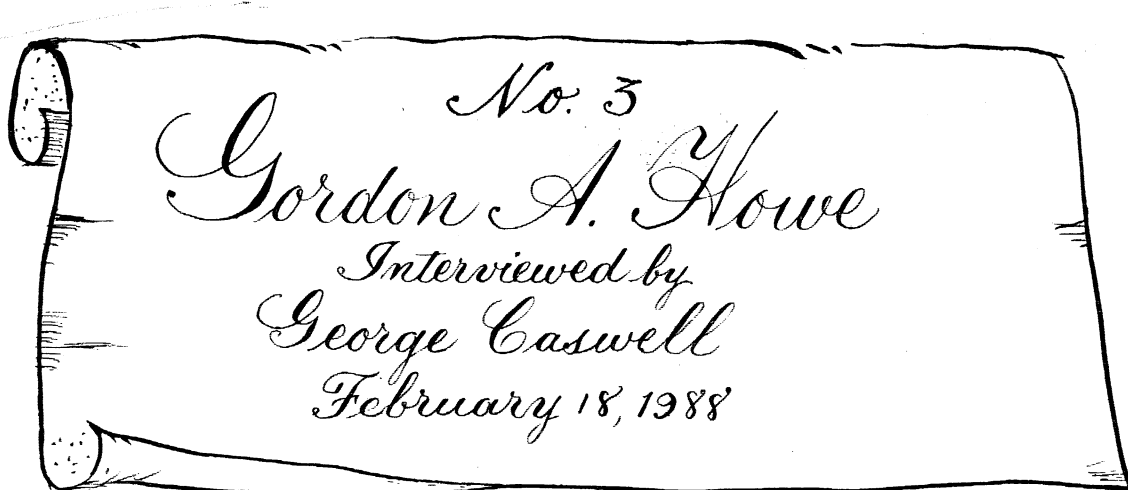


History in Interview



Historical Society of Greece, N.Y.

Question: "You were Town Supervisor in Greece from 1934 to 1960, that's 26 years and I'm sure a record. Will you recall for us the major activities through those years and if you will, tell us about your political activities before you became Town Supervisor?"

Howe: "Well, before I became Town Supervisor I was a committeeman on the Greece Republican Committee and Secretary of the committee, when Al Skinner was the chairman.

In 1929 I was appointed a Justice of the Peace to fill a vacancy and was elected for a four-year term on the election day of 1929. I served as Justice of the Peace which was a member of the Town Board at that time, for four years having been elected in 1929. I then was elected Supervisor in November, 1933 and served for 13 terms for a total of 26 years, which is a record of service as a Supervisor anywhere in the county. I was Chairman of the Board of Supervisors for 12 years and following that in 1960, I was appointed by the Board of Supervisors as County Manager of the County of Monroe and served for 12 years. I was elected a delegate to the New York State Constitutional Convention in 1967 and retired from the position of County Manager in January 1972."

Question: "I know that much happened in Greece in those growing years. Would you recall for us some of the major activities through those years?"

Howe: "Well, population of the Town of Greece at that time was 10,000 now it's near 100,000 and much of that growth was during the 26 years that I was Supervisor and the four years I was Justice of the Peace. In the early days subdividers could come into the town and plow up the land and call it a street and put a sign on each lot - \$5 down and \$1 a week. We changed all that by requiring subdivision developers to install streets in accordance with our specifications, which included installation of asphalt highways with concrete depressed curbing, sidewalks and also to sign a petition for street lights and for sanitary and stormwater sewers so that when a person bought a lot or house and a lot, they knew the improvements were in and paid for. This set a record for the whole area because the other towns in the county soon followed and set up similar requirements for sub-division developments. I think that was an important factor which led to orderly development in the town. During that time, I went to Washington to get money under what was called "Works Progress Administration" and the "Public Works Administration" to install sanitary sewers in the built-up section of the town in the Dewey-Stone area, east of Mt. Read Blvd.

The government also built a sewage treatment plant on Latta Road which was the first sewage plant in the Town of Greece, and the expansion of the sewage district to all the new areas that are being built up is now required."

Question: "That's a wonderful recollection, Gordon. At one time I know, Greece was considered a bedroom community for Rochester and many of the homes that were built in that period were very small and on small lots. Was there a reason for that? Were we attracting a lower income type of people?"

