

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOL. IV, Number 1)

August 1989

Milton's Civil War General

Brigadier General George J. Stannard was born in Georgia, Vermont in 1820. He was educated in the public schools of his native town and in nearby St. Albans with plans to attend college. At the age of 15 he accepted a teaching job, giving up the idea of a college career, and worked on the family farm in the summers.

In 1845 he went to work as a foundry clerk in St. Albans. He subsequently became a partner in the business and continued in this capacity until the outbreak of the Civil War.

When the Vermont Volunteer Militia was organized in 1855, Stannard was chosen 1st lieutenant in the Ransom Guards, which functioned similar to the National Guard of today. In 1858 he was chosen colonel of the newly organized 4th Regiment.

Immediately after the attack by Rebels on Fort Sumpter in April 1861 he offered his services to his country. It is believed that Stannard was the first Vermonter to volunteer his services to the Civil War effort.

On June 6, 1861 he was commissioned Lt. Col. of the Second Vermont Volunteers and had charge of its organization. On May 21st, 1862 he was commissioned Colonel of the 9th Regiment, Vermont Volunteers and he recruited, organized, and went into the field with it.

On March 11, 1863 he was commissioned Brigadier General of United States Volunteers by President Abraham Lincoln and given command of the Second Vermont Brigade. This was composed of the 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th Regiments which were all 9 month regiments. This meant that the men had only a nine month



George J. Stannard
Brig. Gen.

Brig. Gen. Stannard

commitment, including training, thus presenting a challenge for their leader to form a cohesive unit.

This Brigade was in but one battle, that of Gettysburg, Penn. in July of 1863. The Second Vermont fought valiantly and historians credit them with having a large part in repulsing Picket's Charge on the third day of the battle.

General Stannard was severely wounded in the leg at this battle but would not permit his removal from the battlefield until his wounded men were cared for and arrangements were made for burying the dead. For his coolness and gallantry he was brevetted Major General of Volunteers.

Four weeks after the battle he returned to duty and in Nov., 1863 he was placed in command of all troops in New York, a position he held until May, 1864. He then joined the Army of the James, under General Butler. In June of that year he took command of the First Division.

He was in the battles of Drury's Bluff, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Chapin's Farm, and Fort Harrison. At Cold Harbor he lost all his staff officers - two killed - 4 wounded. All his orderlies but one were wounded and he received two wounds himself.

During the battle of Chapin's Farm, Sept. 30th 1864, he was so severely wounded in his right arm that it had to be amputated. Upon recovering from this he reported to General Dix to hold a position that did not see action.

In early 1865, after the famous St. Albans Raid of the previous December, he was recalled to active service to lead the Vermont section of the Frontier Cavalry. He was thus charged with the protection of our country's northern border in Vermont.

In February, 1866 he was assigned to the Freedman's Bureau in Baltimore where he remained until June, at which time he was appointed United States Collector of Customs for the District of Vermont.

Upon returning to his native state he bought a farm in Milton with plans to raise horses. The house, built in 1823 by Dr. Deming, still stands today on US Route 7 just north of the Milton-Colchester town line, and is the subject of an article later in this newsletter. At one time there were as many as five barns and out-buildings as well. Unfortunately, within a few years the horse business ended in bankruptcy.

He remained the head of the US Customs offices of Vermont until 1872. Not much is known of his last years from this point until his death at age 66 in 1886. He was honored with a burial in the national cemetery in Washington, D.C.

(Submitted by Stan Henry, a member of the "Greater Burlington Civil War Round Table")

Stannard / Sanderson Farm

* At the May 88 meeting Stan Henry reported that we had been offered a farm house & barn that once belonged to Civil War General George J. Stannard, a native of Georgia, Vt. The catch was that we had to remove the buildings from the property, owned by the Greater Burlington Industrial Corp. (GBIC), to make room for expansion of the Catamount Industrial Park complex. A committee was set up to investigate the possibilities.

* A resolution to endorse the saving of the Stannard/Sanderson house was drafted and approved at the Dec. 88 meeting. It was presented to the Milton Select Board by Gail McDonough, a member of our society and a selectman.

