

Special Remembrances of My Grandfather (Charles Menzies Briggs, M.D.)

By Betty Briggs Satterwhite Stevenson

Editor's Note:

*Betty Briggs Satterwhite Stevenson (1920-1998) wrote **The Story of My Grandfather, Charles Menzies Briggs, M.D., 1855–1933**, from which the following excerpt was selected. She also wrote other biographies, including that of her father, Irving White Briggs, 1893–1970. In doing so, she left a wonderful legacy for her family. Her son, Stephen Briggs Satterwhite, has kindly granted permission for the publication of this essay in the **Historigram**.*

Doctor Charles Briggs practiced medicine in Fairport for more than fifty years, when house calls were the norm. Doctor Briggs made his in a horse-drawn buggy, with spare horses boarded at strategic locations in the area to expedite the often rigorous trip, especially in the dead of winter. Dr. Briggs is credited with fighting the spread of malaria in this area, through advocating the draining of mosquito-infested swamps. He was a proponent of preventative medicine and embraced new learning and technology, at a time when many physicians clung to more familiar ways. I suspect there are readers of this publication whose existence is directly tied to the subject of this essay, for their parents, grandparents, or perhaps great-grandparents, were among the estimated 1,800 babies delivered by Dr. Charles Menzies Briggs.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY FOR VILLAGE OF FAIRPORT.



RESIDENCE OF C. M. BRIGGS, M. D.

There is no question but that as his only granddaughter, I was very special in my grandfather's eyes. I believe that one reason was my great interest in doctors and medicine. As a little girl on those Sunday visits to Grandpa's, he would let me look around in the office he had in his house. I have often thought that if his patients were not sick upon entering his office, they might be by the time they left! It was a different scenario than the attractive physician's offices of today with lovely pictures on the walls and magazines to read. Just inside Grandfather's office door, the unsuspecting patient met up with a human skeleton. This eerie spectacle turned my brother and cousins off, but it intrigued me, and Grandpa taught me the names of many of the bones and showed off my early knowledge of anatomy to guests who happened to drop in. Of equal interest to me were the shelves displaying glass jars in which he had preserved things like small fetuses and gallstones. I remember especially a tape worm that looked like yards and yards of flat, white noodles.

This image of the Briggs residence at 116 West Avenue was published in the Fairport Business Directory of 1898. The home was designated a Fairport historic landmark in 2016.

Continued on page 4



Comments from your President

March 15th, 2017:

Greetings! What a crazy ten days this area has experienced. We returned from a short ski trip to Gore Mountain in North Creek last Thursday to find the area crippled from a nasty wind storm. Other than many small branches spewed

~ **Bob Hunt** ~

about our yard, we were in good shape on Roselawn Avenue. The power was on, and our house was warm. I could not say the same for our daughter and family who live near Ellison Park, for they were without power. So we had some guests (people and animals) for a few days. Just as the power situation in the area was getting back to normal, we were hit by the biggest snowstorm of the year, 15 inches this morning and more on the way. It was all the old snow blower could handle, and I still haven't found our newspaper.

Last Sunday, we lost an hour of sleep as we welcomed Daylight Saving Time. DST: When did it happen and why? A Google search provided some answers, specifically www.timeanddate.com. In July of 1908, Port Arthur, which today is known as Thunder Bay in Ontario, Canada, became the first location to use DST. Germany became the first country to introduce DST when clocks were turned ahead one hour on April 30, 1916. The rationale was to minimize the use of artificial lighting in order to save fuel for the war effort during World War I. The idea was quickly followed by the United Kingdom and other countries, including France. Many countries reverted back to standard time after World War I, and it wasn't until the next World War that DST made its return in most of Europe.

In the United States, "Fast Time" as it was called then, was first introduced in 1918 when President Woodrow Wilson signed it into law to support the war effort. The initiative was sparked by Robert Garland, a Pittsburgh industrialist who had encountered the idea in the UK. Today he is often called the "Father of Daylight Saving." Year-round DST, also called War Time, was in force during WW II from February 9, 1942 to September 30, 1945, in the US and Canada. During this time, the US time zones were called Eastern War Time, Central War Time, and so on. With the surrender of Japan in August of 1945, the time zones were relabeled Peace Time.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce was in favor of DST because it was believed that people were more likely to shop after work if it was still light outside. Recreational industries pushed DST and golf ball sales skyrocketed. Baseball games could be played at night before fields became illuminated. However, nationally, the time switch was very unpopular,

as people living in rural areas rose and went to bed earlier. Farmers hated DST, as turning clocks ahead meant less morning light for moving goods to market. After World War I ended, Congress repealed DST to quell the farm lobby.

