

Did He Ever Find the Money?

By

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Introduction

This is the story of Ray Carter, the inventor of the hand-held wood router, his mysterious death and the money that he might have buried somewhere on his property. The story was told to Colette Smolinski and me by John Adolphi when we visited his real estate office in Phoenix, NY on the morning of Thursday, February 1, 2024. In this introduction I have attempted to capture the story exactly as John related it to us.

Ray Carter had a patent on the wood router and he ran a pattern making company in Phoenix that routinely used routers in their business. In 1929 he sold the router patent to the Stanley company for \$250,000. The family home was on Chestnut St in the village of Phoenix. The story describes how a Brinks armored truck came to the Carter home one day with a large amount of money. Ray had been investigating types of wood that would be resistant to water. It was thought that Ray placed the money into a wooden container and buried it somewhere on his property.

One time his wife had taken his prized possession — a Pierce Arrow — for a drive. To punish her for driving his car he removed all the tires and put the car up on blocks which tells you that Carter was a very controlling man, said John.

“On one Thanksgiving Day he went next door from his shop, grabbed the food and brought it back for himself and his workers who he had made work on Thanksgiving.” – John Adolphi. According to John, “Carter’s son Shelly said of his dad, that he was an SOB.”

In 1934 Ray took a trip up to the St. Lawrence River supposedly to pay back a debt that he owed to a bootlegger. One story is that Ray never returned from that trip. Back in Phoenix the money that he had supposedly buried was never found. His widow eventually sold the property to Mr. John C. Birdlebough who was the principal of the Phoenix High School. The story goes that Helen Carter had an agreement with Mr. Birdlebough, that if he ever found the money, she wanted him to split it 50:50 with her.

There were never any rumors floating around Phoenix about the money having been found. Many years later, after all the players were long gone, John Adolphi crossed paths with Robert Coulter, Mr. Birdlebough’s lawyer, in the parking lot of the Phoenix Post Office and started to chat him up. Eventually he worked his way around to the big question. John asked Coulter, “Did he ever find the money?” The lawyer hesitated for a moment and then responded, “What money?” With that blunt response John felt he had gotten his answer — he was fairly certain that Birdlebough had found the money and that he never split it with Mrs. Carter.

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The Saga of the Buried Money

In this paper an attempt has been made to gather together the facts and background information on the main actors in this story and their families. While it might not be possible to resolve all the unanswered questions it has been possible to frame the story with solid facts and extensive family histories based on census, land records and newspaper articles. It was also possible to dispel several rumors and falsehoods.

In the Oswego Palladium-Times, on May 14, 1934 there was a short story about searchers dragging the St. Lawrence River with grappling hooks but the bodies of three missing fishermen still hadn't been found. This was at least three days after the boating accident during which they had fallen overboard. By the following day all three bodies, including that of Ray Carter, had been recovered. There is a gravestone for Ray Carter in the Pine Plains Cemetery in Clay, NY and it has been confirmed by a cemetery official that he is indeed buried there. These facts would seem to do away with the bootlegger story and the mysterious disappearance of Ray Carter.

During 1934 there were several notices published in the Oswego Palladium-Times newspaper regarding Ray Carter's estate. The gross value of the estate was estimated to be \$85,779.17. Ray had been a successful businessman prior to December, 1929 when he sold his wood router patents and the tool company to the Stanley Works Co. for \$250,000. At that time, it would have been reasonable to assume that Carter's net worth could have been about \$86,000, prior to the sale of his company. This raises the question: where did the Stanley money go?

After the stock market crashed and the banks started failing, maybe Carter decided he needed a safer place for his money. Keeping it in his house wasn't a good idea and burying it probably sounded like a better idea — but where to bury it? He might have owned several properties but he would have probably felt better if he buried it in the backyard of his Chestnut Street home where he could keep an eye on it. What to bury it in? Metal would rust and there were metal detectors that might be able to search out its location. Being involved with wood working machinery Carter was probably more comfortable with a wooden container for his money. This aligns with the rumor that he had been researching wood that was impermeable to water. And of course, he would want to construct the box himself.

Now, what to put in the box? Prior to 1934 individuals could own gold and it was worth only about \$20 per troy ounce [1.097 oz. per 1.000 troy oz.]. \$250,000 would have required 857 lbs. of gold. This would have been too heavy for a wooden box and Ray wouldn't have been able to carry out the operation in secret all by himself.