* In January we received a letter from GBIC offering us a new deal where we could leave the house in place and lease it from them at \$1 per year. Further, they were willing to pay for the exterior renovations necessary. But, we had to agree to finance the restoration of the interior and to provide for the up-keep of the building (estimated at \$4,000 per year). Although this offer seemed more than generous on the part of GBIC, it still was out of our reach.

* In February we agreed to hire Mr. Chester Liebs of UVM, a consultant on historic restoration projects, to help us evaluate the potential of both the historic site and our society. Although his initial report covered several interesting notes on the potential of the house and barn, he could not help but highlight the difference between the costs involved and the earning potential of our society. Further, he addressed the fact of our limited number of volunteers.

* We are currently trying to locate a larger group that may be able to participate in this restoration project. Our deadline is December 31, 1989. Suggestions are welcomed. We need a creative solution to this problem.

Museum Notes

* A large old slate chalkboard has been donated by the Everest family. Our thanks go out to them.

* Stan Henry repaired and repainted the Museum sign in May 88 and updated the hours that we are open. Unfortunately, the Town has since removed the sign and replaced it with one that does not include our hours.

* Ruth Ryan and Iris Mayville put together a lovely Victorian Exhibit to coincide with the Homes Tour last fall.

* There is presently an extensive collection of antique cameras and photos on display, mostly belonging to Mrs. Sharon Flaherty.

* We have purchased a copy of the new "Swanton Town History" at \$25.00.

* Donations of old Milton photos and other items are always of interest. Contact Ruth Ryan for details.

* Our new winter hours are from 1pm to 4pm on the first and third saturday of each month. This will last from November 1st to May 1st. The summer schedual will include every saturday from 1pm to 4pm. As always, special visits or group tours can be arranged by calling Ruth Ryan.

Treasurer's Report (7/89)

Cemetery Fund -----	10.00
Newsletter Fund -----	382.40
Museum Fund -----	68.66
History Book Fund -----	80.00
Stannard Farm Fund -----	128.35
General Fund -----	1168.43
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Total Balance	1837.84

The Passing Of A Member

We note, with regret, the passing of Mrs. Villa FitzGerald a charter member of our group. She leaves behind many friends and family members, including her husband of 63 years, retired reverand Roger FitzGerald. We will miss her kind ways and gentle smile.

Old Cemetery Notes

* We paid for paint and brushes so the Boy Scouts could repaint the fence at the Checkerberry Cemetery before Memorial Day 1988. The scouts have also repaired the fence this spring where a car went through it last fall. We say thanks again to Dick Dupont and his scout troop for another great year of volunteer work on the town's old cemeteries.

* We are happy to report that there has been an improvement in the cemeteries in town, due to our conversations with the Town Manager. there have been repairs made to fences and new agreements reached on regular mowing of the lawns.

* Art Mayville reports that the town holds about \$6,000 in an account to cover maintenance of the New West Milton Cemetery. Loren Sanderson and Jim Ballard are working with the town to establish guidelines for the release of these funds for their intended purpose.

* Co-Chairmen of Old Cemetery Committee are John FitzGerald & Bob Hooker

* We acknowledge a donation to our Old Cemetery Fund from John & Phyllis Harty, sent in appreciation of our efforts to improve the condition of the New West Milton Cemetery.

Geneology Requests

* Info requested on Peter King and Francis B. Kinney, local men who served in the Civil War.

* Info requested on the Barnes and Richardson families, by Lucius Richardson.

* A request for a copy of the signature of Absolam Taylor, as it appears on the town charter, from Mrs. John Hartry of Michigan.

* The Geneology Committee members are Ruth Ryan & Sharon Flaherty.

Speakers

* May 88

Ms. Elise Guyette of the Shelburne Museum, author of "Vermont, The Cultural Patchwork", presented the tale of Ann Story who settled in Vermont 200 years ago.

Dressed in pioneer costume of long dress and apron, she told her saga in the first person context, beginning in Norwich Connecticut in 1774. Her husband and oldest son walked to their land grant in Salisbury, Vermont in the winter by way of the frozen Otter Creek. Since there were no established roads or paths into the wilderness of "the grants", this was the only practicle way to travel.

They wintered over in a temporary shelter and began cutting trees for a log cabin. The following summer her husband was killed by a large falling tree and was buried near the family cabin. Her son returned to Connecticut alone with the tragic news.

