

History Revealed in Helen DeLand's Photo Album

By Bill Poray

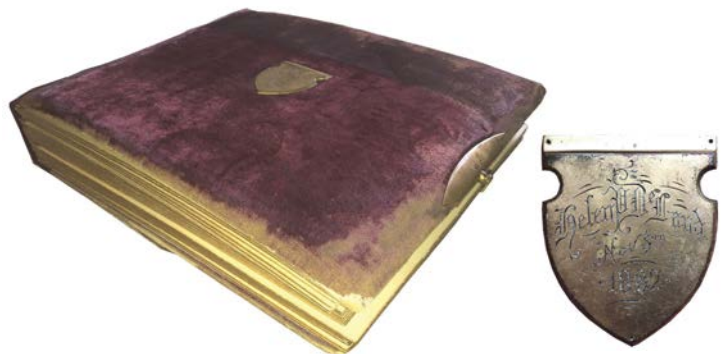
On your visits to the Fairport Historical Museum, you may have noticed a large velvet-covered Victorian-era photo album among the many items in the DeLand family display. While I spend a lot of time at the museum, I had never taken the opportunity to study the album. Given the temporary conditions we are currently experiencing and the need to exist in relative isolation at home, I decided that digitizing and researching the portraits in this album would be a good use of my time. The project would also provide the additional benefit of keeping me focused and busy.

As their daughter Helen's thirteenth birthday quickly approached, Henry and Sarah Parce DeLand made plans for a special birthday present. Like many of the era, young Helen enjoyed collecting photographic portraits known as carte de visites, produced in studios and mounted on stiff cardboard. Typically the name and location of the photographer were printed on each card.

The special gift to Helen from her parents was a large, beautifully decorated album, covered in fine velvet. The pages in the album were edged in gold, and had openings for photographs of varied sizes. An elaborately engraved badge affixed to the front of the album identified the recipient: "Helen P. DeLand Nov. 8th, 1882."



An image of Helen Parce DeLand (1869–1956) from her album



Album of Helen Parce DeLand, a gift for her 13th birthday in 1882



~ *Bob Hunt* ~

Comments from your President

April 14, 2020: I am writing again this month from my office in the carriage barn (see photo at right). I sincerely hope you all are staying safe and healthy, and please, be careful. We are hunkered down and are doing fine, and have been busy getting ready for our move to Georgetown Commons. Of

course, that involves a lot of sorting, tossing and packing. We have closed on the townhouse but have not put our home at 53 Roselawn Avenue on the market yet, so we do not have a move date established.

We have been using Wegmans curbside pickups, and have plenty of food. We also take advantage of Lisa's curbside pickup, so adult beverages are in stock as well.

An interesting story on toilet paper and sanitary wipes: We are members of BJ's and about six months ago one could get 25 cents off per gallon of gas if you purchased certain items in the store. Often these items would be large bundles of toilet paper, and one time it was a six-pack of Clorox wipes. After amassing several large bundles of TP and storing it in the carriage barn, Cindy said "What in the world, we will never use all this toilet paper." But guess what? Yes, we have plenty of TP and wipes.

On April 7th we had a full moon, called a super pink moon. It's called this because it appears larger and brighter as it is at perigee, or closest point to Earth in its elliptical orbit. The moon is not actually pink but is just a nickname from folklore. It is a reference to moss pink or ground phlox; whose pinkish flowers are some of the earliest spring flowers in the Eastern United States. April's full moon is also called the sprouting grass moon, the egg moon and the fish moon.

How did you do on last month's 8th grade grammar test from the year 1895? The Arithmetic section has a time of 1.25 hours and starts with the following questions:

1. Name and define the Fundamental Rules of Arithmetic.
2. A wagon box is 2' deep, 10' long and 3' wide. How many bushels of wheat will it hold?
3. If a load of wheat weighs 3942 lbs. what is it worth at 50 cents/bushel, deducting 1050 lbs. for the tare?
4. District #33 has a valuation of \$35,000. What is the necessary levy to carry on a school seven months at \$50 per month, and have \$104 for incidentals?
5. Find cost of 6720 lbs. of coal at \$6.00 per ton.
6. Find the interest of \$512.60 for 8 months and 18 days at 7 percent.