Howe: "Well, basically the people that moved to the Town of Greece worked for Eastman Kodak or Rochester Products. In the old days, they were able to come in and build what they called a "garage-home" on the back of the lot and use it for five years, but hard times came and many of the people that lived in those small homes on the back of the lots weren't able to comply with the requirements of building a new home on the front of the lot. That all changed when we adopted these new restrictions and requirements that I just mentioned that the developer had to put in all the improvements so that people when they either bought a home or bought a lot, knew that the improvements were in and paid for.

One of the important changes made under the WPA and the PWA were Federal programs to help the people on welfare. We had 1500 families on welfare in the Town of Greece at the time and we had to provide work for them. One of the important projects that we built was the extension of Edgemere Drive. That was marshland and contracts were let to move earth from the hilly area on Frisbee Hill Road and fill in the shores of the ponds for 75 or 80 feet in order for us to build that road, which now everybody takes for granted of course, along the edge of the pond and overlooking Lake Ontario. That's one of the highly traveled roads in the area."

Question: "You're talking now about Edgemere Drive, right?"

Howe: "Yes."

Question: "Now, was there extra fill later for the Ontario Parkway?"

Howe: "Yes, the Parkway was built after Edgemere Drive which was closer to the lake than the Parkway."

Question: "But you had provided landfill enough for all those homes now along Edgemere?"

Howe: "That's correct."

Question: "I suppose that's in the days when Crescent Beach was one of the best known restaurants in the whole area? Who was running it at the time?"

Howe: "The Lewis family ran the Crescent Beach Hotel and in order to get a title to the land there, we had the members of the Lewis family and the Beatty family, which owned the Island Cottage area give us a quit claim deed for the marshland. Edgemere Drive was built on that filled-in land and on property deeded by quit claim deed by the Lewis and Beatty families."

Question: "Is this the same Beatty family that you later bought your property from?"

Howe: "No, it's a different family. The family that owned the Island Cottage area spelled their name Beatty. The family from whom I bought the property at the corner of Long Pond Road spelled their name Beattie. But both were old-time Irish Families that settled in what was known as "Paddy Hill" area along Latta Road and Mt. Read and Latta and Long Pond Road."

Question: "This is very interesting and it makes me think that we ought to have another session sometime when we dig into what happened in the town. Right now I am going to move on to the fact that you moved to the house at Latta and Long Pond Road in 1941."

Howe: "Yes."

Question: "Will you tell us the changes you made in the old farmhouse?"

Howe: Well, substantially the framework and so on was left about the same as it is. We did install big bay windows in the living room facing Latta Road and matched that in the kitchen over the kitchen counter. If you look at the home, there are two peaks that you see facing Latta Road and the story** is that one of the houses was right at the corner of Latta and Long Pond Road and another house was located, a tenant house, on Long Pond Road and the two houses were moved to its present location and jointed together, which became part of the dining room and the stairway going up the stairs. We completely redid the whole inside of the house, painting and papering and so on. We installed hardwood floors in the upper floor and refurbished the beautiful hardwood floors that were on the main floor, We installed the downstairs lavatory and recreation room downstairs in the basement which included a shuffleboard court and train room for the children's trains. It was a seven-foot deep

** recent research shows this story is likely not true; see Appendix #1.

cellar which we converted into a recreation room. We built a fireplace outside with cobblestones for sausage roasts and picnics and we had large patio surrounding the fireplace with flower gardens on either side and flower gardens on another patio which was at the back door and connected with a two-car garage, which we later added to the house. Formerly the cars were left in the barn, the front section of the barn which used to be the carriage house for the Beattie family. The barn was torn down when we lived there."

Question: "I am going to ask you some more questions about that but I would like to back up just a moment. This recollection that you have that they put two houses together is being hard to substantiate in checking out the floor in the basement and the front features. You got that information from whom?"

Howe: "I received that information from Frank Beattie Jr. That was his recollection and his mother, who lived there with her sister before we bought the place and moved in, also had that recollection."

Question: "That's very interesting - we are certainly going to pursue that with some experts in the field."

Howe: "They said there were saloons on the other corner. There was so much noise from the saloons that they wanted to move back far away from the intersection and that's why the house is located where it presently is according to what Mrs. Frank Beattie Sr. told me."

Question: "I have reason to believe from prior investigations that the Beattie family since all moved out of the area and we can't locate any of them. Is that true so far as you know?"

Howe: "Frank Beattie Jr. used to be Vice-President of the Central Trust Company. I haven't heard from him or seen him in years. I am not sure where he is located."

