



# HISTORIC BRIGHTON NEWS

Volume 12

Spring 2011

Number 2

*Celebrating our town's history and educating our community about Brighton's past.*

## ***HISTORIC BRIGHTON WELCOMES HISTORIC PITTSFORD TO ITS SPRING EVENT***

***SUNDAY, APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2011 – 3:00 PM***

***BRIGHTON TOWN HALL – Main Auditorium***

### **PROGRAM:**

## ***HISTORIC PITTSFORD THROUGH THE EYES AND CAMERA LENS OF PAUL MALONE SPIEGEL***

*Ed Snyder's Restaurant on the West Side*



Ed Snyder, Bobbie Darrow, Daisy Darrow, Della Snyder holding Freddie Darrow.

After he stopped training horses for Francis B. Mitchell, Ed Snyder had a restaurant on the West Side of Main

# *Historic Pittsford Through the Eyes And Camera Lens of Paul Malone Spiegel*

*Sunday, April 10th, 2011 — 3PM  
Brighton Town Hall – Main Auditorium*



Many people know Paul M. Spiegel as a former Pittsford Town Trustee and Town Supervisor. But to those who love history, he is known and appreciated for his collecting and sharing of Pittsford's History. As author of several books, including five pictorial scrapbooks on local history, Paul has spent the past 25 years researching and documenting information about the town his family has resided in for five generations. His books depict the way of life of adults and of children, of local architecture, modes of transportation and commerce. He records all the activities and lifestyle of his town through loving eyes.

Paul was born and raised in a house once located on Main Street at Pittsford's Four Corners, the site of his grandfather's wagon shop. He was educated in Pittsford Schools and at the University of Rochester. He served as a Staff Sergeant in the Air Force during World War II, and received six veteran battle stars.

After teaching for a year in the Village of Spencerport, Paul chose to enter the insurance business and pursued that career until he entered the local political arena, serving as the Pittsford Town Supervisor from 1966-1987. William Carpenter, the current Supervisor, describes Paul as having a "giant, kind and gentle manner" and greatly influenced him in his political life.

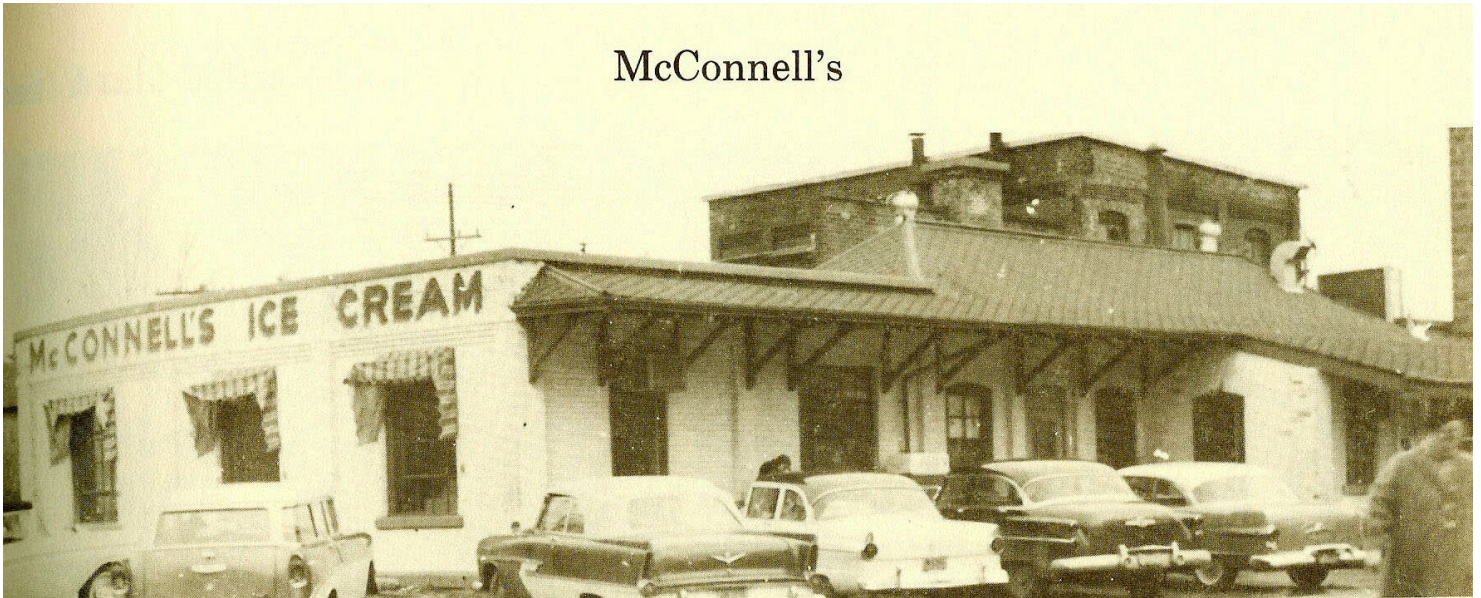
Paul's collection of five *Pittsford Scrapbooks* contains photos covering more than 140 years. Volume Five has photos as recent as the 1980s. While the Scrapbooks are out of print, one can find copies of his other books for sale at Historic Pittsford's Little House. (*Echoes of Olde Pittsford*)