From 1945 to 1966 there were no uniform rules for DST in the U.S. and it caused widespread confusion, especially for trains, buses and the broadcasting industry. As a result, the Uniform Time Act of 1966 was established by Congress, stating DST would begin the last Sunday of April and end the last Sunday of October. However, states could choose to be exempt from this law, so there was confusion still. For example, in one 35-mile stretch between Ohio and West Virginia, one could pass through seven time changes.

The Congress extended DST to a period of ten months in 1974 and eight months in 1975 in an effort to save energy following the 1973 oil embargo. Although the trial period showed DST saved about 10,000 barrels of oil a day, it was still controversial, as many complained that dark winter mornings endangered children going to school.

After the energy crisis was over in 1976, the DST schedule in the U.S. was revised several times. From 1987 to 2006, the country observed DST for about seven months each year. The current schedule was introduced in 2007 and follows the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which extended the period by about one month. Today, DST starts on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday of November. Personally, I enjoy the extended daylight on summer evenings.

For much of the content of this topic, I relied upon www.theweek.com and www.timeanddate.com.

Thanks for your continued support and we will chat again next month.

Bob Hunt, President

585-415-7053 — rhunt356.rh@gmail.com



Perinton Historical Society

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<i>President</i>	Bob Hunt
<i>Vice President</i>	Vicki Profitt
<i>Secretary</i>	Doug Whitney
<i>Treasurer</i>	Linda Wiener
<i>Communications</i>	Pat May

TRUSTEES

Keith Boas	Lucy McCormick
Bill Poray	Jim Unckless
David Wild	George Wolf

MUSEUM

<i>Director</i>	Vicki Profitt
-----------------	---------------

Upcoming Programs & Events

Tuesday, April 18th, 7:00 p.m. at the museum

Program: *Then & Now: Celebrating Fairport's Sesquicentennial*

Presenter: Village of Fairport 150th Anniversary Committee

Tuesday, May 16th, 6:00 p.m.—Perinton Park Pavilion

Event: Perinton Historical Society Annual Meeting and Picnic

Tuesday, June 13th, 7:00 p.m. at the museum

Program: *Annual Illuminated History Cemetery Tour*

Wednesday, July 19th, 7:00 p.m.

At the Fairport Public Library

Program: *An Evening with Miss Susan B. Anthony*

Presenter: Jeanne Gehret

This program is co-sponsored by the Fairport Public Library and will be held in honor of the VoteTilla event happening the late afternoon and evening of July 19th.

Museum News

The Fairport Historical Museum has extended its hours and is now open on Saturdays: 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Visit the Fairport Savings Bank, 45 S. Main Street, to view the PHS mini-exhibit, *Celebrating Italian Heritage in Fairport*. The exhibit closes in mid-April, so see it while you can!

Over the Top: Honoring Fairport's World War I Veterans: This new exhibit features artifacts from the collections of the Perinton Historical Society and the Perinton Town Historian. It commemorates Fairport's 280 soldiers and sailors who served during the war. Read the story of William T. Colmyer, who was aboard the U.S.S. President Lincoln when it was torpedoed by the Germans in 1918. See the trench periscope created by Wollensak Optical Co. in Rochester. Discover the names of ten Fairport soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice. You can see the exhibit during regular museum hours. It will be on display through October.

More than 140 postcards dating from 1909–1911 are on display at the museum for a limited time. The postcards are from two different collections. The first, owned by Carolyn Blyler French, features postcards her father, Thomas Blyler, received as a young boy from his aunts. Bob and Cindy Hunt own the second collection. Bob's stepmother, Elizabeth Rhodes Hunt, received the holiday postcards from her family in New Jersey as a way of keeping in touch.



Above: Colin, second from left, beside his dad, Mike McKechny



Right: Evan Alaimo shown on the right, with Reuben Birch



Then & Now: Celebrating Fairport Village's Sesquicentennial

The Perinton Historical Society is pleased to welcome the Fairport Sesquicentennial Committee to the museum on Tuesday, April 18, at 7:00 p.m. Fairport was incorporated as a village on April 30, 1867, and is celebrating its 150th anniversary this spring. Learn about the evolution of Fairport's businesses, parks, banks, schools and churches. Fairport had the great fortune of an adjacency to the Erie Canal, railroad and trolley—all contributing to Fairport becoming the bustling village it is today. Our village has a fascinating history!