If Ray trusted in the US government to back their currency, he might have chosen that vehicle for his money. Not in the form of 10s and 20s as would be demanded for a ransom but in \$1,000 bills. For \$250,000, Carter would have only needed 250 of these bills, resulting in a smaller box, less digging and it would be harder for someone to find. Carter wasn't a crazy man hiding money in his backyard; he was a very intelligent man being forced to take the only course of action that seemed to make sense to protect his wealth as the Great Depression rained down economic disaster on the country.

Ray L. Carter and Helen L. Spiers

Henry L. Carter
b. Oct 30, 1844, Clay,
Onondaga Co, NY
d. Dec 17, 1917,
Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem,
Clay, NY

=

Priscilla Beecraft
b. 1848, Morehouseville
d. Jan 20, 1933, Syracuse
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

Lived in Syracuse for 50 years
15 grandchildren
13 g-grandchildren

Albert W. Carter
b. Mar 20, 1867, Clay, NY
d. May 17, 1916, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

Never married

Grace L. Carter
b. Nov 1868, NY
d. May 5, 1953, North Wolcott, Wayne Co, NY
bur Westbury Cem, Butler, Wayne Co, NY

= **FNU Garvey (1)**
d. bef 1892

Christian C. Born (2)
b. 1864
d. Nov 14, 1933, Victory, Cayuga Co, NY
bur Westbury Cem, Butler, Wayne Co, NY

Elijah Spencer Carter
b. Nov 9, 1870, Clay, Onondaga Co, NY
d. Apr 26, 1924, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Anna Hughes**
b. 1867
d. Oct 16, 1918, Syracuse, NY
bur St. Paul Cem, Oswego, NY

Was a minister in
Granby, Oswego Co in
1920.

Rev. Francis E. Carter
b. Jun 28, 1875, Paris, Oneida Co, NY
d. Nov 18, 1958, Schroepel, Oswego Co
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Artie Louisa Bailey (1)**
b. Jul 31, 1873, Baldwinsville, Onondaga Co, NY
d. May 29, 1921, Granby, Oswego Co, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Margaret A. LNU (2)**
b. 1884, Scotland
To US 1885

Esther M. Carter
b. Jul 14, 1876, Schroepel, Oswego Co, NY
mar 1894
d. Nov 22, 1950, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Charles Augustus Yates**
b. Dec 29, 1872, Syracuse, NY
d. Dec 21, 1956, Ponce, Ponce Municipality,
Puerto Rico
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY
125 Hillsdale Ave in 1933

Ray Leonard Carter
b. Dec 25, 1884, NY
d. May 10, 1934, Cape Vincent, NY
Drowned in St. Lawrence River
bur. Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Helen L. Speirs**
b. Jul 21, 1891, East Aurora, NY
mar 1909
(Not mar at time of 1910 census)
d. Feb 1, 1971, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

In Rowley, MA in 2024
at age of 96.

Married **Gordon Shea**.
In Syracuse, NY in 1950
In Beverly, MA in 1971

Ray L. Carter, Jr.
b. 1922
d. Aug 10, 1997, Phoenix
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

Barbara D. Carter
b. 1928

Charles Yates is related to Floyd C. Yates who was working at Ray Carter's Phoenix Pattern Works. Charles Yates is the father of Floyd C. Yates. Floyd is Ray Carter's nephew. In the 1910 census the Yates family was living in the 5th Ward of Syracuse on 205 Buena Vista Street and Floyd was the oldest of 8 children. Floyd was 15 years old and he was working in a Foundry as a Pattern Maker. Living next door to the Yates family, at 202 Buena Vista Street was the William Spiers family. Their 19-year-old daughter, Helen, was the future wife of Ray Carter.

Ray Carter Dies in Boating Accident



According to an eye witness, the boat was midway between Carleton Island and Millen's Bay when the boat turned over.