Paul Spiegel is considered a rare treasure to his community. At 94 years young, Paul continues to do what he enjoys; to gather historic photos, photograph current Pittsford life, and share his hometown's story. Come and learn about our good neighbor, Pittsford, through a fascinating collection of photos and remembrances of a fascinating gentleman. □





## McConnell's



3

In 1933 Al Stephany opened the “Trolley Grill” in the old trolley station. In 1936 they moved their business to the Exchange Hotel, and Scott McConnell and his sons Lloyd, Red and Frank, brought their milk and ice business here from their first place of business on Penn Street (Washington Road). They began to sell their very popular ice cream and continued in business until 1966 when they sold out to Bill Wahl.



Toward the end of World War II Lloyd McConnell and Jack Spellman, built this added building opposite the ice cream store and Jack and Jean Spellman ran a bakery for several years. Then it served as a mom and pop store, and then became the real estate office of Doug Blue.

Schoen Family Reunion 1925 at Masonic Hall





## Touch Football in Pittsford

In the years before World War II, touch football up behind the Lincoln Avenue School was very popular on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

4



Elmer Peck, John Sens, and Raymond Hoeltke. 1941



"Moe" Robertson, Decker, Dutcher, and Tom Dowling. 1941



"Moe" Robertson and Ford Pannell. 1938



Larry McCarthy and Al Kassel.

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### 2011 Historic Brighton Board of Directors:

Beth Keigher - President, Rome Celli - Treasurer, Janet Hopkin - Secretary

Elizabeth (Betsy) Brayer, Leo Dodd, Monica Gilligan, Tom Hack, Hannelore (Honey) Heyer, Ron Richardson, Janet Tyler, Nancy Uffindell, Arlene Wright Vanderlinde, David Whitaker, Mary Jo Lanphear - ex-officio (Town Historian)

# Edmunds Diary

Story #5. . . 1898 Milk Wagon

By Leo Dodd



## Diary on the Dairy:

You are aware of our access to some thirty years of Edmunds family farm diary writings, authored mainly by James Polk Edmunds who never missed a day in entering some notation...yep!..never. The first twenty years he maintained the farm obtaining income from farm produce and his orchards of apples, pears and quince. In 1890 he expanded his dairy farming beyond his own needs for milk, cream and butter, gradually purchasing about five times as many cows, which brought the total to about twelve maximum. Then he established a milk route and obtained a customer base, thus becoming one the many hundred farmers supplying milk to the Rochester area. The dairy provided an income producing business giving a steady, dependable income every day, a more reliable income than that derived from the farm and orchard products. Now he had the herculean task of managing both, his farming operations and a customer based milk delivery business. This Edmunds Dairy was but one of hundreds on farms in towns surrounding the city of Rochester. The town of Brighton was especially well located along the southern border of the city to provide a major supply of Rochester's dairy needs.

James Polk Edmunds is not very attentive in his diaries at noting the exact times of farm



activities but the following picture is clear. He rose before the sun was up, milked the cows, filled the metal containers, loaded his wagon or sleigh, delivered his customers, arrived back home about noon had lunch (he called it dinner), washed the milk cans, fed the horses and took a short nap. Awaking from this nap he worked the farm seasonal activities till sunset. This was every day....rain, shine, sleet or snow....as the local mailman tells me. His diary always had a weather related comment, noting temperature, wind direction, weather and road conditions.

The road conditions were rather bleak during the winter months. Dirt roads tend to wash away and it's not the occasional pot hole we deal with but a major rebuilding that is necessary.

The following are entries from the 1898 diary. This was the last diary we have that was written by James Edmunds. James at age 54 had organized the farm operations where his oldest son, James Polk II, age 24, was managing the daily farm operations, his youngest son, Fred, age 21, worked the milk route with him, all were living in the family home where his 89 year-old father, a surveyor, who owned the property, still maintained an active life working the farm. Now that sure fits the old adage ***“The Family that Farms Together Stays Together”***.

