is to furnish the music, and W. A. Potter is to serve as floor manager. Mr. Briggs has the reputation of giving very satisfactory dances to those who delight in such amusements.

Wyoming County Times, Thursday, December 12, 1889

—Briggs of Varysburg, has cards out for a Christmas evening dance on December 23th, at the Varysburg hotel.

Andrew Bauer has his cards out for the X-mas dance to be held Dec. 27.

Having the cards out for a Christmas dance in 1889-1898 was either a way of advertising or selling tickets or both. These dances would have been at the Varysburg Hotel.



Varysburg Hotel

**May 25, 2026
MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE SCHEDULE**

for the Strykersville American Legion Six Star Post #637:

Morning Assembly & Departure

8:00 AM – Assemble at Legion Post 8:30 AM – Depart Legion by bus

Community Stops

9:00 AM – Java Center

11:20 AM – Dutch Hollow

10:00 AM – Johnsonburg

11:50 AM – Pioneer Cemetery (Perry Road & Rt. 78)

10:55 PM – Sheldon

12:15 PM – Java Village

10:30 AM – North Java

12:30 PM – Strykersville

Main Ceremony: 1:00 PM – Ceremony and Luncheon at Post



Strykersville Sam—This beautiful eagle was donated by David & Diana Meyer for a fund raiser to continue making improvements in our Strykersville Pioneer Cemetery.

STRYKERSVILLE SAM

What is a Patriot?



Patriots are defined as those who were at all times unflinching in loyalty and rendered acceptable service to the cause of American Independence. Service must have been carried out, with some exceptions, on or between April 19, 1775 and November 26, 1783.

One or more of the following criteria must be met:

- o Served in a branch of the military, including Continental Army, Continental Navy, Minutemen, and militia on or between 19 April 1775 and 26 November 1783; served at the Battle of Point Pleasant on 10 October 1774 (this location and date only); or furnished a substitute for military service.
 - o Defended a fort, frontier or served as a ranger
 - o Taken as a prisoner of war, including those on the British ship Old Jersey or other prison ships
 - o Signed the Declaration of Independence, Mecklenburg Declaration of 1775, Albemarle Declaration of 1779, or Cumberland Compact of 1780
 - o Participated in the Boston Tea Party, Kaskaskia Campaign, Galvez Expedition, Cherokee Expedition, or Edenton Tea Party
 - o Physician, surgeon, nurse, or otherwise rendered aid to wounded of the Continental Forces
 - o Rendered material aid, such as furnishing supplies with or without remuneration, lending money to the Colonies, munitions makers, gunsmiths, or any other material aid which furthered the cause of American Independence
- Clergy member or other recognized leader of any religion who performed overt acts of resistance to the authority of Great Britain which could only be performed by religious leaders

JOB WINSLOW, PATRIOT AND PIONEER

By Jean Tucker Winslow

"Maybe life is just carrying news. Surviving to carry the news. Maybe we have just one message, and it is delivered to us when we are born and we are never sure what it says; it may have nothing to do with us personally, but it must be carried by hand through a life, all the way, and at the end handed over, sealed."

News of the World, Paulette Jiles

Those of you who have done the painstaking work of teasing out the life story of ancestors that are merely hinted at in their dry data will know the excitement that comes with each new nugget of discovery. One very special day in the quest my husband and I were pursuing researching the history of his 4th great grandfather, Job Winslow, happened at the Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum. We knew that Job Winslow had Revolutionary War service but there were very many men of the era who participated in militia service of short durations. We came to Sheldon mostly to find Job's grave and to see the area where he lived his last years.

At the very back of the Java Village Cemetery, we found a small metal marker that was placed by the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution in 1933 commemorating the grave of "Job Winslow 1754 - 1839". If there was another grave marker in the cemetery, it was not evident.

My husband's family had the advantage of owning a large, leather-bound Bible purchased in Canandaigua in 1827. This Bible listed Job's name and family members and was carried to Texas by Sylvester Winslow, grandson of Job, who immigrated from western New York just before the Civil War. This sparse record lists Job as "Col. Job Winslow". As we came to find out, the "Colonel" probably referred to his rank in the Bristol County Militia in Massachusetts (he retired as Lieutenant Colonel Commandant in the militia, Lane, p. 160).