Question: "I contacted the bank and there was an old-timer who remembered him and said he left and became an executive in a bank either in Boston or New York so we can't really trace him down. The family burial plots are all here at Mother of Sorrows and again they cannot seem to give us any information. I am going to ask you - can you recall the changes made in that area of Long Pond and Latta known as "Greece Center." As you know at this corner there was the old cobblestone First Christian Church which became the Greece Methodist and the building was used later as Gus Holler's Blacksmith and Wagon Shop. Down the road was an old school, No. 17 now a real estate office. Can you fill that in - did anything great happen while you were there?"

Howe: "Well of course all of Latta Road is built up now from the city line right out to Long Pond Road practically and all those sub-divisions adjacent to Mt. Read Blvd. and Latta Road were developed during the time that I was either Supervisor or County Manager. In fact, the whole growth of the town west of Mt. Read Blvd., west of Dewey Avenue practically, was built up in that area when I was on the Town Board or County Manager. The population when I first became a member of the Town Board was 10,000 and it's nearly 100,000 now so all that growth occurred during that general time area."

Question: "It is sad for us to recall, but before your time, they destroyed that old cobblestone church and the old blacksmith shop. The records show that on the property that you owned at that time, the first building was another blacksmith shop on your side of the road. Tell us about the days when you were in the house, the big shots you entertained, all Republicans, I assume."

Howe: "Well, we always had the Greece Republican picnic for the committeemen there and I remember one time the Barnard Fire Department won a state-wide contest for both the department and the band and I was in Rome, NY with them and I called down to Joe Vatter, who ran the market there in North Greece and he brought everything up to the house and we had a reunion of everybody - all the firemen and the band that won the prizes in Rome, NY and fed them there and had a good time. Annually we had the Republican committee and Senator Bridges was a guest. Malcomb Wilson was a guest, he was Lt. Governor, and other prominent people. Congressmen, of course, and assemblymen, State Senators always met with their committee groups - so it was sort of a headquarters for the political people at that time in the Republican Party."

Question: "You mentioned the fireplace in the back, a very elegant one and how many parties you held there. I think you told me once where the stones came from."

Howe: "Yes, they were Medina stones...they came from Allen Street in the city which was being torn up and replaced with a modern pavement. I sent a truck up there and got, I think, two truckloads of those stones, they were giving them away to anybody who would take them away. then I hired a stone mason who did a lot of work around the Thousand Islands, I've forgotten his name for the moment, but he designed and built the fireplace out of Medina pavement blocks and he chipped off the front of each to give them the effect that it has now. It has a big chimney on it and a grill that was about 3 feet square so you could cook many hamburgers or hots on it at the same time. The large chimney took the smoke away."

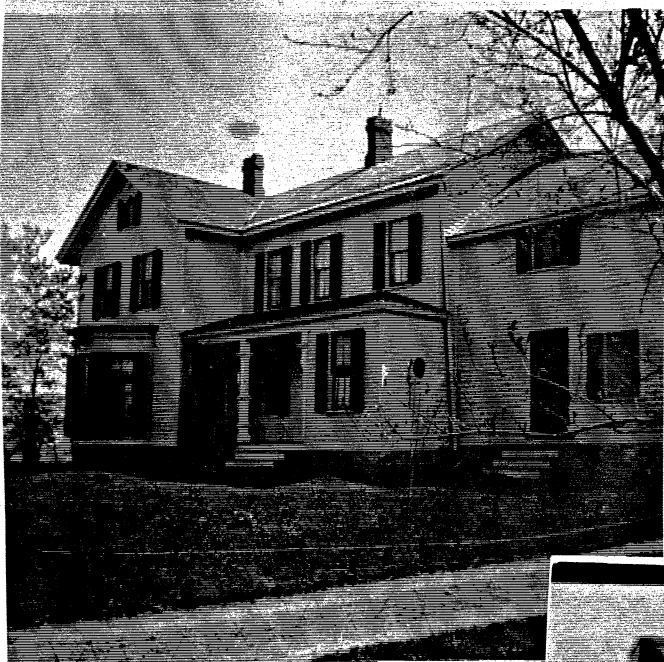
Question: "Well, as of this date, February 1988 we are expecting soon to witness the moving of your old home to a location about 1/2 mi. north on Long Pond Road. This area is really the center of Greece geographically and the claim to that title will be furthered by the fact that there is a major shopping center planned there and the future location of the Greece Town Hall and a huge residential and business complex. The Y.M.C.A. is already down the street and the preservation of your old home, known as the Howe House is important to many local residents. Wegman Enterprises has donated the building to the Greece Historical Society and is moving it to a location on town owned property. Perhaps you can tell us a little more about this property which will now be vacant."