Boy Scouts Complete Eagle Projects at the Museum

The Perinton Historical Society has been fortunate to have two Boy Scouts complete their Eagle projects at the museum in the past month. In February, Colin McKechny of Troop 273 digitized many of the items in the museum's resource library. These included obituaries, house surveys and genealogies. This was a big first step as we move forward with the task of digitizing the entire PHS collection.

Several weeks later, Evan Alaimo of Troop 208 painted the museum's three bathrooms and outer rooms, as well as the kitchen. We are very appreciative to Home Depot of Victor for donating five gallons of paint, four rolls of blue tape, six paint rollers and covers and two paint trays for the project.

Many thanks to Colin and Evan, and to the family members, friends, neighbors and fellow Scouts who helped them complete their projects at the museum.



Charles Menzies Briggs, M.D.
1855-1933

Grandpa stood for no nonsense in his children. My father used to chuckle over a misadventure that cost him a real spanking. Apparently he was often bored with the long church services he attended every Sunday, and one time while the adults were raptly listening to a sermon, he crawled under the pews, gathered up everyone's boots, and put them in a large pile at the rear of the sanctuary. Nobody thought it was funny but my dad!

Dinner at Grandpa's was unforgettable. I'm sure that the table was not as huge as I remember it, but there were always twelve to fourteen relatives there, including elderly maiden aunts with their little caps, and velvet ribbons around their necks with cameo pins in the front. They seemed to appear from the many bedrooms along the long corridor upstairs, and to disappear when dinner was over. The servants came from the kitchen and stood beside Grandpa's chair while he said what seemed interminable prayers before dinner was served. It was long before paper napkins were invented, and everyone had big, white linen napkins in napkin rings. I remember my brother and me being chastised more than once for attempting to leave the table without folding our napkins and returning them to their rings. I also remember the lovely canister set, holding cut glass containers of salt, pepper, vinegar and toothpicks (ugh!) which was always on the table.

My father bought one of the first home radios in the Rochester area and I have recollections of Grandpa visiting our house, heading for the radio and listening to it until it was time to leave. That would have been fine if we all could have listened, but the first radios had headphones and only one person could listen at a time!

Grandfather had two lovely cottages that I often wish he had kept and willed to his children. One was at Lake Bluff near Sodus Bay. Perched high up from the water, the Bluff commanded an awesome view of Lake Ontario, but it was not ideal for children. My parents constantly warned us not to go too close to the edge of the Bluff. And we had to walk down a

long, steep hill to the beach. Grandpa's place had a two-story living room with bedrooms leading off a second story balcony. We kids used to think it great fun to sneak out of our beds at night and listen to the big folks' conversation.

His other cottage was on the east side of Canandaigua Lake near what is now Cottage City. Again, one of my recollections of it includes looking through a peek hole in a bedroom floor board after my bedtime and watching and listening to the big folks.

Unfortunately, business acumen was not one of Grandpa's strong points. A traveling real estate salesman once sold him several acres of "prime" land for development on Long Island. Upon his death, my father investigated it, only to find it all swamp land, in some places under several feet of water.

Apparently, I was precocious in my language development, for Grandpa would often scoop me up and set me on the mantle above the back parlor fireplace, where I would recite "The Night Before Christmas" to the delight of those assembled.

Grandfather could be very formidable. My mother recalled a scolding from him all her life. When I was small, ankle socks were just becoming popular. They were a great improvement on the long, white baggy stockings that I had been wearing. Upon my first visit to Fairport wearing ankle socks, Grandfather admonished her that if I "got into trouble," it would be because my mother let me go around with bare legs.



The historic Briggs house at 116 West Avenue.

Photo by Bill Poray in 2011



This photograph, from the archives of the Perinton Historical Society, includes the following information on the reverse:

**Picnic at the Briggs Cottage,
Lake Bluff—July 20, 1911**

Front Row:

Edith Briggs, Miss Lucas, Alice Westerman

Middle Row:

Edith Ranney, Lucy Clark, Mrs. Chas. J. Clark, Mary Harris,
Mrs. Charles Briggs, Augie Harris, Grandma Briggs

Back Row:

Charles J. Clark, Dr. Briggs, Grandpa Briggs, Irving Briggs,
General John A. Reynolds



We Need You!