Which brings me to the day that we met with Jeanne Mest at the Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum in 2016. We had communicated with her before we arrived about our research, so she was ready to help. She introduced us to Fold3.com, which contained the muster rolls for Job Winslow and showed the many locations where he had been stationed during the Revolutionary War. That day in Sheldon was mind-blowing for us. We did not know that Job had been a Continental soldier, enlisted for 3 years from 1777 through 1780. How the family had failed to communicate this amazing story might tell us something about how grueling the pioneer experience was when more recent difficulties overwhelmed the memory of the deeper past, no matter how glorious.

The family Bible told us that Col. Job Winslow and his wife Mary Atwood Winslow had been born in Dighton, Massachusetts. This was enough information to find other sources to help us tease out this family line from the many other Winslow families with their similar names and birthdates that lived in Massachusetts from the earliest settlement at Plymouth. Long story not so short, I will tell you the story we were able to parse about Job Winslow, quintessential American patriot and pioneer.

Job Winslow was born in 1754, the youngest child of Col. Job Winslow (Sr.) and his wife, Elizabeth Fisher Winslow. He was a 4th generation colonist. His 3rd great grandfather, Kenelm Winslow (brother to Gov. Edward Winslow of Plymouth Colony) had immigrated to Salem in 1629. Kenelm Winslow was a furniture maker and shipbuilder. The next generations of family had continued to live in the Plymouth and Massachusetts Colonies within twenty miles of the coastline.

His mother, Elizabeth Fisher, was a descendant of six Mayflower passengers: Thomas Rogers and his son Joseph Rogers, William and Alice Mullins, their daughter Priscilla and her husband John Alden. Several of her siblings lived in Dighton along with their families, so Job was surrounded by aunts, uncles and cousins.

Relations between the colonies and England had been going downhill for some time. In 1775, Parliament declared Massachusetts to be in a state of rebellion and enforced a blockade of the colony. Tensions were high and the Massachusetts Provincial Congress directed each town to organize and regularly train its militia, stipulating that "one-third of the men ... between sixteen and sixty years of age be ready to act at a minute's warning": the Minutemen. Job's father, Lieutenant Colonel Job Winslow of the local militia (1762 to 1778) most likely made sure his son, who was almost 21, was among the Minutemen.

Just weeks after the Battles of Concord and Lexington, the younger Job Winslow is seen on the muster rolls of Capt. Peter Pitt's company, Col. Timothy Walker's regiment, at the Siege of Boston. Forty-seven men from Dighton enlisted on May 2, 1775, for service of 3 months, and defended the fortifications at Roxbury (Ripstein-Hayes). Three of them died during the deployment.

Job surfaces again April 23, 1777, shown on a muster roll as a corporal in Capt. Elijah Walker's company, Col. John Hathaway's regiment, for militia service of 21 days marching from Dighton to Tiverton (Rhode Island). Most deployment by the Dighton militia are like this one, a local captain leading a group of men on a short engagement usually going to Rhode Island. Most of the men of Dighton appear to have served in some capacity during the war. Roughly 286 Dighton men including 7 slaves that were freed to serve show service from 1775 to 1782 but only 19 of these men had extended enlistments of 2 to 3 years in the Continental Army (Dighton Historical Commission).

In the summer of 1777, James Leonard, Muster Master of Bristol county manages to sign up 17 men for a 3-year term. Job is described as 5 ft. 5 in. tall, age 23. He begins his enlistment as a corporal, shown on a company muster roll of the 16th Massachusetts, in Capt. Gawen Brown's Company of the Regiment of Foot, commanded by Col. Henry Jackson in Boston. (All muster roll references from Fold3.com.) The 16th Massachusetts Regiment of Foot, also known as Henry Jackson's Additional Continental Regiment, left Boston in October 1777 to join Washington's army west of Philadelphia.