Howe: "Well, we planted the poplar trees all along the edges of the driveway and around the edge of the parking area at the back of the house. The children in the neighborhood used to gather there because we had a soft ball diamond on the front lawn and a basketball hoop in the back and also a slide for winter sledding with a wooden toboggan. So it became a gathering place for all the youngsters in the neighborhood and they got a big kick out of playing there."

Question: "We are going to change the subject a little, quite a little. One of your peers in Greece, in Monroe County, was Al Skinner. What can you tell us about Al? I think you were instrumental in furthering his political career, were you not?"

Howe: "Al Skinner used to be a Town Constable for several years and became a U.S. Marshall appointed by the President. Following that, through the efforts of our party in Greece and I more or less led the way, he was nominated in the convention held in the old Convention Hall to run for Monroe County Sheriff and was elected and served as Sheriff, I believe for ten three-year terms. He was a grand person and a charitable person and was noted for handing out dollar bills to needy people who came into his office or while walking along Main Street - he would always be approached by someone for a meal or something and he always responded with a donation. He was a very generous type and a fine friend of mine and an excellent public official. He expanded the Sheriff's program in Monroe County to what it is today - a well respected and highly regarded police unit, which serves those areas in the county that do not have their own police department and also back up the town departments when they need extra help. He certainly was a wonderful citizen and a wonderful person and always a gentleman."

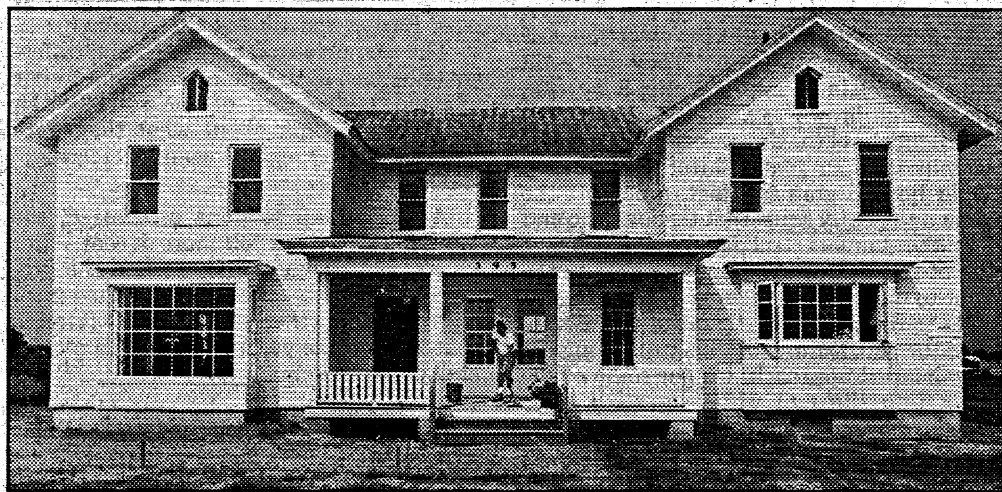
Question: " He never married and his sister took care of his



ORIGINAL HOUSE ON LATTA ROAD VERY CLOSE
TO LONG POND ROAD. BUILT ABOUT 1860.



HOUSE AFTER MOVE BACK FROM
ROADS ABOUT 1910. NOTE NEW
PEAK ADDED ON RIGHT SIDE.



AFTER MOVE TO 595 LONG POND ROAD IN 1988 TO
BECOME HOME OF THE GREECE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

household, is that right?"

Howe: "Yes, the sheriff lived at the jail, which was on Exchange St. at that time and Al named his sister as the matron. Usually the sheriff's wife is the matron and they maintained the house and fed the deputies who were on long hours of duty. The matron is also paid but I don't know how much it was."

Question: "I know when Al died it was a well-attended funeral. Can you tell us about it?"

Howe: "Yes, the funeral services were held in the Greece Baptist Church and one of the sheriff's horses with the boot in the saddle backwards, which meant death, was in the funeral procession to the cemetery and was standing there when the casket was lowered."

Question: "I suppose the reason for his being buried from that church of which he was not a member, was his close friendship with Dr. Fred Dean. Is that right?"

Howe: "I believe that's true. Yes, that is true."

Question: "I don't think he was connected with any church, was he?"

Howe: "As far as I know, he wasn't. But that was a central location across from the Town Hall and he selected that before he died."