You may wonder about my office is in the carriage barn, so I have included a photo this month.

7. What is the cost of a square farm at \$15/acre, the distance around is 640 rods.

8. Write a Bank Check, a Promissory Note and a Receipt.

There are five parts to this 8th grade test, Grammar, Arithmetic, U.S. History, Orthography, and Geography. The time is six hours. If you want a copy let me know and I will email it to you.

Thanks for your support of PHS, it is appreciated, chat with you again next month.

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HISTORIGRAM

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Traveling on the Canal in 1836

From the Journal of William Pope

The following is an excerpt from the journal of William Pope, who traveled by packet boat through the Erie Canal in 1836 on his way to Upper Canada. After several more trips, he eventually settled in Ontario with his family in 1859.

We might think a journey across the state via packet boat back in the 1830s would be pleasant and even romantic. Not so, according to Mr. Pope. Here are some of his impressions regarding the conditions that he encountered:

"..sleeping was impossible, the cabin compares to a second hole of Calcutta. Strange and uncouth noises emanate from the mouths and nostrils of the uncivilized semi-barbarian passengers, some coughing, some sneezing, some snoring loud and boisterous as a whole fraternity of fat lazy monks or their allied Brethren, a congregation of Wild Boars... The very shrieks and guttural sounds of the bullfrogs were perfect harmony compared with the din and discord of this heterogeneous assemblage, and the fumes of Tartarus, although I have never experienced them, must, I am thoroughly convinced, be no worse, perhaps better, than the noisome and pestilential vapors floating about our rattlesnake den of a cabin."

Our thanks go to one of our museum volunteers, Brent Smith, for sharing his ancestor's enlightening prose. Painter William Pope was Brent's great, great, great grandfather who later became known as the "Audubon of Canada."

William Pope (1811–1902): English-Canadian naturalist and amateur painter who lived most of his life in Ontario, Canada. Notable wildlife artist Fenwick Lansdowne stated that Pope "gave us the first comprehensive, well executed pictorial record of Canadian birds."

Source: *Wikipedia*



Unlike the packet boats of the 1800s, modern ones have nearly all the comforts of home. Here's a popular rental boat approaching Fairport's Parker Street Bridge. Another is in the background.

Photo in 2009 by Keith Boas

Upcoming Programs & Events

The Fairport Historical Museum is temporarily closed.

CANCELED

May 9 Greenbrier Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

The club has made the difficult decision to cancel its annual plant sale this year. The PHS board very much appreciates the club's attention to the museum gardens each year and we all look forward to hosting their plant sale in 2021.

POSTPONED

May 19 PHS Annual Meeting and Picnic

Due to COVID-19 health concerns, the PHS annual meeting and picnic has been postponed until the fall. The event will now take place on October 20th. At the annual meeting portion of the event, we will hold an election for members to the board. See August and September issues of the *Historigram* for more information.

Special Recognition Level Memberships *As of April 15, 2020*

Business (\$100)

Robert Ruhland (aka Mr. Perinton), Keller Williams Realty

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

Phone: 585-303-6607, Web: bobruhland.yourkwagent.com

Barranco's Clothing and Shoes

32 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-388-1270

The Inn on Church

11 West Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-678-1106

Web: www.facebook.com/theinnonchurch

Fairport Village Inn, Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14550

Phone: 585-388-0112, Web: thefvi.com

Perinton Historical Society

Mission

To promote interest in preserving and sharing local history through education and accessibility.



The last pages of the album include images of many classmates of Helen DeLand at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. Some are pictured here, from left to right: Nellie Comins, Lillian Shepard, Clara Gilbert, and Florence Kelsey.

When she received the album as a gift, Helen likely already had a collection of carte de visite photographs. Her family was wealthy, and traveled regularly, including to DeLand, Florida, settled by, and named for her family. In her travels, young Helen certainly had opportunity to collect the portraits of family members, neighbors, and new friends. The album contains a total of 143 images, almost all professional portraits. Thankfully, adjacent to every photo is a name, written in pencil, and in some cases, a location, or further descriptive information, such as "Aunt Mary."

My task would have multiple steps: First, to digitize all 143 photographs. The photos were not removed from the album, as I did not want to risk damaging them, or the album itself. Instead, in natural lighting from a north-facing window, so as to minimize shadows, I simply photographed each image, one by one. I then copied the images to my computer.