The winter of 1777-78 was the miserable time Washington's ragged army was reorganizing at Valley Forge. During this first winter of Job's enlistment, he was stationed first at Lancaster, (Pennsylvania) and then Gulph Mills (Maryland) between Valley Forge and Philadelphia. The long wait for action soon ended. In June 1778, word was received that the British were evacuating Philadelphia headed north. Col. Henry Jackson and the 16th Massachusetts were sent to

take possession of Philadelphia but soon joined the forces under General Charles Lee to chase and harass the retreating British and Hessian troops commanded by Lt. General Charles Cornwallis. At Monmouth Courthouse (New Jersey), the Americans were surprised when the main British army turned to engage them. The American troops, including Job's regiment, held off the British the entire morning of June 28 in stifling heat. By noon, Washington was able to bring up his main army and relieve the units that had fought all morning. In the afternoon, the Battle of Monmouth became the largest field artillery engagement of the war including a 3-hour artillery duel—imagine the sound! That night, the British army slipped away heading north. What a thrilling first battle for Corporal Job.

The 16th Massachusetts was then sent northward to Providence where it played a major role in the Battle of Rhode Island on August 29, 1778. The British had held Newport and Aquidneck Island since late 1776. With the entry of the French into the war, Washington gave Lafayette the task of coordinating a grand plan with the French to strike by land and sea. Eleven thousand Continental troops and militia crossed over to Aquidneck Island on August 9, 1778. As the British and Hessians withdrew to Newport, siege operations commenced as the American troops awaited the French navy. As the British and French ships positioned for battle in Narragansett Bay, a hurricane blew in which put an end to the sea battle. The American army, though larger than British forces, was composed largely of short-term militia soldiers, many of whom became discouraged with the departure of the French and went home. The remaining American army leaders decided to abandon the siege and headed northward. On the morning of August 29, 1778, British and Hessian troops attacked the retreating American troops with assistance from British ships who bombarded the American position along the western side of Aquidneck Island yet the Americans managed to hold their line until evening. Col. Jackson's biography cites 16th Massachusetts combat at Quaker Hill on this date (Dean, p. 112). It was a very hot day with many perishing on both sides from the heat. The last of the American troops finally withdrew from the island around midnight August 30. After this battle, they were sent to rejoin Washington.

Corporal Job's regiment is next visible at Pawtucket (Rhode Island) where he is shown on muster rolls from November 1778 through March 4, 1779, obviously winter quarters. In the summer of 1779, the 16th Massachusetts were sent to Boston in response to the British seizure of Castine (Maine). After the British finally withdrew from Newport in October 1779, the Regiment was sent to New Jersey where it endured a difficult winter. A muster roll dated March through April 3, 1780 finds Corporal Job in Morristown (New Jersey).

In June 1780, British forces attempted an invasion of New Jersey from Staten Island, speculating that loyalists and local residents, fatigued by the war, would welcome them. On June 23, the Battle of Springfield commenced with General Nathanael Greene defending valiantly against a much larger force. Job's regiment, Henry Jackson's Additional Continental Regiment, was actively involved in this battle. The British resorted to burning and looting, setting fire to Springfield before retreating back to Staten Island. This was one of the last major engagements of the War in the north. British General Clinton had lost a rare opportunity to destroy or disperse Washington's army. The Battle of Springfield became known as the "Forgotten Victory".

Job Winslow was discharged from the army September 10, 1780 though he participates in a final militia excursion in March 1781. He had marched as far west as Pennsylvania and as far east as Maine, enduring terrible winters and scorching summers. His horizons had been expanded in ways that would eventually lead his family far away from coastal Massachusetts.

Job returned home and married his 2nd cousin, Mary Atwood in November 1781. He was 27 and she was 26. They had 6 children, all born in Dighton. Job stated many years later in his pension application for service in the Revolutionary War that he was a cooper. A cooper is someone who makes wooden, staved vessels held together with wooden or metal hoops such as casks, barrels, buckets, etc. As Dighton was a regional shipping center on the Taunton River, Job must have been a busy tradesman making wooden containers used for shipping goods.

Job's career in the local militia continued. He moved up the ranks of the Bristol County Militia and was eventually promoted to Lieutenant Colonel Commandant which he continued until 1805 (Lane p.160).