Question: "The procession must have been very impressive. Where was he buried?"

Howe: "He was buried in a Parma Union cemetery outside the village of Hilton."

Question: "How did it happen to be in Hilton?"

Howe: "He lived on Manitou Road which is right at the Hilton town line. His activities, shopping and so forth were in the village of Hilton, so he had a Hilton address. The horse, naturally didn't walk all the way from the Greece Baptist Church on Ridge Road to the Parma cemetery but taken down there in a trailer. The sheriff had a trailer for his horses and the horse was there when the funeral procession arrived."

Question: "Was this horse one of his favorites, or one he rode himself?"

Howe: "I doubt if he ever rode it himself but it was one of his favorite horses because he had four or five horses that patrolled the parks mostly at that time. He paid for a couple of them himself, too."

Question: "I guess he did a lot of little gestures like that, didn't he?"

Howe: " "Yes, he did."

Question: "In the historical book, Eight Miles Along the Shore, the story of the Town of Greece, it shows the old Skinner Hotel down by the ponds. Would that have been Al's grandfather?"

Howe: "Originally it was his grandfather, I believe, but his uncle ran it, they called it the Arlington Hotel. It was right near the railroad in Hilton and later on, some of the family carried on but moved the restaurant on to Main Street in Hilton." (Note: This is confusing--two different hotels are being discussed.)

Question: "How about some comments on Monroe County government when you were active as chairman?"

Howe: "Well, we worked together, Al and I, we were good friends and good political workers and the town seemed to thrive when we were with the party. As far as activity in county government is concerned, we established a system of salaries, using a merit system and also setting salaries - beginning and finishing salaries in each of the brackets, which is still in effect in the county government. We went on a 100% budget system in the county and provided a forum for the people by recommending a county manager form of government and it was approved in a general election by the people and that provided for the appointment of a county manager to act as a county executive administrator appointing all of the department heads excepting the ones the constitution called for being elected; county clerk, and county treasurer at that time. Population growth was great in the county until I retired in '72 and the county assumed a great deal of the responsibility.

When I first went on the Board of Supervisors in 1934, the Board consisted of a Supervisor from each of the 24 city wards and one from each of the 19 towns. The 43 members really ran the county government. They had a committee system and the various committees met and took up the problems relative to their committees and made a recommendation to the entire Board of Supervisors and then the resolution would be passed by the 43 member Board of Supervisors and that was the way the county government ran. But then when the people of the county voted for the county manager's system, the manager became the chief executive and administrative officer with the authority to appoint the various department heads. That was the first time there was a head of the county government other than the chairman of the Board of

government other than the chairman of the Board of Supervisors that had executive responsibilities and administrative powers. Now the system has been changed to an elected county executive instead of an appointed county manager and that system carries on now with the county executive elected by all the people in the county."

Question: "Let's go back to Greece now. Has Greece always been Republican?"

Howe: "Well, they tell me before my time that there had been a Democratic administration in the Town of Greece. But then, came Frank Dobson, who was elected Supervisor and beat the Democrats at that time and later became an assemblyman and then came back as a justice of the peace and served for several years. But that would have been way back in the early 1900's or late 1800's when there was a Democratic administration."

Question: "You were not defeated in your final time, were you?"

Howe: "No, I was never defeated. I ran 13 times as Supervisor and once as Justice of the Peace, once as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, several times as a Committeeman and finally elected by the county legislative body as County Manager."

Question: "Who followed you and with your blessing, I assume?"

Howe: "The first county manager under the county manager system was Clarence Smith."

Question: "Let's talk about Greece."

Howe: "Vincent Toffany was named Supervisor, he was attorney for the town and named Supervisor when I went to the county as County Manager."

Question: "Had he been active politically before that?"

Howe: "Yes, he was a committeeman and town attorney and knew town government so he was appointed town Supervisor and then he became Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for the state later on."

Question: "Who followed him then?"

Howe: "George Badgerow followed him and then he lost in a primary and Fred Eckert was elected - was nominated over George Badgerow in the primary and then was elected to a couple or three terms, I believe, then ran for congress and served one term and then he was defeated for Congress by Mrs. Slaughter. He now, as I understand it, is the envoy or ambassador to Rome. He holds that position at the present time.

Question: "He was also Ambassador to Fiji, wasn't he?"