The next step was to transcribe the descriptive information related to each image. A spreadsheet was created, with a line for each photo. With the images and descriptions now safely saved on my computer, I began the most intensive part of the project: to research every person represented in the album. Many of the people were clearly identified, but a large number were not, with only clues to help determine their identity. Many tools were utilized in research, including old newspapers, genealogy websites, and cemetery databases, among others.

It became apparent that every person in the photo album had something in common—a connection to its owner, Helen DeLand. The project was very much like working on a jigsaw puzzle. Identifying each person, and understanding their relationship with Helen DeLand gets us a bit closer to solving the puzzle, while uncovering more history about the community we love.

Lessons from Helen DeLand's Album: **Jessie Jack Hooper**

One of the few photographs in the album for which no concrete relationship can be established with Helen DeLand are a pair of images of Jessie Jack Hooper. The discovery of these particular photographs has special irony in this, the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment to the Constitution of the United States, finally allowing women the right to vote. As a leader in the suffragist and post-World War I peace movements, Jessie Jack Hooper (1865–1935) is considered a state treasure in Wisconsin.



Image of Jessie Jack Hooper from Helen DeLand's album. Here she holds her 12-week old baby, Lorna, in September of 1889.

A biography of Jessie Jack Hooper published in a 1965 edition of the Oshkosh Daily Northwestern stated that "she heard her first suffrage speech in 1893 while attending the first International Conference of Women." The week-long convention, held as part of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, featured hundreds of speakers. The event was attended by women from every state and 27 countries. More than 230 residents of this community attended the 1893 World's Fair, roughly half of them women. It is a reasonable assumption that many of the women from Perinton and Fairport attended the International Conference of Women while in Chicago. And among those in attendance was 23-year-old Helen DeLand. Perhaps it was while in attendance at the conference that she met Jessie Jack Hooper, age 28 at the time, and exchanged photographs.

Lessons from Helen DeLand's Album:

Death of a Grandfather Shapes Perinton History

Much of our fundamental understanding of Fairport and Perinton history has been shaped by the extensive work of a group of women who established the Perinton Historical Society in the 1930s. More than anyone, it was Marjorie Snow Merriman's tireless research and documentation over a period of thirty years, which continues to be an essential component of our local history. Amazingly, none of this would have occurred, but for the death of her grandfather twenty-nine years before her birth.

Eliza DeLand, a sister of Daniel and Henry DeLand, married Michigan attorney Delos Marring in the early 1850s. Their daughter, Lelia, was born in December of 1857, sadly, a few months after her father unexpectedly died. With heavy heart, the young widow of Delos Marring eventually returned to her hometown of Fairport, with her baby. With the support of her extensive DeLand family, Lelia both attended and taught in Fairport schools, and eventually married Edward C. Snow. Their home at 88 West Church Street was filled with the voices of young girls, including the oldest, Marjorie, born in 1886 in the home of her uncle, Henry DeLand. You may have been there before, when it was known as the Green Lantern, or more recently Dominic's on Main.

Marjorie Snow graduated from Fairport High School in 1904, married Paul Merriman in 1906, and for a time, they lived in Ithaca. By 1925, they had returned to her hometown, where she began her relentless research and documentation of the people and places of this community.

Had Marjorie's grandfather not died unexpectedly in Michigan in 1857, there would have been no reason for her grandmother to return to Fairport. Marjorie's mother and Edward Snow would not have met. The birth of Marjorie Merriman, the person, who more than any other, captured and chronicled our local history, never would have occurred.



Image of Delos Lee Marring (left) from Helen DeLand's album, grandfather of Marjorie Snow Merriman (right)

Remembering the Canal

*An Email Message
from Betsy Garner Carpenter*

Before I settle into what should be done today, I wanted to let you (the *Historigram* staff) know how much I enjoyed your April article, *The Packet Boat Seneca Chief*.