FOUR LOSE LIVES IN ST. LAWRENCE ON FISHING TRIP

Bruce Decker, Three Rivers, and Ray Carter, Phoenix, Among Victims

“WATERTOWN, N. Y., May 11 (AP) — Bodies of three men were sought in the St. Lawrence river near Mullen's bay today after they lost their lives Thursday afternoon while on a fishing trip. The body of a fourth man was recovered after the tragedy yesterday and a fifth fisherman was saved. The body of **Bruce Decker** of Three Rivers, near Phoenix, was found soon after their boat was swamped in a heavy sea. **A.S. Bigsby** of Syracuse was saved when he drifted ashore with the craft, but the bodies of **George Reeley**, Three Rivers and Syracuse; **Ray L. Carter**, Phoenix, and **Neil Warren**, Cape Vincent, were not found.

“**Decker** was the operator of a refreshment stand at Three Rivers. This eating place is well-known by hundreds of Oswego county folks, being located near the Oswego-Onondaga county line.

“The party was in the 24-foot craft, Bigsby standing in the bow, **Decker**, **Reeley** and **Carter** standing in the stern and **Warren** bending over the motor, when the boat was turned and a white-crested wave slapped against it broadside.

“The boat tipped over on its side and all except the Syracusan fell into the choppy stream. **Bigsby** stated later that he threw three life preservers out as the boat with the motor dead drifted rapidly down the river. He saw **Carter** and **Warren** but did not catch a glimpse of the other fisherman.

“Shocked by the loss of his friends he guided the boat as best he could with the only remaining oar and finally landed on the shore between 3 and 3:30 o’clock.

“The accident happened about halfway between Carlton island and the General Electric company’s power house at Mullen’s bay, according to **Mrs. Harry Higgins**, wife of the Carlton island caretaker, who observed the boat just before it was turned over.

“**Bigsby** jumped ashore in a small bay just west of Mullen’s bay and went to the farmhouse of **Charles Stoel**. He was nervous and excited and asked that help be summoned.

“**Mrs. Stoel** telephoned the **Wilfred E. Dodge** boat livery and the Tibbett’s point lighthouse and reported that four men had been washed overboard from a boat.

“**Sheriff LeRoy S. Harrington**, several deputies and **Carl J. Hynes**, assistant district attorney, left here late in the afternoon for the scene. Boats were sent out from Cape Vincent and other points along the river to search for the bodies.

Body Found Floating

“Decker’s body was found by **Wilfred E. Dodge** and **Elwin Dodge** before the arrival of the officers. It was floating in Mullen’s bay. Nearby was the boat’s fish box on the surface of the stream. Darkness a few hours later halted the hunt for the remaining bodies. The search continued this morning and grappling hooks were used to drag the river bottom.

“The body of Decker was taken to the Mannigan funeral rooms at Cape Vincent.

“**Bigsby** told **Hynes** and **Sheriff Harrington** the story of what happened as best he could. He was badly shaken by the tragedy.

“He said the four men came Wednesday night to the **Warren** farm, where they had visited before. They had planned to pitch a tent, but the night was so stormy that they stayed at the Warren farm.

“They went out at about 2 o’clock in the boat toward Carleton island and got about half way there when it was suggested they go to Mud Creek where they had been bullhead fishing before.

“Then the boat was turned and suddenly a wave hit them and four of the men washed over.

“**Bigsby** said the river was choppy. He was in the bow. **Decker**, **Carter**, and **Reeley** in the stern and **Warren** standing over the engine. He does not know how he stayed in the boat as it rolled over on its side. One oar and a fish box went over.

Unable to Start Engine

“He declared the boat drifted about 150 feet away and the engine stalled. He saw **Warren** and **Carter** in the water but did not see the other men. He threw three life preservers at the men but the preservers drifted away from them. He heard the cries for help but could do nothing. He was unable to start the engine. Finally he worked the boat ashore with the paddle.

“The men were all heavily clad and had on rubber boots. He got ashore and went for help. The sheriff found three life preservers still in the boat. There was some water in the boat.

“PHOENIX. May 11 — **Ray L. Carter** of Phoenix, **J. Bruce Decker** and **George Reeley**, both of Three Rivers, who were drowned in an accident on the St. Lawrence river Thursday, and **Arthur L. Bigsby** of Syracuse, whose life was saved, made up a fishing party that left here for Cape Vincent early Wednesday night.