Howe: "Yes, he was, but then he ran for Congress and lost that. He was elected once and lost it the second time around. President Reagan was very loyal to him because he was one of the early Reagan supporters. So he was appointed to the Fiji Islands ambassadorship and when he lost the congressional vote, he was named by Reagan to the ambassadorship to Rome, Italy." ^

Question: "It looks as if all of the Greece Town Supervisor had an opportunity at least to get into state-wide or national politics. Toffany and Eckert - Mr. Badgerow now, is he at the airport still?"

Howe: "No, he did work at the airport but he is retired now. He lives in Florida half of the year and the other half up here."

Question: "I remember it was Mr. Badgerow who started having the scouts run the town government for one day and that is still going on, I believe."

Howe: "It is, yes."

Question: "Now for the history records, can you tell us something about your family, where they came from and so forth? I am looking at an old photograph of a gentleman with a big moustache. Who was that?"

Howe: "That was my father. Frank Ballow Howe was his name and he was born in Hamilton, New York which is the seat of Colgate University and the Howe family ran a bakery in Hamilton. He moved to Rochester and married my mother who was a native of Scotland. There were five children in the family...three boys and two girls. We lived on Plymouth Avenue in the city and then in 1919 moved to the Town of Greece and I became active as a town committeeman in the new sixth election district, which was started because of the increase in population in the Denise/Latta/Britton Road area. Earlier I became secretary of the Republican Town Committee and then was named to fill a vacancy for Justice of the Peace and then was elected Justice of the Peace and elected Supervisor and then named County Manager. I had 43 years of public service altogether."

Question: "Your mother was not connected to the Town of Greece? What was her maiden name?"

Howe: "Her name was Agnes Morrow."

Question: "We recall your lovely wife."

Howe: "Lois Spears who was a schoolmate of mine, actually."

Question: "Schoolmate where?"

Howe: "At Charlotte High. We both went to Charlotte High School. We were married in 1937 and we have three children. Gordon II, Gretchen who is now the County Treasurer, and David, who is a former Asst. Dist. Attorney in Onondaga County and is now a partner in Hancock Law firm in Syracuse. He lives in the town of Tully just outside of Syracuse and Gordon lives in Penfield and is a Republican Committeeman in Penfield and counsel to Senator Anderson in the NYS Senate. He goes to Albany during the sessions, three days a week."

Question: "Your family kept sort of political didn't they?"

Howe: "Yes they did to some extent - right."

Question: "Where did you live when you first came to Greece?"

Howe: "On Denise Road - 675 - apartments are built there now. We sold the homestead there to Max Farrash, I believe it was, and he built the apartments. There were eight acres."

Question: "Is that when you went to the house on the corner of Latta and Long Pond?"

Howe: "It was about that time. I wasn't married until '37 and we lived in an apartment on Denise Road the old Denise Homestead, which had been converted into two apartments. We lived there for a few years and then in 1941 we bought the 25 acres on the corner of Long Pond Road and Latta Road."

Question: "So when you first went to Denise Road, it was with your family, right? Before you got married?"

Howe: "Yes, correct. Through that I was a student at Charlotte High School and that's where I met my wife, Lois Spears. And she lived next to us; the Spears family moved into a home right on the corner of Willow Brook Road which was right next door to our family and we used to walk to school together."

Question: "Well, we are going back now because Mr. Howe has some fascinating recollections."

Howe: "Well, in 1934 the Barnard Exempts bought 16 acres of land on the end of Pamona Drive with the driveway leading out to Maiden Lane. The Barnard Exempts wanted to keep the driveway private and it is required by the town law that - in order to keep it private, it must be

closed off once each year. We borrowed from Judge Fisher and I called upon him and he agreed to loan the money to the Barnard Exempts to build their club house only if I would sign the mortgage personally together with Fred Conway and Ray Craft. And that's how we started the exempts originally and started to build the building which has been added on to several times since then."

Question: "Please repeat the story you heard from Skinner about the name of the Elmheart Hotel, which is on West Manitou Road."

Howe: "Well, Al Skinner told me at one time that the Elmheart Hotel got its name when they were building the hotel, they had to cut down a tree(which was an Elm tree) and in the heart of the elm tree was a round cannon ball that had been fired during the War of 1812, and lodged in the tree. And so that's the reason that the hotel was named the Elmheart. That bullet in the tree is referred to in the deeds and there was a lawsuit between the Odenbachs and the Skinners as to where the property line was between the two parcels of land and when they sawed down that tree they found the cannon ball in the heart of the tree and that's how the Elmheart Hotel was named."*

Question: "Gordon, we have been puzzled by the fact we have an item that is marked with the address, "Barnard, New York." Do you know whether Barnard was considered as a Post Office?"