"Our" canal always fascinated my family. (Betsy grew up in Fairport.) I don't know how my dad knew when Fairport's lift bridge would rise; however, I do know that Dad, my brother Steve, and I enjoyed many a "lift" while standing on the bridge as it went up. One warm summer day, my great uncle David Norris and I did this. I was barefoot, so you can imagine how the sticky tar on the bridge's deck oozed up between my toes. Uncle Dave was horrified, and once back at my home on Galusha Street, he and my father broke out the turpentine to remove the tar from my feet.

Today's gentrified towpath was the scene of several bike "hikes" that my Dad led Steve and me on. For those of you old-timer Fairport natives, you'll recall that in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the towpath was overgrown with weeds. But we still enjoyed each adventure.

Then there was fishing along the canal near Dick Castor's home. Dick was a Sunday school teacher at the Congregational Church. Members of our Pilgrim Fellowship, equipped with fishing poles and worms, would gather along the canal bank near the Castor home. Anything we caught was tossed back into the canal. Hey, we knew better than to eat what came out of that stagnant waterway. Back then, Dr. George Dean, our school doctor, had spread the word that the canal's fecal coliform count was so high, it could not even be measured! Yet some folks in the community *did* eat the fish they caught as well as swim in the stale, smelly water.

Yuck!

Perinton Historical Society

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Of Milliners and Minutemen

By Lucy McCormick

With so much uncertainty over the current pandemic, the PHS House Tour scheduled for Sunday, September 27 has certainly been affected. The House Tour Committee had been busily planning the tour on South Main Street, with six homeowners stepping up to the plate to have their homes on tour. However, planning is on hold at this time.

No matter how this pandemic crisis plays out in terms of the tour, the committee wants to honor the South Main Street women and men who helped shape and enrich the early Perinton community. The year 2020 is a key year for women: Susan B. Anthony would have been 200 years old this past February. And just 100 years ago in August, the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, granting women the right to vote nationwide. In the spirit of celebration, we highlight two former residents of South Main Street.

Agnes Sproul, 1856-1929, pictured on the right, lived at and/or had her millinery business at 11, 38, and 58 South Main. She entered the millinery business in 1884, purchasing the shop of Mrs. William Bly in the original Bown block and training with her. Several moves later, Sproul rented a store in the Storms block and branched out to locations in Macedon and Despatch.



Quite the enterprising businesswoman, she also sold corsets and seven-gore walking skirts, giving a bonus of Double Green Trading Stamps. Sproul sold her 35-year-old business in 1919, assisted other milliners, and was recognized as one of the most capable milliners in the region.

Abner Wight, 1756-1844, lived in the home at 234 South Main Street, although at the time of his occupation, the house was in a different location. He served as a Minuteman during the Revolutionary War in Massachusetts. After his military service, he married Huldah Perrin in 1781. She was the sister of the first two settlers of Perinton: Glover and Jesse Perrin.

In 1792, Abner and Huldah and their six children moved from Rehoboth, MA, to what would become Perinton. They

Winter is here!

A new Winter
Hat is wanted.

Where shall I go?

— Why to
Miss Aggie Sproul,

DEALER IN

Fine Millinery,

IVES BLOCK.

SECOND FLOOR.



built a log cabin on the east side of South Main Street and had two more children. Their log cabin was eventually replaced with a wood frame home, after a nearby mill was established to produce sawn lumber.

A subsequent owner moved the house to 234 South Main, on the west side of the street. Abner was active in town politics and was an overseer of highways and a fence viewer.

Agnes Sproul and Abner Wight are part of a cast of spirited residents once inhabiting South Main Street. Watch for others in upcoming issues of the *Historigram*.

SUBMARINE CHASERS

Here? On The Canal? You Must Be Kidding!

By Keith Boas

Eight Submarine Chasers Passed Through Fairport in June, 1918

*From the Lyons (NY) Republican
Reprinted in the Monroe County Mail
Thursday, June 13, 1918*

“A fleet of eight submarine chasers went west through the Barge canal (in Lyons) at noon, Wednesday. They varied in length from 50 to 115 feet and all were converted yachts which have been used to patrol the Atlantic coast since war was declared with Germany. They have now been replaced by more modern submarine chasers and these old ones were on their way to Detroit, where they will be used for training purposes. All the boats were built of mahogany but since being in government service, the mahogany finish has disappeared and all are now painted the standard battleship gray. All were armed and were manned by U.S. Navy men.”