Museum volunteers work one shift per month greeting and assisting visitors. New volunteers are paired with veterans for each shift, and training is provided. We are always looking for new volunteers to staff the museum, and especially need volunteers on Saturdays from 10:00–1:00 p.m. and Sundays from 2:00–4:00 p.m. If you can give of your time just a few hours a month, please contact PHS Volunteer Coordinator Sue Scheirer by phone at 585-377-3789 or at dscheir1@rochester.rr.com. We look forward to adding you to our volunteer roster!

HISTORIGRAM

*Published nine months per year by the
Perinton Historical Society*

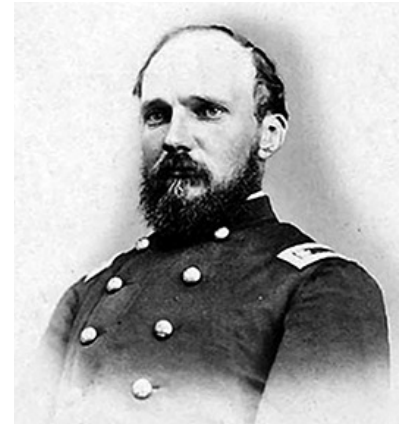
Editor: Bill Poray Art Director: Keith Boas
Production & Distribution: Jim Unckless
Proofreading: Irene Poray

The General of West Avenue

By Bill Poray

Note: The photograph of a group of people at Briggs's Cottage on Lake Bluff (left column, this page) includes a friend of Doctor Briggs, General John A. Reynolds. The General is the subject of this article.

Carte de visite photograph
of General John Alfred
Reynolds, well-known
Civil War veteran and com-
mander of the George H.
Thomas Post of the Grand
Army of the Republic (GAR)
in Rochester.



For twelve years one of Monroe County's best known Civil War veterans resided in one of Fairport's most recognizable homes. General John Alfred Reynolds purchased the former home of Fairport's George L.G. Seeley in December of 1908. The large brick Italianate house at the corner of West Avenue and West Street was built in 1874 by Seeley. It has been said Seeley offered it as a gift to his new bride, Almira Beardsley. Seeley was well known in his own right, having served as village president, town clerk and town supervisor, among other positions, in addition to his being a tin and hardware merchant.

Alfred and Juliet Reynolds lived in New York City when their son John was born on October 4, 1830. The family moved to Webster in 1839, and ten years later, to Rochester. John Reynolds worked with his father in a successful grocery and provisions business while also serving as captain of a militia group known as the Rochester Union Grays. At the start of the Civil War, Reynolds and the Greys offered their services as an artillery company.

An article in the Monroe County Mail of May 5th, 1921 announced the death of John A. Reynolds. It also provided the following summary of his military career:

"In August and September, 1861, General Reynolds recruited in Rochester Battery L of the First New York Light Artillery. He became captain of the battery and served as such through the battles of Second Bull Run, Antietam and Chancellorsville. From the battery he went to the staff of Major-General John F. Reynolds, commander of the First Army

Corps of the Potomac, and served as chief of artillery until the battle of Gettysburg. The following November he went to the Western army with reinforcements sent to the relief of Chattanooga, and became chief of artillery on the staff of Joseph E. Hooker, commanding the Twentieth Army Corps, and as such was in the battle of Lookout Mountain. The following year, 1864, he took an active part in the battles of the Atlanta campaign, and was at the siege and surrender of the city of Atlanta. On General Hooker's retirement, Colonel Reynolds became chief of artillery on the staff of General Henry W. Slocum, commanding the Army of Georgia, on its march to the sea, and on the march north through the Carolinas, and was at the capture of General Joseph E. Johnson's army at Greenville, N.C. He was mustered out in June, 1865, as colonel of artillery."



This brick mansion on the corner of West Avenue and West Street in Fairport was built by George L.G. Seeley in 1874.

General John A. Reynolds purchased the home from Seeley in December of 1908.

The image is from the *History of Monroe County, 1788—1877* by W. H. McIntosh.

8

DEWEY'S ROCHESTER

A. REYNOLDS & SON,

Wholesale & Retail Dealers in

GROCERIES,

PROVISIONS, FRUITS,

FISH, OILS, & C. & C.

151 MAIN STREET,

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

A. REYNOLDS.]

[J. A. REYNOLDS.

Advertisement published in Dewey's Rochester City Directory for 1857 and 1858.

The above summary states that John A. Reynolds held the rank of colonel when mustered out of the service. A newspaper article announcing his purchase of the Seeley house in Fairport also identifies his rank as colonel. Less than two years later, the same Fairport newspaper refers to him as General John A. Reynolds. The rank of General was related to his role as commander of the George H. Thomas Post of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) in Rochester, a position he held for more than 45 years, according to the Fairport Herald. The GAR was a fraternal organization of Union Army veterans, founded in 1866 and dissolved 90 years later after the death of Albert Woolson (1850-1956), its last member.