Howe: "Yes, there was a Barnard Station on the railroad - at the corner of Dewey Avenue - and the general area of Dewey Avenue by the railroad there near Bennington Drive down as far as Stone Road, I think and east to Mt. Read Blvd. was known as Barnard and they had a Post Office there in the grocery store, which was located right next to the railroad at Barnard's Crossing. The fire department took the name of Barnard Fire Department when that was organized in 1927."

Question: "That's interesting, so there actually was a post office."

Howe: "Yes, my brother carried mail at the Barnard Post Office at one time. All that section of Greece, had the Barnard Post Office address."

Question: "Would you say how far the parameters of the Barnard section would be? The reason for asking is that we have come across an old cigar in a box and it was given out by

*There were many stories like this, all inaccurate. See Appendix #2

the Knipper Hotel, which was up by the Greece Town Hall. So we can't figure how Barnard Post Office could connect with a location that was know as "Ada" post office in those days. The area of Barnard would be fairly small wouldn't it?"

Howe: "Well I would say the area of Barnard was probably bordered on the south by what is now Winchester Street and on the north by Stone Road - I would think in that area. On the east Mt. Read Blvd. That's my recollection."

Question: "I think you're right and it's one of those puzzles that history bring up to find why a place in the heart of Greece by the town hall should be called Barnard."

END OF INTERVIEW

In Loving Memory of

GORDON A. HOWE

Born January 19, 1904

Died August 26, 1989

Funeral Services

7:00 p m. - August 30, 1989

Bethany Presbyterian Church

3000 Dewey Avenue

Rochester, New York

Officiating

Rev. M. Dwight Ferguson

Interment

Riverside Cemetery

Vay-Schleich & Meeson Funeral Home, Inc.

Appendix #1

(From the "Our New Historical Home" leaflet.) Information which could be learned from old Greece maps from 1852 to 1924 has been greatly amplified by the discovery that a Pittsford resident, Mrs. Louise Beattie Sullivan, had been born in the original house, close to the corner of Long Pond and Latta Roads and grew up in the new house created by the moving and enhancing of the original structure.

There seems no question that the move was made primarily to get away from close proximity to the noisy Kelly Store, tavern and home all in one building just across the narrow Long Pond Road.

The first building shown on the map of Lot 23 was a blacksmith shop, indicated on the map of 1852 on property then owed by John Butts, who had bought it from Elijah Miller in 1847. The area was called Greece Centre and an 1858 map also shows Mr. Butts shop and indicated he lived on Long Pond nearby.

The property remained in the Butts family until 1866 when it was sold to John Larkin and it seems apparent that he was the one who built the house, close to the corner as shown on the 1872 map, on which the shop was no longer shown.

The Larkin family various members, through Quit Claim deeds on various pieces of the property retained the corner lot until 1896 when it was sold to Gustavus Haller, whose name was also spelled Gustave. The 1902 map indicated the house, still close to the corner.

After Mr. Haller's death in 1904, his widow Margaret sold to Frank H. Beattie and that family, after many quit claim deeds, which covered parts of the original 54.14 Haller acreage, retained possession until 1941 when 25 acres on the corner, were sold to Gordon and Lois Howe.

In 1966 the Howes sold to Robert B. Wegman and for several years some of the Wegman family occupied the house before it became rental property and finally unoccupied.

Many structural and outside changes made by the Howes are known to us. Any action by the Wegmans, especially in decorating could be investigated. The heavy red velvet drapes in place when the Society acquired the house were very different than the early treatment.

While maps and abstracts make it possible to trace property, it is difficult to identify most old buildings. It seems evident from our research that the original house was built by John Larkin with its gambrel roofed barn about 1866, and that the Haller's lived in it for about eight years from 1896 to 1904 without making any significant changes.

In the first half of the 20th century, this gentlemen's farm home was known as the Larkin-Beattie house. To the present generation, it is remembered as the Howe House because of the prominence of the 25 year

owner as Town and County Supervisor. Set among beautiful old trees at the corner of Long Pond and Latta Roads, it was the setting for many gatherings of members of the Republican Party.

The kindness of Mrs. Louise Beattie Sullivan with her excellent memory and priceless family snapshots, we have learned much about our new Historical Society home.

From the old maps we estimate the date of the original building as about 1866. The original appearance can be guessed at from snapshots taken in the early 1900's and assuming no drastic changes were made by the Larkins or Hallers.

