

"From the Historian's File"

Homer J. Buckman - Sold Milk, Cream and *LOLLIPOPS!!!*

It might be a surprise to learn that a man that founded one of the first dairies in Greece also sold "suckers" in his very modest store, attached to his dairy barn. Last month in the Corinthian was a "Guess What?" photo. Readers were asked to identify, what looked like an over turned, double sifter. No one ventured a guess but it was once used to hold Lollipops on Buckman's dairy store counter. It might well have been fashioned by Mr. Buckman or made for him (one of a kind). (See more pictures on page 6.)

A short biography of the Buckman family seems in order, since the recent Buckman's Dairy and Donut Shop may not be known to the younger generation.

The Buckmans came from England in the mid-19th century. The Buckman name appears in the 1875 local census with Job and wife, Harriet Benedict, and their three children, George, Jennie and J. Frank living in Greece. Job is listed as a farmer with the eldest George being a farm laborer. George is married to his wife Lucy about 1881 and Homer Jay Buckman is born two years later. Moving ahead to the twentieth Century, we find the Buckmans on a Road north of the Ridge which will bear their name. Papa George farms a rather modest plot of 9 acres, plus maintains a modest greenhouse. When a 50 acre plot becomes available on the north side of Ridge Road, just west of Long Pond Rd., he purchases it from a Sarah Walker. 1911 is an important year as he sells almost all of the fifty acres to son George. A house and sturdy barn are already on the property, so George moves in with his wife, Lucy and year old daughter, Emeroy. He soon adds twelve cows....George is in the dairy business! He does fairly well, but finds he has competition selling milk. By 1914 the competition is gone as George buys that small business and starts to pasteurize milk and deliver it to customers in a one horse wagon. Business increases and his own cows can't produce enough milk for the demand. He soon is receiving raw milk dropped off at the North Greece "Hojak" railroad station. He needs a better delivery system than "ole Bessie and wagon". A Ford Model T truck does the trick for a few years until a more rugged REO truck takes its place. Homer adds a small cash & carry business store next to the barn. Milk, cream and in season, ice cream are the main products with a small assortment of gum and candy (hence the suckers). By the late 1920s his driver is delivering 300 quarts of milk per day, 7 days a week. Because of ill health Homer sells his business in 1931 to Robert Peters. Buckman still owns the buildings and continues to live in the house just to the west of the business.

In later years Homer moves to Walker Street (once part of the Buckman pasture) and dies in 1972, at the age of eighty-eight. Ralph DeStephano Sr. had purchased the dairy and property in 1950. The DeStephano's Buckman-Bonney Brook Dairy story has been told a number of times in the past. It could be retold in the near future....



Photos, data supplied by **Alan Mueller**, Greece Historian's Office. If you have any information on our photos, call Alan at 663-1706.