In a true pioneer spirit, Ann Story and her five children decided to continue with their plans to move to Vermont. They sold almost all their belongings, save what essentials they could carry on their backs, and set out for Vermont on foot, a 150 mile journey.

They settled into their cabin in Salisbury and scratched out a living in the wilderness, having to deal with the wild animals, the weather, the Indians, the Tories, & the American Revolution. Ann and her family acted as spies for the American troops during the war. Since their cabin was located in an area that was readily traveled by both the Indians and the British, they were able to report their movements to the American troops.

Ann Story and her family were very brave during this time of hardship, which included having to rebuild their cabin after it was burned by the Indians and British. A monument stands in Salisbury today to commemorate her accomplishments.

Carrying on the family tradition of bravery, one of Ann's sons joined the Green Mountain Boys when he was grown.

Ms. Guyette brought some early pioneer artifacts from the museum's collection to show how they went about their daily lives. Included were cooking and eating utensils, as well as cabin building tools.

The talk, which followed the presentation of the 4th grade history contest awards, was enjoyed by over 100 Milton residents present for the occasion. We are very grateful to Ms. Guyette for sharing her expertise with us, and would highly recommend her to any group interested in this period of history!

* June 88

Stan Henry presented some notes on the history of the US Postal system in Milton as an addition or update to his article presented in our last newsletter.

In notes taken from "The Postal History of Vermont", by George Slawson, Arthur W. Bingham, & Sprague W. Drenen (1969), Stan has found that the first post office was opened in 1805 instead of 1808 as was previously thought. Also, a post office was established in Milton Borough in 1882. The spelling of Borough was changed to Boro in 1897, and the post office was closed on April 30th, 1903.

On early state politics, Stan quoted "A History of The Green Mountain State" (Edmund Fuller, 1952) concerning the "Anti-Masonic" Party, which gained control of the political scene from 1826 to 1836. William A. Palmer was elected governor on this ticket 4 times. In addition, in 1832, Vermont was the only state in the union to give its electoral vote to the Anti-Masonic Presidential candidate, William Wirt.

* July 88

Ruth Painter of the Williston Historical Society spoke in detail of their recent project of moving the last one room school house in their town to a new location for restoration. There were numerous details, problems, and costs that were involved. It was our hope, and her intention, that a sharing of their experience would help give us more insight into the Stannard/Sanderson farm project for our group. An excellent presentation with photos of

work in progress, names of moving companies and utilities to contact, costs to consider, and fundraising techniques. Plus the 'voice of experience' talking about the commitment required to follow through to completion. Our hats are off to Mrs. Painter for a fine presentation and to the Williston Historical Society for a job well done.

* September 88

A video presentation on the Basin Harbor Maritime Museum was shown at the home of Franklin and Odessa Cary in West Milton. Boat building was featured, from tree cutting to the finished product, with detailed commentary. Also included was an overview of boating on Lake Champlain. Mr. Art Cohn is the director of the Maritime Museum.

* October 88

Mary Ellen Martin, Historian of American Interiors, presented an illustrated talk, "Through Lace Curtains". The slides shown were of 18th & 19th century homes and she related detailed descriptions of the changing styles and trends.

An 18th century home in Randolph, Vermont was shown, as an example of the Federal style. A picture of a St. Johnsbury home, also from the late 1700's, showed original wallpaper from Europe, and a Roman styled sideboard with inlaid wood. The Greek Revival style of both the State Capital Building in Montpelier, and the Follette house in Burlington were noted as excellent examples of their period.

An 1860's octagonal home in St. Johnsbury showed Italianate overhang of the eaves, and a Mansard roof. Ms. Martin noted that platform rockers were especially popular during this time.

From the 1870's to the 1890's Queen Ann architecture of hip roof and gabled roof prevailed, with attention to details. Victorian furniture, popular at the time, featured round oak tables, square pianos, organs, and stools. Completing the stately interiors were often found horse hair sofas, drapes, lace curtains, scarves, and ferns. A varia-

tion on the Queen Ann theme was illustrated by a house in Brandon that has a styck stlye roof, with lots of gables.