After the war, the Treaty of Hartford in 1786 granted Massachusetts ownership of pre-emption rights over 6 million acres in western New York. Pre-emption was an exclusive right to purchase the land from the Indigenous nations (Haudenosaunee/Iroquois) and then sell it to others. This land, located west of the Pre-Emption Line (from the Pennsylvania border north to Lake Ontario, just west of Seneca Lake), was later sold to speculators. Just 3 years later, the Dighton Land Company was formed. Several families of Dighton purchased 46,080 acres together which were then divided into smaller lots for other Dighton residents. This area included what are now the towns of Richmond and Bristol in Ontario County on the western side of Lake Canandaigua and including Honeoye Lake.

As evidenced by a beautifully handwritten deed, Job Winslow had purchased some of this land which he sold in 1803 to Eliakim Walker of Bristol, Ontario County, NY in August 1803. We don't exactly know when Job moved his family to this area but it must have been after 1805 when he resigned his commission in the Bristol County Militia in Dighton and before 1813 when he shows up on the tax assessment rolls in Bristol, NY. At least four of Job and Mary's children go with them to western New York, possibly going by boat from Massachusetts, up the Hudson and then inland westward. What an exciting journey it must have been. The youngest, Nathaniel Fisher Winslow was a boy of 9 in 1805 and is my husband's 3rd great grandfather. He served for a brief militia service during the War of 1812.

In the years following, Job buys and sells land, owning as much as 96 acres as shown on the tax rolls in 1824. The tax rolls between 1827 and 1851 are missing so Job's land ownership is not clear beyond 1826.

In 1818, Congress enacted "An Act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and naval service of the United States in the Revolutionary War". Job made an application for pension on April 14, 1818 in which he lists all of his personal possessions which are valued at \$72.95. A court document for Ontario County, State of New York, dated August 21, 1820 states that "personally appeared in open Court...Job Winslow aged sixty-six years, resident in the town of Bristol in said county, who being first duly sworn, according to law, doth on his oath declare, that he served in the Revolutionary War as follows: Under Capt. Brown in Colonel Henry Jackson's Regiment Massachusetts Line as a Corporal for a term of three years commencing in Sept 1777 and discharged in 1780." He affirms, "And I do further swear and declare that I am by occupation a cooper and not able to do but little work owing to my infirmity and that my family consists of a wife age 66 years and entirely unable to help herself being in a decline and my daughter Polly aged thirty-three years and weakly. [signed] Job Winslow" Three judges of Ontario County approved the document and he received Pension Certificate No. 8172.

His wife Mary dies in 1826. They had been married 45 years. Where she is buried is unknown.

In a deed dated March 23, 1830, Job sells 51 acres in Bristol to his son-in-law, H.B. Stevens, married to his daughter Sally Atwood Winslow Stevens. This event may be a prelude to the final chapter of his life.

Although you might think Job with his stated infirmities might be ready for a peaceful retirement, he is not done yet. We next find him in Java, New York with a new wife, Tamzon Westover, whom he married in 1830 when he was 76 years old and she was 39. Tamzon is apparently a widow, as on an 1830 census in Sheldon, Genesee, New York, she is shown as head of household with four children, one between 10 and 15 years old, one between 5 and 10 years old and two under the age of 5. Once again, Job has a wife and a houseful of children though he is more the age of a grandfather. Even so, Tamson and Job have two children of their own, twins Elida Jane and George Washington Winslow, born August 15, 1832 in Cattaraugus, New York. Job lived until 1839 when he passed away at age 85.

Col. Job Winslow lived a long life through momentous times. As a boy living in Dighton, he grew up in the era of the French and Indian War. As a teenager, he experienced the colonies' gradual disenchantment with British rule. As a young adult, he was most likely a Minuteman, served in the militia and spent three years as a corporal in the Continental Army, fighting in four major engagements of the Revolution (the Siege of Boston, Monmouth Courthouse, the Battle of Rhode Island and the Battle of Springfield). Returning to his hometown, he married, raised a family and was a leader in the county militia while being a local tradesman. Finally, in midlife, he became a pioneer, taking his family far away to new lands on the western frontier where he eventually remarries and starts raising a second family. His story, so long forgotten, is the story of a quintessential early American patriot and pioneer—one life that quietly traced the arc of a nation coming into being.