After the war, Reynolds worked for many years in partnership with the Brooks family of Rochester in the manufacture of shoes and boots, with a factory on Mill Street, then State Street, and finally on North Main Street. He was appointed Postmaster for the city of Rochester in 1880, and is said to have involved himself in numerous community affairs. After many active years of public service and business endeavors, Reynolds and his wife retired to Canandaigua.



Known as the Seeley House, the large brick Italianate home was designated a landmark in 2010 by the Fairport Historic Preservation Commission.

Recent photo by Bill Poray

Almira Beardsley Seeley died in 1906. In 1908, George L.G. Seeley, who was 84 at the time, decided it was time to downsize to a smaller house. He moved around the corner to 17 West Street, and put his 4,600 square-foot brick mansion on the market. Five years after the passing of his wife, Marietta Pardee Reynolds, the 78 year old Reynolds purchased the Seeley property. On December 31st, 1908, the Monroe County Mail announced his purchase of the Seeley mansion:

"Col. John A. Reynolds of Canandaigua, has bought the Seeley property, corner of West Avenue and West Street, and will take possession April 1st. This is one of the most desirable pieces of property in Fairport. The sale was made by John Dixon, who, while looking after the sales of first-class properties, has in mind the securing of desirable residents for Fairport."

General Reynolds lived in Fairport for more than twelve years. For most of that time, he shared his home with Miss Georgia Lucas, his housekeeper and companion, until her death in 1920. The large and dignified mansion became a familiar location for members of Rochester's George H. Thomas Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. General Reynolds involved himself in the Fairport community as well, and was a fixture at public events and activities. In May of 1921, as reported in the Fairport Herald, friends found Reynolds seriously ill, and immediately sent for the doctor, "...but the general lived a brief time only after the physician's arrival." The doctor was his West Avenue neighbor and good friend, Charles M. Briggs.



Special Recognition Level Memberships

As of March 17, 2017

Business (\$100)

Fairport Village Inn, Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-388-0112

Website: <http://www.thefvi.com>

Forever Financial Advisors, LLC

Annie McQuilkin, MS, CFP®

140 West Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-598-1377

Website: <http://www.foreverfinancial.com>

The Inn on Church

11 West Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-678-1106

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/theinnonchurch>

Robert Ruhland, Keller Williams Realty

2000 Winton Road S. Bldg. 1, Rochester, NY 14618

Phone: 585-303-6607

Website: <http://bobruhland.yourkwagent.com>

Ed Bradford, Liftbridge Financial Advisors

6 North Main Street, Suite 400w, Fairport, NY 14450

Website: <http://liftbridgefinancial.com>

Pixos Print

75 Goodway Drive, Rochester, NY 14623-3000

Phone: 585-500-4600

Website: ReadytoRun@pixosprint.com

Suzanne Lee Personal Histories

33 Chesham Way, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-267-6189

Website: <http://SLeePersonalHistories.com>

Joel Cuminale, Turning Point Signs & Design

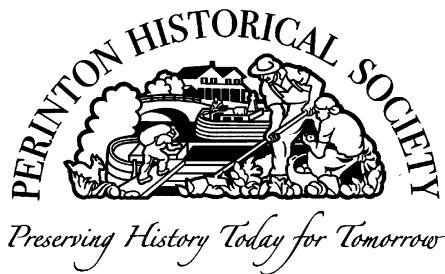
7 East Avenue, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-377-9310

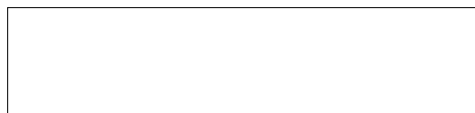
Website: <http://www.tpsigns.com>

DeLand (\$100-\$249)

None this month



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 149
Fairport, NY 14450



Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers set I beams in place at the new Fairport Public Library on Perrin Street, circa 1937. The camera is facing north, with 16 Perrin Street in view.

*From the collection of the
Perinton Historical Society*

Fairport Historical Museum

18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450

The museum is open to the public on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at the hours below:

Saturday 10:00–1:00 p.m. Tuesday 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Sunday 2:00–4:00 p.m. Thursday 7:00–9:00 p.m.

Group tours, presentations and special projects are by appointment. Please call and leave a message at **585-223-3989**.

www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org