“Surviving Carter are his wife, **Mrs. Helen Carter**; a son, **Shelley Ray Carter**, 12; a daughter, **Barabara Diane Carter**, 5; a brother **Rev. Francis E. Carter**; two sisters, **Mrs. C. E. Born** of Westbury and **Mrs. Charels A. Yates** of Syracuse.

“**Mr. Decker**, who was 55, was the son of **James L.** and **Emmie Bruce Decker**. Surviving are a daughter, **Mrs. Lucy Whitcomb** of Sarnie, Ontario; two brothers, Attorney **Frank N. Decker** of Syracuse, and **Ralph D. M. Decker** of London, Ontario; a grandson, **Robert Bruce Decker** and a daughter-in-law **Mrs. Norma Young Decker** of Syracuse.

“Mr. Decker’s son, **Robert Bruce Decker**, was killed in an automobile accident several years ago.

“**Frank N. Decker** went to Cape Vincent Thursday night to claim the body.

“**Arthur Monty**, a neighbor of Decker: **Floyd Yates** and **Howard Kinslow** left here at 4:30 o’clock Thursday afternoon for Mullen’s bay after hearing of the tragedy.”

May 11, 1934, Friday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

BODIES STILL MISSING

“PHOENIX, May 14 — Search for the bodies of Ray L. Carter, Phoenix; George Reeley, Syracuse, and Neil Warren, Cape Vincent, who were drowned in the St. Lawrence river near Mullen’s (Millen’s) Bay Thursday, continues fruitless, according to word received here. Searchers have covered a large area with grappling hooks. It is believed the bodies may have been carried into Canadian waters.”

May 14, 1934, Monday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

GET 3 DROWNED MEN’S BODIES

Special to the Journal

“WATERTOWN, May 15. — Bodies of the three of the four men drowned in the Carleton Island section of the St. Lawrence River last Thursday have been recovered. Searchers brought up the body of **Neil Warren**, 48, St. Lawrence River guide, was found yesterday afternoon and this morning the body of **Ray L. Carter** of Phoenix was brought to the surface near the same spot. Only the body of **George Riehle** of Syracuse is now missing, as the body of **J. Bruce Decker** of Phoenix floated to the surface two hours after the accident. **A. S. Bigsby** of Syracuse, only survivor of the boat accident, is working with the searchers.”

May 15, 1934, Tuesday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

“RIEHLE — Suddenly at Cape Vincent, May 10, 1934. **George W. Riehle**, aged 38 years. He is survived by his mother, **Mrs. Theresa Kurz Riehle**; one brother, **Henry B. Riehle**. He was a member of Syracuse Turn Verein. Funeral services at the home, 1128 Park St., Friday at 8:15 a.m. and at Holy Trinity Church at 8:45 a.m. Burial Assumption cemetery.”

May 16, 1934, Wednesday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

Newspapers – Carter Estate Related

Surrogate's Court

“Appointment of the Citizens National Bank and Trust company of Fulton as co-administrator with **Helen L. Carter**, of the estate of **Ray L. Carter**, late of Phoenix was made by Surrogate Morehouse on Monday. The local institution succeeds the First Trust and Deposit company of Syracuse, which resigned as co-administrator. Mr. Carter was one of a party of fisherman drowned in the St. Lawrence river last spring. He was a former manufacturer. The amount of the estate remaining unadministered is \$30,373.”

December 20, 1934, Thursday, The Fulton Patriot, Fulton, NY

“Statement of the assets of the estate of **Ray L. Carter**, late of Phoenix, was filed by the widow and Oswego County Trust. Company as administrators, showing the estimated value to be **\$30,320.48**. Burton J. Quinn and Frank Campbell were named executors, and Harry M. Stacy appointed special guardian of infants.”

April 29, 1935, Monday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Transfer Tax Appraisals Filed in Several Estates

“Transfer tax appraisals and exemptions from such appraisal in several estates were filed in Surrogate's court Monday. Surrogate D. P. Morehouse, Jr. presided.

“In the estate of **Ray L. Carter**, late retired Phoenix manufacturer, the gross estate was values at \$85,779.17; deductions totaled \$21,575.24, and the net estate was \$44,203.93 (should be \$64,203.93). Assets include real estate, \$4,000; stocks, etc. \$38,592.54; mortgages, notes, etc. \$15,448.13; jointly owned property, \$5,500; other personal property, \$1,228.50. Expenses of administration and funeral, \$4,?96.50; debts, \$15,486.74; support of dependents \$1,052. Tax assessed \$142.04.”