By the late 19th century wicker furniture was most popular, along with mantle clocks, wrap around porches, and gingerbread style houses. This trend lasted into the early part of the 20th century.

The last slide showed a Christmas scene of an old fashioned living room, or parlor, of the early 1900's. The decorated tree was surrounded by presents, cards, and family members.

Mary Ellen Martin is a former director of the Wood Art Gallery, and the Vermont College Art Center.

Several publications pertaining to the presentation were on display, including "Century of Color" magazine.

There were about 25 members and friends present for the talk.

* November 88

Rodney LaDoux of the Swanton Historical Society, talked about writing a town history book. Their society has recently completed such a book and we have purchased a copy for our museum.

He said the format of a town history should include some current information as well as past historical data, and should be as accurate as possible. He noted that it has been said that "nobody can change history like historians".

The Swanton Historical Society established a committee of 7, with Mr. LaDoux as chairman, to direct the project but there were 30 people actually involved in writing the book.

The project took 4 years, with the first year spent mostly on research. The total cost was \$26,000 for 1900 books. They were able to get partial funding from the Town and from the Vermont Historical Society. Priced at \$25 each, the books are in line with similar local history projects. He also said that offering a discount of \$5 for advance sales could be a good fundraiser.

As a form of advertising they had 6,000 brochures printed at a cost of \$350.00. They found them to be very helpful in getting the word out about the project.

It was necessary for the committee to get a permit from the state tax department to sell the books. Although no tax was charged to the customer the committee was required to pay a tax to the state.

In closing, Mr. LaDoux quoted "The Vermont Historical Gazeteer" (1882, Abby Marie Hemingway), "making history is building bridges over the old stream of time".

* December 88

Presented by Velma Powers and Edith Holden, we heard readings from "The Great Turkey Drive", by Charles Morrow Wilson. It told of drives that started about 1824 and continued into the early part of this century. The turkeys were driven overland from points in Vermont to the markets in Boston, some 250 miles, in three weeks. Of the thousands of birds moved this way, it noted that casualties of 5% were not uncommon.

The readings were followed by the telling of Christmas stories by various members of the group, the annual exchanging of homemade gifts, and the yuletide eggnog.

* February 89

Lucius Leavens, basket collector, auctioneer, and antique dealer spoke about basket making, basket collecting, and in particular about Seymore Morehouse, basket maker of the early 1800's.

Speaking informally, Mr. Leavens said that although most baskets look alike to the novice, they are all different and artistic. Baskets can be of many materials, including cane, willow bark, sweet grass, or any other vegetable material.

He showed several antique brown ash splint baskets, some from his own collection, and some borrowed. He described the making of such baskets. It begins with a brown ash log which is split down the middle and sliced to size; then hammered and peeled off in 10 to 12 foot strips. They are then cut more precisely to size, soaked in water, and shaped around a mold to dry. In the olden days, he said, whole families were involved with basket making.

The baskets were used to hold grain, eggs, corn, potatoes, and almost everything else. They were also used as units of measure and were made very carefully to size, such as peck, half bushel, and bushel. He noted that many of the early settlers learned the craft from native Indians living in the area, and the designs show this influence.

He also spoke of his research to learn more about Seymore Morehouse of Westford, Vermont, basket maker of the early 1800's. Not much is known about him but he has collected some facts. He was a wheelwright by trade and took up basket weaving in his later years. It is suspected that he was forced to give up the wheelwright trade due to some disability. A great Grandson, Homer Morehouse, of Barre, remembers his folks talking of Seymore delivering his baskets in a two wheeled cart.

Although he probably made hundreds of baskets over the years, not many remain to be found. Some were signed and dated on the bottom, and others can be recognized by their design which includes carved wooden handles and a particular type of overlap in the weave. The Shelburne Museum has one of his baskets in their collection. They currently sell for about \$300 each at auctions.

Other basket makers mentioned included Newton Washburne of New Hampshire, who still makes 46 different patterns, Charlie Cross of Essex Jct., the Sweetser family of Sterling, Silas Lapan, Calais Hollisway of Joe's Pond (an Indian), and John O'Bun Sarvin of Grand Isle.

The presentation concluded with a chance for questions about old baskets brought in by our members and a hands-on look at the speaker's collection.