There is one final coda: Job's daughter of old age, Elida Jane Winslow Lind, established the Job Winslow Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Traverse City, Michigan in January 1914.

SOURCES:

Dean, John Ward (Editor), *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol XLVI, Gen. Henry Jackson p. 110-114, April 1892.

Dighton Historical Commission, *They Pledged There Lives and Fortunes*, 1976.

Lane, Helen H., *History of Dighton, Massachusetts*, Town of Dighton, 1962.

Ripstein-Hayes, Anita, *Revolutionary Soldiers and Widows of Wyoming County, New York*, 2007.

www.Fold3.com/



We wish to thank Kenneth and Jean Tucker Winslow for sharing this story and for their generous donation to our Historical Society and 250th Celebrations. A park bench will be dedicated in memory of Job Winslow on May 30. Ken and Jean hope to travel here from Oklahoma to attend this ceremony honoring our Sheldon ancestors.

Finding Family History Stories - The Barvian Family

By Jeanne Mest

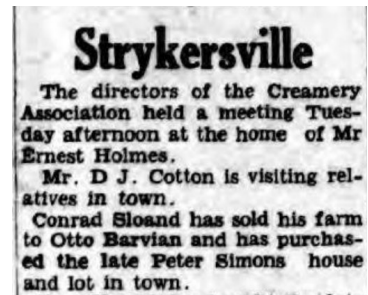
Occasionally readers ask where we get ideas for stories. The Sheldon Schoolhouse Museum is filled with stories of people and their lives. They are found in scrapbooks, family trees, cemetery lists, file folders, historical books and some are in black archival boxes, packed away with family memorabilia. Sometimes all we have to go on is a photo, a name, or some detail that catches your attention and you know there has to be a story there.

Recently we received several donations in memory of Robert Barvian and his sister, Mary Barvian Conrad. Although I'm familiar with these names, I wondered what was inspiring people to remember them so generously. When I asked Robert's son, Scott, if he had any interesting family stories to share about his dad or his aunt, he began by saying his father was 4th, Betty was 5th & Mary was 6th in the family of Otto and Bernice Kriger Barvian. I took a look at the Barvian family tree and there I found some of their stories: Some from the newspaper, some that were told by their children.

I knew that his grandfather, Otto Barvian, had been killed tragically on the day after Christmas in 1945. He was struck by a falling tree, leaving his wife alone to raise their six young children: John Otto (Jack), Jean Marie, Nancy Irene, Robert Paul, Elizabeth Ann (Betty) and Mary Agnes.



Otto Barvian, 1944



Otto Barvian, probably with son, Jack



Nancy, Betty, Jean, Mary, Jack and Robert Barvian, children of Otto and Bernice Kriger Barvian. 1944-45

(Continued on page 18)

From Scott's notes, I learned: "Otto and Bernice lived in a "tenant house" on Eugene Musty's farm in the early years of their marriage. Jack and Jean were born there. In early 1935 he purchased the Sloand farm on Perry Rd. on the "East Hill" above Strykersville. Dad said that before his death, Otto was saving money in a kitchen cabinet to use to buy the larger farm of his uncle George Armbrust (who died a week before Otto was killed). This money was used for living expenses after Otto died. Eugene Musty helped the family (with harvesting, etc.) after Otto's death, and Dad lived with Eugene for a while while in high school (after Eugene's son John was drafted). They worked four farms that Eugene owned. After graduating from high school, Jack operated the 96-acre farm by himself (with occasional help). After Bernice's death in 1961 he bought out the shares of his siblings and in 1963 he sold it to Robert Pingrey." In the early 2000's Jean wrote to Scott: Jean said that she was born in a little tenant house on Gene Musty's farm. "Dad drove a cement truck and helped out on the farm for the rent and roof over their heads. He had applied for Prison Guard in Attica and just after he bought the farm (from Conrad Sloand) he heard from them. Ma was always sorry about that because there was such a rundown house and no bathroom indoors. Not sure how those people lived there. Uncle Henry Logel, Aunt Iva's husband and my father put in a bathroom and kitchen cupboards. Little by little it was livable. Wood for heat and never enough water is what I remember. We did not have it easy making a living on that farm after Dad died; Mom had to buy the farm from the estate because there was no will. When someone died and there were dependents, 1/3 of the estate went to the widow and 2/3 to the dependent kids. When we turned 21, we each got some money (not much). The farm had to be appraised and with the lawyer's help, things eventually got straightened out. He always called us his kids because of all the legal mumbo jumbo involved."