“The estate is shared by the widow and two children. An order authorizing the sale of real estate in the town of Clay, Onondaga county, was entered. Sale is to be made to Ralph G. VanEpps for \$5,000.”

May 13, 1935, Monday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

“Final account of **Helen L. Carter** and Oswego County Trust Company as administrators of the estate of **Ray L. Carter**, late of Phoenix: total amount received **\$30,915.91**; total amount paid out for expenses, etc., \$2,276.07; balance for next of kin, **\$28,639.84.**”

June 24, 1935, Monday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

“OSWEGO — The bulk of the **\$30,915.91** estate left by Ray L. Carter of Phoenix will go to his widow, it was revealed Monday when the Oswego County Trust Company and Helen L. Carter, executors, filed letters of administration with Surrogate D. P. Morehouse Jr.”

June 24, 1935, Monday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

Financial Reconciliation

The Financial Status of the Family after Ray Carter's Death

Barbara Dix had talked with Ray's daughter Barbara Carter Shea and she said that her father's death had left her mother broke. They had to sell the house and move into an apartment.

Note: After Ray Carter's estate was settled there was a \$28,639.84 "balance for next of kin" (June 24, 1935, Monday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY). Carter's widow was able to *struggle* on financially until 1943 when she finally sold the family home on Chestnut Street.

A different take on those depression years was offered by Barbara Carter Shea in her memoir.

"The financing of bootleggers may have produced even more income than the stock market for Ray. At any rate, it was another ongoing, lucrative avenue of his investment. We never felt the depression. We lived on its flip side." — From Barbara Carter's book: *Tangerine from Chestnut Street*, A Memoir, 1999.

If the money from Ray Carter's estate is divided by the nine years between when Carter died in 1934 to 1943 when they sold the family home one arrives at the approximate amount of money that his family had to live on annually.

$$\$28,640/9 \text{ years} = \$3,182 \text{ per year}$$

In the Appendix there is a section titled "Occupations, Salaries and Housing in the 1940 Census." In the table there is income information for some 46 individuals who were living around John C. Birdlebough (who purchased the Carter home on Chestnut Street in 1943). Of the 46 individuals in the table there are only 5 who had an annual income higher than \$3,182. Helen and Barbara Carter were indeed very well off. Of course, they could have spent substantially less than the almost \$3,200 per year and still lived very comfortably and still had been able to stretch the money from Ray Carter's estate even further. This example shows that Ray Carter's death did not leave his wife Helen broke.

Barbara Dix said that they (Barbara and Helen) had enough money to make it through the Depression. "How does a woman with no job survive the Depression?" she asked the author.

John Chester Birdlebough

Birdlebough became the Principal of the Phoenix High School in 1931. In 1940 he and his wife were living at 93 State Street and paying a rent of \$30 per month. In 1939 his salary as a principal was \$3,300. Also in 1939, his wife's father, Ezra Oaks of Angelica, Alleghany Co., died and left his estate to his daughter Jessie and her brother Charles. The estate consisted of a \$1,200 personal estate and \$5000 in real estate. In 1940 Charles Oaks was running the family farm so it hadn't been sold to settle his father's estate. Most likely he bought out Jessie's half of the farm for \$2,500 and she would have split the \$1,200 with him. So, in 1940, Jessie had an inheritance of \$3,100, which was only a couple hundred dollars less than her husband had earned the previous year. Her inheritance was probably what she and John used to buy the property at 21 Chestnut Street from Mrs. Carter in 1943.

This raises the question as to where Birdlebough got all the money for his clock collection. In March 1950 the collection was described as follows: "...the Birdlebough collection of clocks which is one of the largest and most interesting maintained by any horologist in the state."