* March 89

Stan Henry and Lorinda Henry gave a fine presentation on oldtime medicines. There were lots of old medicine bottles from their private collections, as well as reproductions of ads extolling the virtues of various tonics. It was noted that the main ingredient in many of the old cure-all's was either alcohol, opium,

or some other dangerous substance, sold long before the advent of the US Food and Drug Administration.

One of the most famous patent medicines, Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Nostrum, was the best selling cure for female complaints and had a high alcohol content. Lydia's slogan was "A Baby In Every Bottle". The Lydia Pinkham company was based in Lynn, Mass. where Miss Pinkham was born in 1819 and died in 1883.

The term patent medicine was actually a misnomer, since the name was patented, but not the ingredients. They were popular from the mid 19th century to the early part of the 20th century.

Other patent medicines mentioned were Indian Oil, Indian Worm Killer, Buffalo Salve, & Buffalo Liver Pills, all produced and sold by the Kickapoo Indian Medicine Company. It was noted that this company was only recently shut down. Also popular was Father John's Patent Medicine, by Kimball Brothers Company of Enosburg Falls, Vermont. Another product of the time was Dr. B. J. Kendall's Blackberry Balsam, warranted to cure Cholera, Dysentery, and all summer complaints.

The display included an aqua bottle once containing Lydia Pinkham's Blood Medicine, and a brown bottle labeled "Muny On's Paw Paw Tree Great Natural Remedy". There was also a black bottle which once contained "Paines Celery Compound", and also a green one labeled "Moore's Emerald Oil".

A small book on display, printed in 1937 by the American Medical Association, asks the Question... "Ox Bile or Rhubarb root anyone?" Both were included in useful drugs.

Stan and Lorinda also displayed their collections, on behalf of our society, at the annual health fair sponsored by the Villemaire Family Health Center Advisory Board last November.

* April 89

Archaeologist, and Milton resident, Scott Dillon of UVM talked about the artifacts found during the surface diggings at the Catamount Industrial Park several years ago. He passed around several examples and explained that they were pieces of spear or

dart tips used for hunting by the early Indians 5,000-10,000 years ago.

Although the new buildings in the park have destroyed some potential digging sites, he is planning to ask permission to get back to further research as soon as possible on the remainder of the open land.

He noted that the Milton area, especially parts near Interstate 89, are believed to be very rich in early artifacts due to the patterns of traveling tribes of Indians and other early peoples. As an example, the Manley farm was highlighted as producing 5,000 - 10,000 arrowheads, spearheads, and other implements over the years just from turning the land over with a plow.

In addition, he told us that the Vermont Archeological Society is in need of a headquarters of some kind. This situation may be beneficial to our search for support in saving the Stannard / Sanderson house which is located on the edge of the Catamount Industrial Park. He also noted that there is no established archeological museum in this part of the state and it would be very appropriate to locate one near such rich diggings.

Mr. Dillon also showed slides of an archeological study done in the northern part of the state on the construction site of a power conversion station. This illustrated the system and methods used to get a complete picture of the early history of an area.

He noted that it is equally important to be able to accurately map the location of each artifact as well as to dig it out of the earth and identify it. For that reason the team spends a great deal of time measuring distances and drawing a grid pattern across the entire area under study.

His next project will be a series of digs in the intervale area of Burlington's North End this summer. He invited us to join his team since they are in need of many volunteers, and they could train us in the basic skills for this project. He would also need volunteer help with a return to the diggings at the Catamount Park.

The President's Message

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I would like to thank the members of the Milton Historical Society for the opportunity to serve as their president this past year. Including the three year term I served earlier, this was my fourth year as president.

As we all know we need more members who are ready to tackle some of the important projects such as the old cemeteries, writing a complete history of Milton, collecting oral history, and last but not least the Milton Museum. I feel that we should have some special exhibits at the museum every few months to encourage our visitors to return.

Rod LeDoux of the Swanton Historical Society, commenting on their recent town history book project, made us aware that this project alone could use all our available volunteers for several years to come.

I would like to thank all my officers and also the members who have supported me this past year. Without you this year would not have been a success.