Wedding of Otto & Bernice Kriger Barvian, Feb. 22, 1933

"When our dad died, our Mother could not drive a car. Try that one. With Aunt Iva's help and others, she learned how. That Lady was a Saint. (Aunt Iva was Bernice's sister and the mother of Marie Logel Redden and Ed Logel. Barbara Logel's grandparents [Sloands] owned the farm that Otto bought in 1935). Guess the Barvian side of the family donated some money to help with buying the farm. We had horses.

Jack had to stand on a ladder to bridle them. Eventually we got the tractor. Not sure how. I remember driving the horses on the hay wagon and it was fun. Those horses were huge and strong.

The boys were in the woods with Dad and the horses when he was killed. I remember that day but not too much of what followed. Uncle Charles (Kriger) and family came to live with us and work the farm until we all got big enough to deal with it alone. Keep in mind that we all graduated from High School, which was a huge blessing at that time. Nancy went to Nursing School and became a nurse and I went to work at the school in Arcade to help with her expenses as much as possible."



Jean, Bob, Betty, Mary 2005

Robert Barvian married Shirley Conrad. They raised four sons and retired in Arizona until his death on September 20, 2025. Shirley's brother, Norman Conrad, married Mary Barvian, who in later years was known to many as the Popcorn Lady, due to the popcorn sign by their house on Route 20A. Norm and Shirley's grand-father Peter Conrad had sold seed for the Carlton Seed Co. of PA; the popcorn was a legacy of that. Mary and Norman raised two daughters and a son. Mary Agnes Barvian Conrad passed away two months before her brother Bob on July 17, 2025. Elizabeth Ann married Thomas Reisdorf and they live in Indialantic, Florida. John Otto Barvian, Jean Marie Mulcahy and Nancy Irene Johengen passed away in 1996, 2018 and 1982, respectively.

In April, Scott and his brothers traveled to Varysburg to have their Dad's funeral. After he returned home, he heard from his Aunt Betty. *"When my parents got together, Dad was 6ft 2 and was slim like your dad, who looked like him. The year before he died Mom was proud, because he got up to 200 pounds. Mom was only 5 ft tall although she said she was 5ft 2. I was taller than her when I was 12. I remember most how my mother could sew. She had a pedal machine and could really make it work with her feet. I would sometimes start a skirt or dress and she would finish it. She could do in 20 minutes what would take me all night and do a beautiful job. She once sewed a whole set of clothes for Mary's doll and they were gorgeous. Very talented. Things were really hard when Daddy died but she kept us together."*

The story of this family's tragic loss, on the day after Christmas, of all days, has always touched my heart. From just a few facts and questions, I learned that they stood together against hardships and left a legacy of faith and love to their descendants.

Every family has a story—What is yours?

Attica News, January 10, 1946

Father of Six Young Children Killed by Tree

Otto Barvian, 43, Strykersville, father of six young children, was killed instantly, Wednesday, Dec. 26, 1945, on his farm in that community, when struck by a falling tree.

Accompanied by two sons, Mr. Barvian went into the woods on the farm to fell trees. The first tree to be felled was dead timber and the next two live timber. As the last tree was falling, it apparently struck the top of the dead tree which slipped off and struck Mr. Barvian in the back of the head, crushing the skull.

Mr. Barvian was born Oct. 27, 1902, in Sheldon. The family had lived on the farm in Strykersville for ten years. He was a member of St. Mary's church.