I will share some dairy related notes within the 1898 diary entries:

***Jan. 1..... Fred and I went with Milk.....***(This was his standard entry)

***Jan. 17... Fred and I went with Milk. Took the sleigh for the first time this winter.***

***.....Fred hooked on the cutter after he washed the cans and I took a ride.***

***Jan. 19... Fred and I went with Milk. Got the team shod all round. We got home at 4 PM.***

**6** ***Jan. 20... Fred and I went with Milk. It rained hard all the forenoon. We got soaking wet. Temp: 36°***

***Feb. 1.....Fred and Frank went with Milk. 10° Snowed & blowed, so you could not see anything.***

***Feb. 8.....Fred and Frank went with Milk. Cold with light snow. 4 below zero in the morning.***

Now a diary entry that defines the route:

***Mar. 8... Fred and I went with the Milk. Broke a spring on the Wagon. Jimmy came down. Him and I took the West Side of the River. Fred got the wagon fixed and finished the East Side. Fred took Ned to Town and had a shoe reset. ....***(Note: Ned being his longtime favorite horse, but you knew that from a previous story.)

You ask, where did he deliver milk? I have yet to read in the diary any text that defines the milk route. He frequently records going to the Clinton Hotel which stood on the south east corner of Court Street and South Avenue, now occupied by the Blue Cross Headquarters Building ...okay!...okay!...how about east of the Dinosaur Bar-B-Que. He records several special milk deliveries to the Clinton Hotel so I have assumed that he delivered to homes and businesses along South Avenue from Brighton to the center of Rochester, then went over the Court Street Bridge to deliver on the west side of the Genesee River. How many stops? He never recorded. What streets? He never recorded. Delivering to what homes and businesses? He never recorded. His business was delivering cans of milk or ladling milk from the cans. The term “bottle” never occurs in this time period. But!... uncovering an Edmunds milk bottle would be neat.

The Clinton Hotel received special attention, possibly because George Mehl, the hotel proprietor, was a fishing buddy of James.



***July 2..... Fred and I went on the Wagon. I went to the Clinton at night with a can of Milk.***

***Sept. 2... Fred and I went with the Milk. Fred took a can of Milk down to the Clinton at night.***

***Oct. 22....Fred took a can of Milk down to the Clinton at night.***



7

The following entries illustrate that operating a dairy can be dangerous, fun, restrictive and worrisome.

***May 13.. I got run into by the Street Car and did not get home until half past three.***

Moving vehicles propelled by one horsepower or two hundred have always been dangerous. (Note: Street cars had become electrified in the late Nineties.)

***May 22... Fred washed the cans. I made Ice Cream.***

With your own dairy you can produce your own treats.

***June 1... Fred and I went with Milk. The Milk inspector wer here and took a sample of our Milk.***

***June 20..Fred and I went with Milk. Met the State Inspectors.***

***June 3... Fred and I went with Milk. I went up to the Milk Inspector's Office.***

***Aug. 24..The Milk inspectors wer here at night and took samples from every cow.***

You are encouraged, by law, to operate a clean facility.

***Aug. 23... I went down to see Mat Willson about insuring our buildings and cows and stock.***

***He came up at night and made out the policy.***

If you are operating a dairy....you worry about your investment.

As James describes his dairy activities we can also see how dependent he is on neighbors for support. Remember, he must milk and deliver every day....every day. If his wagon is broken, a neighbor loans a wagon as the blacksmith in West Brighton repairs his wagon. If his horse is lame, he again borrows from the farm next door. If he is sick, a neighbor steps in to help deliver. Great to read these stories.

Now one last thought, provoked by the following entry:

***Sept. 21... Fred and Carrey went with Milk. Jimmy and I went to Geneva to the dedication of a new building on the Experimental Farm.***

8



FIG. 10.—Biological and Dairy Building, New York State Experiment Station.

To operate a milk farm and operate a dairy requires a knowledge base and education. An education that James did not receive in the school of his youth, School No. # 3, on his farm property off Westfall Road. So he had to educate himself, if he were to profit by the business. Beyond the education courses his Grange membership afforded him and available books he purchased, he notes contact with Cornell Agricultural College. He made mention in other years of Cornell professors assessing his orchards. But this entry of September 1898 notes that he and his son board a train for Geneva to attend the dedication of the new Biological and Dairy Building at the New York Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva New York. He gave up a days work and purchased a train ticket to be in attendance with his son. Why? Was he invited to attend, or was he just an active Cornell supporter and wanted to be present and view the facility that would increase his knowledge of dairy farming. How did he keep abreast of the happenings in Geneva? This association with Cornell is interesting to ponder.