Jane FitzGerald, President

Annual Meeting - 1989 Officers

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* On April 5th, 1989 the annual meeting was held and the following officers were elected....

President; Jane FitzGerald
Vice President; Lorinda Henry
Treasurer; Bob Hooker
Recording Secretary; Stan Henry
Corresponding Secretary; Stan Henry
Historian; Ruth Ryan
Director; Sharon Flaherty

Milton History Book

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* At our February meeting we reactivated the committee to update and rewrite our town's history book. The members are Sharon Flaherty, Stan Henry, John Deboer, Clara Deboer, John FitzGerald, Jane FitzGerald, Iris Mayville, & Velma Powers.

History In The Making

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* Is anyone out there interested in keeping a scrapbook of news clippings on Milton? We would be glad to provide the book and glue if you would donate the finished product to the museum each year. Remember, today's news is tomorrow's history! Maybe it could be a class project for Social Studies!

1989 Dues

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* As usual, your dues are due on the first of April. The fees are listed here. Please mail them directly to the Treasurer, Bob Hooker, at 46 River St., Milton, Vt. 05468

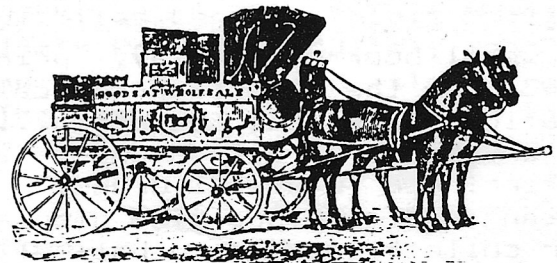
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Student	-----	\$1.00
Honorary	-----	\$0.00

Larger sums are most welcomed, and of course, all donation are tax deductible!

Our Sponsors

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* Thanks again to all our faithful sponsors who help to make this newsletter a reality!



Newsletter Staff

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Editor: Bob Hooker
Proof Reader: Jeanne Henry
Contributors: Stan Henry, Ruth Ryan,
Jane FitzGerald, Lorinda Henry
Advertising: Bob Hooker

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROGRAMS 1989 - 1990

Meetings of the Historical Society are held on the first Wednesday of each month at the American Legion hall on Route 7, 1 1/2 miles south of Milton Village. Unless otherwise indicated, the programs start at 7:30 pm and are followed by the regular business meeting. Anyone interested is welcomed to come. For more information call 893-7036, or 893-2340.

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August 2: Pam MacPherson and Elsie Smith of Champlain Valley Quilters. You may bring a quilt to share.

September 6: Marjorie Napoli will present "An Introduction To Genealogy".

October 4: Evelyn Stanley from Enosburg, editor of the "Pot Ash Kettle", the publication of the Vermont Folklore Society, will speak on Vermont Folklore.

November 1: Eloise Hedbor will present a program on prohibition entitled "Booze Smuggling across the Border".

December 6: Annual Holiday party and handmade gift exchange.

January 3: Ethan Sims will speak on his ancestor Ethan Allen.

February 7: Annual Pie Night; A film on the 1927 flood will be featured.

March 7: Irving Berlin Musical program. Music by Barbara Cox and local singers.

April 4: Marjory Power, Archaeologist, on pre-history of Abenakis. The program will be followed by the annual election of officers.

May 2: Junior Historians' Night. Prizes awarded for Fourth Grade History Contest. Speaker will be of interest to young people.

June 6: Dr. Leonard Perry of the Vermont Extension Service will talk on Victorian Gardens.

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Membership dues are \$5 per person or \$7.50 per couple, renewable in April. New members are welcomed at any time. The Milton Museum, in the Clark Memorial Building on Main St., is opened every Saturday from 1pm to 4pm, from May 1st to Nov. 1st (winter hours every other Saturday). Groups and special visits by appointment with the curator, Ruth Ryan (893-4488)

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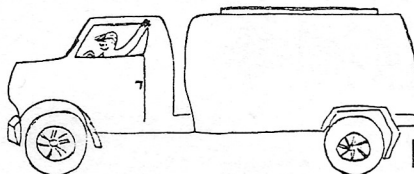
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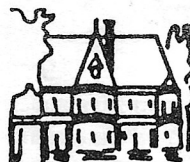
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