Funeral services were held Monday morning in St. Mary's church with the Rev. Charles Gampp and the Rev. George Koch of Sheldon, officiating. Burial was in Saint Mary's cemetery.

Besides his wife, Bernice Kriger Barvian, he is survived by two sons, Jack 12, and Robert, 8; four daughters, Jean 11; Nancy, 9; Betty, 6, and Mary 2; also by his father, George, of Sheldon; one sister, Mary Kazmierzk, Olean, and a brother, Richard, of Sheldon.

Mrs. Barvian is the daughter of Edward Kriger, Attica.

STARK TRAGEDY

The headline:

"Father of Six Young Children Killed by Tree".

It meant more than that. It meant a man in middle age had been suddenly struck down and deprived of an opportunity to labor for those youngsters, to give them the same as other youngsters have, a father.

The story did not tell of how the two sons, eight and 12, leaving the scene of the accident, rushed through swollen waters of a stream to secure help for a daddy even then in death.

It could not explain the anguish of a wife and mother made to face such a disaster in the twinkling of an eye. It was a big disaster for her.

After such a shock she must gain courage and lift up the burdens that so short a time ago were shared by another. She will find it a gigantic task to be mother and daddy to youngsters two, six, 8, 9, 11 and 12 years of age.

Lord, will thou extend pity to her in this hour of travail? Help and bless her. Strengthen her and comfort her in this great task.

Scott Barvian found this article years ago but was never able to learn the identity of the author.

Sheldon Historical Society
Schoolhouse Museum
3859 Main Street, PO Box 122
Strykersville, NY 14145

In This Issue:

Historian	2
Varysburg History	4
Varysburg Bicentennial	6
Memorial Day	11
Job Winslow	12
Family History—Barvian	17
Membership	20

Newsletter printed by:
ARC Hilltop Printshop
Mount Morris, NY 14510
(585)658-3311

Our QR Code
may be used
for donations
or to pay for
membership!



Research assistance is available
throughout the year.

For inquiries please contact Jeanne at
townofsheldonhistorian@gmail.com,
716-474-3156 or mail: 470 Rt. 20A,
Strykersville, NY 14145.

Newsletter compiled and edited by
Jeanne Mest, with the assistance of
creator/consultant Mary Ann Metzger,
Scott Barvian and many volunteers.
Submissions welcome; please send
articles or questions to Historian.
Newsletters can be emailed. For
previous newsletters, see website or
contact Historian.

Sheldon Historical Society Officers:

President - Jeanne Mest
Vice President - Carol Felski
Secretary - Clarence Conrad
Treasurer - Michelle Fontaine
Board Members:
P.J. Almeter, Chairman;
Barbara Logel, Elaine Almeter,
Judie Coffey, Steve Lakas, Missy Kehl
Museum Curator - Barbara Logel
Classroom Curator & Town of
Orangeville Historian - Laury Lakas
laurylakas@gmail.com
Sheldon Historian/Archival Curator
Newsletter Editor - Jeanne Mest
townofsheldonhistorian@gmail.com

It is almost time to renew annual memberships. Please send the following form, or come see us on June 6-7, 2026 at our Annual Strykersville Yard Sale, when the Schoolhouse Museum will be open from 9:00 to 4:00. See historian for a gift.

Sheldon Historical Society Membership

Being a member of the Sheldon Historical Society means being part of preserving history. Your dues and donations help maintain our museum and historical artifacts and contribute to scholarships. As a member, you may vote and receive newsletters at no cost. The membership year is from July 1 through the following June 30.

Please renew yearly and let us know of any address changes.
If you are currently a member, we thank you for your support!

Please send a check payable to the Sheldon Historical Society to
PO Box 122, Strykersville, NY 14145

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

____ NEW MEMBER ____ MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

____ \$12 Annual Membership July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

____ \$75 Lifetime Membership

____ Making a Donation in Memory or Honor of _____

***** Something New – Your Ancestors' Names *****

We would love to know what brought you to us and how we can help you! Please share how you became interested in membership, and the names of your ancestors. We will gladly keep an eye out for them in our records and share any information we discover.