That's it for an 1898 diary view of life on a Brighton Dairy.....the Edmunds Dairy. □



No deaths, no broken crockery:

# The Brighton Earthquake of 1663 That No One Heard

By Betsy Brayer

*A bunch of us were kicking around ideas for newsletter articles via e-mail and I mentioned that I was interested in pursuing, "The geology of Brighton including the 16th century earthquake." My friend Leo Dodd immediately replied:*

*That sounds like quite a tale.*

*How did you come by that?*

*Should make a very interesting Newsletter Story.*

*Tell us more!*

9

Obviously Leo thought I was delusional. I was, to the extent that 1663, the date of the monster earthquake, was 17<sup>th</sup> rather than 16<sup>th</sup> century. But I was also on to something. I had first read about the earthquake in *the Annals of the Rochester Historical Society* which stated under 1663: "All that is now [Eastern] Canada, Western and Central New York, was visited by a tremendous earthquake."

But, you might ask, who was living in what would become Brighton to report on this tremendous earthquake that another account described as, "What is likely the worst earthquake in Northeast history since French and English settlement occurred on February 5, 1663"?

Well, the French and Indians were passing through the future Brighton. The Senecas and other tribes had formed the League of the Iroquois about 1570. Even earlier, French missionaries had begun pursuing the Indians in the wake of Jacques Cartier sailing up the St Lawrence in 1534. In 1609 Samuel de Champlain fired on Mohawk chiefs near present-day Ticonderoga, arousing Iroquois hatred that persisted for the next century and a half. In 1612, Champlain sent his messenger, Etienne Brûlé, on a war mission; consequently Brûlé became the first white man to cross the Genesee Country. In 1626 the Franciscan Joseph de la Roche Dallion, had conducted a mission among the Indians of the Neutral Nation. In 1669, six years after the big quake, Robert Cavelier, Sieur de LaSalle, came to the Indian Landing in what is now Ellison Park in Brighton looking for, of all things, a water route to China. Nine years later, in 1678, LaSalle crossed Lake Ontario once again for Irondequoit Bay, this time bringing materials for shipbuilding and a stock of provisions. And so it went.

As the French clerics traveled about, they noticed many differences in the landscape before and after the Charlevoix earthquake of 1663, and eventually filled seven volumes with their observations.

They noted that this tremendous earthquake was attended with some remarkable effects. Many fountains and small rivers were dried up. Some of the waters became sulfurous and some channels were so altered that they could not be distinguished. Trees were torn up, and thrown considerable distances. Some mountains appeared to be much broken and moved. In French Canada, mountains were toppled and an island in the St. Lawrence was uplifted. The island Aux Coudres became larger and the channel in the river became much altered.

Rochester annals don't mention that all of New England was affected too, especially Boston and other settlements on Massachusetts Bay. Although Canada was the chief seat of the concussions, Massachusetts houses were shaken so that pewter was jarred from the shelves and the tops of stone chimneys were broken.

In Boston chimneys fell, floors collapsed, and terrified residents sought refuge in the streets. In rural areas, the earth opened up and cut deep crevices. A pre-shock of significant magnitude occurred two weeks earlier, as well as many damaging after-shocks.

An article in the Portland, ME *Cumberland Gazette* of August 1786 describes the great quakes of the previous century: "On 26 January 1663[Old Style], 'at the shutting in of the evening,' another measurable earthquake shook New-England. From the general expressions the writers who speak of it use, it seems to have been one of the greatest this country ever felt. It is represented as being preceded with great noise and roar. Mention is made of the houses rocking, the pewter falling from the shelves, the tops of several chimneys falling in, the inhabitants running out into the streets and passersby being unable to keep on their feet. As to

**10** its course, duration, or extent, nothing is to be found of the New England writers. But they are well described in the accounts that were given of this earthquake in Canada....

"On 5 February 1663 [New Style], 'about half an hour after five in the evening,' a most terrible earthquake began there. The heavens being very serene, there was suddenly heard a roar, like that of a great fire. Immediately the buildings were shaken with amazing violence. The doors opened and shut of themselves, with a fearful clattering. The bells rang without being touched. The walls split asunder. The floors separated, and fell down. The fields put on the appearance of precipices, and the mountains seemed to be moving out of their places: and amidst the universal crash which took place, most kinds of animals sent forth fearful cries and howlings."