John C. Birdlebough and Jessie Oaks

(s/o William Robinson Peckham and
Maria Schermerhorn Kettle)
(d/o Father and Mother)

(s/o Peter Smith Birdlebough and
Mary E. Russell)
(d/o Father and Mother)

Charles Peckham
b. Oct 21, 1839, Truxton,
NY
d. Aug 18, 1915,
Cortland, NY
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **Rosannah Suggett**
b. Jun 1851, NY
mar 1870
d May 22, 1930
bur Cortland Rural Cem

**Joseph R.
Birdlebough**
b. 1846, NY
d 1907
bur Cortland Rural
Cem

= **Aldula Rexford**
b. 1844, NY
d. Jan 25, 1923
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **Gertrude Louise Peckham**
b. May 14, 1873
mar May 4, 1892, Cortland
d Jul 4, 1904, Cortland
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **C. Frank Birdlebough**
b. Dec 3, 1869
d. Apr 3, 1897, Cortland, NY
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **John C. Birdlebough**
b. Apr 1894, NY
d. Sep 3, 1981, Syracuse, NY
bur Fisk Cem, Angelica, NY

= **Jessie Oaks**
b. Oct 18, 1887, Angelica
mar Feb 2, 1923. Walden,
NY
d. Apr 30, 1963
bur Fisk Cem, Angelica,
NY

NOTE: Dates were extracted from census records, cemetery records and newspaper articles.

Census Records - Birdlebough

1900 NY Cortland Cortland WD01 Dist 0091

81 Homer Avenue, Res 185, Fam 200, Owns home with a mortgage

Charles A. Peckham, Head, Oct 1839, 60, M, 30 yrs, NY, NY, NY, Marble Polisher

Rosannah Peckham, Wife, June 1851, 48, M, 30 yrs, Children: 1/1, NY, Eng, Eng

Gertrude Birdlebough, Dau, May 1873, 27, Wd, Children: 1/1, NY, NY, NY, Teacher

John C. Birdlebough, Grandson, April 1894, 6, S, NY, NY, NY

1920 NY Cortland Cortland Cortland WD01 Dist 0002

81 Homer Avenue, Res 81, Fam 88, Owns home free of mortgage

Rosanna Peckham, Head, 68, Wd, NY, Eng, Eng, None

John C. Birdlebough, Grandson, 25, S, NY, NY, NY, Asst Manager, Paper Box Factory

1925 – Not found

1930 NY Tompkins Trumansburg Dist 0039

54 Cayuga Street, Res 104 Fam 116 – One of 3 renters - \$25/mo. Has a radio

John Birdlebough, Head, 36, Mar, Mar @ 29, NY, NY, NY, Principal, Public School

Jessie Birdlebough, Wife, 40, Mar, Mar @ 33, NY, NY, NY, Teacher, Public School

1940 NY Oswego Phoenix 38-75

93 State Street, Res 29, Rents \$30/mo

John C. Birdlebough, Head, 45, M, C-5, NY, same house, Principal, Public School, Worked 40 wks, Income \$3,300

Jessie B. Birdlebough, Wife, 50, M, C-4, NY, same house, Income \$0

1950 NY Oswego Phoenix 38-91

21 Chestnut, Res 201

John Birdlebough, Head, 56, Mar, NY, Principal, Phoenix High School

Jessie Birdlebough, Wife, 60, Mar, NY, No occupation

Sample Questions for Jessie Birdlebough

21. Living in same house last year: YES

25. Where were parents born: Father: US, Mother: US

26. Highest grade attended: C5

27. Completed grade: YES

28. Attended school since Feb 1st: 30 or over

30. Number of weeks worked: None

31a. Earned from wages or salary: None

31b. Income for own business, professional practice or farm: None

31c. Money received outside of earnings: \$5,000

NOTE: Perhaps Jessie had left her half of the farm invested and she was paid a share of the earnings every year.

Financial Analysis — Birdlebough

Could the Birdleboughs Afford It?

John C. Birdlebough and his wife Jessie purchased the Carter house at 21 Chestnut Street (later numbered 422 and now 61) in Phoenix, NY on September 22, 1943. The deed of the sale recorded at the Oswego County Clerk's Office, listed the sale price as "\$1.00." In the 1940 census Helen Carter's home was valued by her at \$10,000. In the 1930 census Helen's husband Ray Carter had valued the house at \$20,000. The Great Depression had taken its toll on the value of the Carter home.

In the financial analysis that follows it was assumed that the sale price of the Carter home in 1943 was \$10,000. Mrs. Carter's financial situation at the time of the sale isn't known for sure, but the money from her late husband's estate was probably running low. If she had been under some financial pressure the selling price of the house might have been lower.