The moving and renovation of the house about 1910 was a dramatic and probably expensive operation. The architect was Otto Block, who was known for designing the prestigious Wilder Building. It was his skill that resulted in the dramatic new main staircase and the artistic balance of the exterior by adding the new peak roof on the right end, to match the original one on the left.

Appendix #2

From an article in the Rochester Business Journal "How The Elmheart Hotel Got Its Name" by George A. Caswell.

Down Manitou Beach Road, north of the Ontario Parkway, at the very end where Lake Ontario and Braddock's Bay meet on a strip of land called the West Spit, you will find a venerable hotel which has borne the name Elmheart since 1895.

Ask around how it got the name, and you will get many answers. The last owner George Wiedman, told me that it was because an elm tree decided ownership of the property, but he did not mention where the "heart" came in.

Some say an elm tree with a nail inside had something to do with the name. Others had heard a cannon ball was embedded in the tree, fired from a British frigate. Another had heard a tale that there was no elm tree at the presumed spot, but a maple stood there and when cut down, revealed an elm around which the maple had grown. Of such tales does history become confused. Actually, the true story is equally fantastic.

In early 1890, Frederick Odenbach, a Rochester liquor dealer, decided to build a hotel on beautiful Manitou Beach eight miles along the shore, west of Charlotte. It was a favorable spot at the end of the popular Manitou trolley line, which served hundreds of cottages along its route and carried thousands of city folk on family outings or group excursions to the many popular resorts on the lake. The ride itself was a delight, as the tiny cars bounced along the flimsy tracks, and over fragile trestles across the bays. Some cars were open and waves often lapped the passengers' feet.

Construction of the new hotel was well along when an unexpected problem halted the work. The Skinner family, which owned property

adjacent to the new project, claimed that it was on their land and took the argument into court. After a trial in 1890, decision was made in favor of Mr. Odenbach, who proceeded to complete the hotel.

The new establishment was called Odenbach's and ran for several years. But the Skinner's did not accept the court decision, and instituted an appeal which was heard by the Monroe County Supreme Court in May 1894. The plaintiff was Falding W. Skinner, whose son, Albert, became Monroe County's greatly admired Sheriff. Falding's father, Roswell, whose ancestor had bought a plot of land from Nathaniel Rochester, operated a small hotel--actually more of a fishing camp--where both Falding and Albert were born.

The trial was long and involved. Scores of witnesses were called and the proceedings would today make good material for a television scenario. There was one lady witness who called herself Fannie Skinner, and claimed to have been married to Roswell in 1873 "at some place in Greece on the way home from Rochester," although she admitted to having a previous husband elsewhere.

The deciding evidence in the new trial turned out to be lodged in the heart of an old elm tree. Almost a hundred years before, in 1802, the wilderness, including the land in question, had been surveyed, before the Town of Greece was formed in 1822. The surveyor had established a line there on the point of land between lake and bay, using what he described as a **large black oak** for a benchmark; but in 1890, there were no oak trees visible or remembered in the vicinity. But **there was an elm tree in the expected location**, and a sharp-eyed surveyor going over the old measurements spotted faint markings on the tree trunk, indicating survey marks.

The tree was cut down, and sure enough, there inside were revealed the axe marks hewed by the surveyor standing on the lake shore 88 years before. It was agreed that he had provably made the error in the type of tree because his notes, as stated, were made late in the day when he was very tired. Also, an almanac showed that on the date the tree would have been leafless and in the dim light the tree's profile might have looked similar to an oak.

But were these marks from the original survey or one of a later day? This was resolved by counting the rings of the tree, part of which was still alive, and it was evident that the marks were made at least 90 years before. To the referee's mind, this evidence and other likely errors made in compass readings by that surveyor, who was working in difficult marshy conditions back in 1802, were conclusive evidence that the plaintiff was correct in his appeal and should prevail. The defendant, Odenbach, must turn over the property to Mr. Skinner.

It was a great victory for the whole Skinner tribe and news stories of the day related how the new owner came with a brass band and large entourage to take possession. As the new owner of the fine hotel, he chose the name Elmheart and so it has remained to this day.

And you have to believe this story. It comes from the lips of Mrs. Marion Odenbach Slavin, who was born and grew up on Manitou Beach. What

she did not see herself, she heard from reliable authorities such as George Wiedman, her neighbor. He gave her the ultimate proof, the elm tree stump with the 1802 surveyor's axe marks. In turn, she has given it to the Greece Town Historian, Virginia Tomkiewicz, and the Historical Society of Greece for permanent safekeeping.

THE END