"The duration of this earthquake was very uncommon," reports affirmed. "The first shock continued half an hour before it was over; but it began to abate in about a quarter of an hour after it first began. The same day, about eight o'clock in the evening, there was a second shock, equally violent as the first; and in the space of half an hour, there were two others. The next day about three hours from the morning there was a violent shock, which lasted a long time: and the next night, some counted thirty-two shocks; of which, many more neither were violent— nor did these earthquakes cease until the July following....

"New-England and New-York were shaken with no less violence than the French country. And, throughout an extent of three hundred leagues from east to west, and more than one hundred and fifty from north to south, the earth, the rivers, the banks of sea, were shaken with the same violence. The shocks sometimes came on suddenly; at other times by degrees. Some seemed to be directed upwards; others were attended with an undulatory motion. Throughout the vast extent of country to which they reached, they seemed to resemble the motions of an intermitting pulse, with irregular returns; and which commenced through the whole at the same hour."

Five more less violent earthquakes were felt in the same area over the succeeding centuries. A 5.0-magnitude quake that struck the Ontario-Quebec border region in 2010 sent tremors



throughout the Northeast. At least two buildings in the Boston area, more than 300 miles from the epicenter, were evacuated due to concerns about the shaking. “I thought I was dizzy,” one Boston witness said, “but then I noticed the plants in my office were moving around the floor,”

Considering that the current New Zealand earthquake that leveled most of Christchurch measured 6.3, today’s seismologists consider that the Charlevoix earthquake of 1663 would have measured 7.0 and been labeled “Intensity X” for “disastrous.” It may be just as well that it occurred over mostly unpopulated land and that only Boston crockery felt it. □

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## Groceries Some 50 Years Ago

By Ray Tierney

Fifty years ago the Twelve Corners was a bustling retail area. Stores included Neisners, Altiers, Formans, Chilson’s Drug, Earl’s Drug Store, and many other smaller retailers. The hub of all that activity was the considerable grocery presence in the area. Most retail was nestled closely to one of the four major supermarkets.

**11** Wegmans was located in the Twelve Corners Plaza while Star Market and A&P anchored the plaza across the street on Monroe Avenue next to Howard Johnsons. Loblaws was on Monroe Avenue at Glen Ellyn Way.

The status quo was about to change. The impetus was commercial development in Pittsford just up the road on Monroe Avenue. Once Pittsford Plaza was proposed, every major supermarket chain needed access to the new customer base looming to the east. Loblaws was the first to move as it re-located to the corner of Clover and Monroe. Next, Star Market became one of the original tenants of the new plaza. Wegmans took a different approach and built a store on property adjacent to the plaza proper. Finally, A&P moved into the plaza and completed the retail grocery migration. By that time, Twelve Corners had the beginnings of its next generation of grocery stores.

The vacated Star Market was quickly remodeled and opened as a Super Duper. IGA eventually took up residence in the plaza abandoned by Wegmans. As A&P did not close its Twelve Corners store after opening in Pittsford Plaza, the area now had three major supermarkets all within 500 feet of one another. Brighton was now ready for the next chapter of grocery shopping in its town center.

Both IGA and Super Duper were independently owned and operated, which was in stark contrast to the A&P and the recently departed chains, Wegmans, Loblaws and Star. That new era would bring change but would hold the retail base of the area for many years to come.

The next edition will recount the grocery business at Twelve Corners in the 1960’s, complete with the advent of the challenge of limits on Sunday sales because of the so-called Blue Laws and examples of the very competitive nature of the grocery business.

Location key:

1960 Loblaws – currently Whitehouse Liquor

1961 Loblaws – currently Mann’s Jewelers

1961/62 Star/Super Duper – currently various Brighton Commons tenants, east end

1962 A&P – currently various Brighton Commons tenants, west end

1961/64 Wegmans/IGA – currently various Twelve Corners Plaza tenants

Historic Brighton  
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Rochester NY 14618



## Save these Dates!

**Sat. June 11th 11:30AM to 2PM**  
**Historic Brighton celebrates:**  
**Washington Grove / Cobbs Hill**  
**and Annual History Luncheon**  
Speaker: Larry Champoux  
Location: Lake Riley Lodge

**Sun. Sept. 18th 3PM**  
**Speaker: Wayne Goodman**  
Executive Director — Landmark Society  
Topic and Location: TBA

*Please mark your calendars and consult our website and newsletters for more details.*  
*[www.historicbrighton.org](http://www.historicbrighton.org)*