There is no photo or record of the date when the flotilla passed through Fairport. Yet, assuming they were not detained at any of the five locks between Lyons and Fairport, they probably reached our community on Friday, June 14th.

In attempting to track down details, including photos, of these vessels, I contacted Todd Woofenden, who is editor of the Subchaser Archives website and author of the book *WWI Submarine Chasers*. Todd couldn't help me with photos or specific information. However, he did prove to be an excellent resource: According to Todd, “The more modern submarine chasers that were referred to in the newspaper article, would be the 110-foot (slightly shorter) sub chasers, which were definitely not mahogany. The newer ones were hastily built boats made primarily of oak and pine. Prior to the construction of the 110-foot boats, there were a lot of boats conscripted for military use that were loosely called ‘sub chasers,’ in that they performed patrol duties and would have been on the lookout for U-boats. It seems some of them, (including those passing through Fairport in June, 1918), were once more being repurposed, this time as training vessels. That date makes sense: By June of 1918, (the new) 110-foot submarine chasers were already deployed overseas and along the U.S. coast, so there were probably a lot of older boats that were no longer needed.”

We can assume that these would include the sub chasers on their way through the canal to Detroit in June, 1918.

Sub Chaser SC 245 in Fairport–October 1919

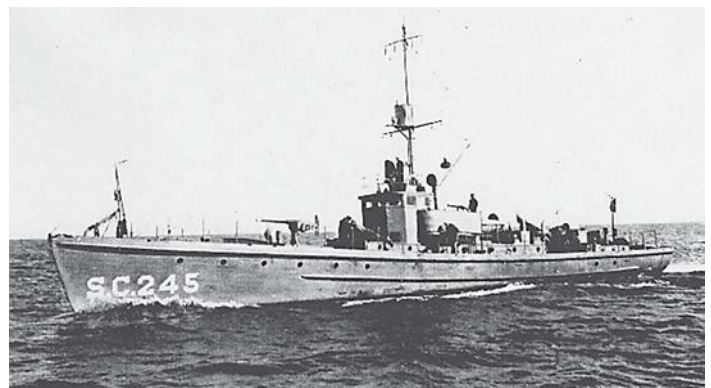
The 110-foot Submarine Chaser USS SC 245 passed through Fairport on its way to the Great Lakes in October of 1919. The vessel was built at Eastern Shipyard, Greenport (Long Island), NY, and commissioned in March, 1918. It was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet in the Special Hunting Group with USS Patterson. The SC 245 was decommissioned in December, 1919 and sold in June, 1921.

From The Newark Courier, Oct 16, 1919

Sub Chaser 245 to Stop in Newark Tomorrow Will Lay Here All Day and Will Be Open For Inspection–To Stimulate Recruiting.

“Ships Quartermaster Larry Dowd, Chief Quartermaster E. P. Lambert and Seaman G. R. Craft of the U.S.S. Utah have made arrangements for the Sub Chaser No. 245 to stop in Newark all day tomorrow, the 17th. This Chaser has the record of being the first one to sink a submarine, and is equipped now just as she was in the war zone, including the same crew. The sub chaser is making this trip through the canal as an aid in recruiting. It stopped in Lyons today and will be in Palmyra, Saturday. While here, the ship will be open for inspection by anyone interested.”

Another news article covered the boat visiting Brockport on October 22nd. Schools there were closed early to let students tour the vessel. If the boat was docked in Fairport on its way west, nothing was reported in any newspaper.



110-foot Submarine Chaser USS SC-245, on the open sea, circa 1918. The rigging would have been removed for passing under bridges on the Barge (Erie) Canal.

Photo courtesy of The Subchaser Archives



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Happy Birthday to a Special Lady

While following “social distancing” guidelines, a group of friends and neighbors gathered outside the home of Perinton Historical Society member **Mary Masciangelo** to celebrate her 95th birthday.

Here’s to Mary, one of the very nicest people we know.

Fairport Historical Museum
18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450

The museum remains temporarily closed.

We look forward to opening our doors to the community when it is safe to do so.

Upon reopening, the museum will be open to the public:

Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. and Sundays and Tuesdays from 2:00–4:00 p.m. Free admission. Group tours, presentations and special projects by appointment. Call 585-223-3989 to leave a message.

www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org