For the purpose of running some numbers to determine if the Birdleboughs were able to afford the Carter home it was assumed that they took out a mortgage for a term of 15 years at 4.7% which was a typical rate in the early 1940s. No mention was made in the deed about how the purchase was financed and there was no Birdlebough mortgage found in the records at the Oswego County Clerk's Office. It was assumed that Helen Carter took back a mortgage on the house and it wasn't recorded with the county clerk. To estimate the size of the mortgage, information from the 1950 census was used. In the 1950 census several individuals who were listed on predetermined row numbers were asked more detailed financial questions at the bottom of the page. Helen Carter happened to be one of those persons and one of the questions concerned the amount of money the individual had received in the previous year, apart from income. Helen Carter had received \$540. It was assumed that this was the amount of the mortgage payments from the Birdleboughs. The mortgage amount was varied until it produced an annual payment of \$540. This required a mortgage of \$5,800 and it's an interesting coincidence that the amount turned out to be such a nice round amount.

Jessie Oaks Birdlebough's father, Ezra Oaks had died in 1939 and he left an estate of \$5,000 in real estate and \$1,200 in cash. John Birdlebough was the executor of the Ezra Oaks estate. This was probably split between Jessie and her brother Charles who continued on the family farm in the Town of Angelica in Allegany County. This would have given Jessie \$3,100 to put towards a down payment on a house. In addition, since the couple didn't have any children, they might have been able to put aside some money each month towards a down payment. In 1940 the Birdleboughs were renting a house and paying a monthly rent of \$30, or \$360 per year (10.9% of 1939 income). Between the inheritance and the down payment fund they should have been able to handle the down payment of \$4,200. They had already been paying \$360 per year in rent and now they could divert the down payment savings to paying the mortgage and they should have been able to afford the \$540 yearly mortgage payments. This would have been 15.4% of his income, assuming 3% raises in 1940 and 1941 for an income of \$3,500 which was then frozen during the war years.

A survey was made of 46 individuals living around John Birdlebough in the 1940 census (See Appendix - *Occupations, Salaries and Housing in the 1940 Census*). This included occupations, incomes (1939), weeks worked, owned or rented house, and value of house or monthly rent. At an annual salary of \$3,300 Birdlebough had the fifth highest income of the group. Those above him were a physician (\$5,000), a president of a manufacturing company (\$5,000), a superintendent of a paper mill (\$3,960), and a professor at a medical school (\$3,500). Of the top five individuals only the top two owned homes and both were valued at \$10,000.

It seems probable that the Birdleboughs would have been able to afford the purchase of the Carter home on Chestnut Street without it being a financial burden.

Interest in Clocks Prior to House Purchase

“Principal J. C. Birdlebough, speaking before the Men’s Club of the Methodist church Monday night reviewed the history of clock making in this country and told of some of the early clock makers. His address followed a supper of the club.”

February 5, 1942, Tuesday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

The Collection of Clocks

“Many members of the society will have the opportunity for the first time to see the Schroepfel clock Sunday afternoon, April 2, at 3 o’clock and following at the home of Principal and Mrs. Birdlebough at 21 Chestnut street, Phoenix, where it is now a part of Mr. Birdlebough’s *collection of rare and interesting clocks*. Mr. and Mrs. Birdlebough are arranging a tea to take place at their home on that date to which all members of the historical society are invited. The guests will have opportunity not only to see the Schroepfel clock, but many other clocks which are a part of *the Birdlebough collection of clocks which is one of the largest and most interesting maintained by any horologist in the state*.

“Mr. Birdlebough acquired the clock some months ago at the time when the Schroepfel Mansion, erected in 1818 at Oak Orchard by George Casper Schroepfel after whom Schroepfel Town was named was vacated following deaths of the last of the name to occupy the house which was in the continuous occupation by the family for about 130 years. Although the various mechanisms of the clock-organ were in a bad state of repair Mr. Birdlebough was able at *the ‘clock hospital’ which he maintains in connection with his home in Phoenix to restore it to its original functioning condition*. The woodwork of the clock with a crotch mahogany veneer has been entirely refinished and its case is now one of great natural beauty. Some of the history of the clock will be found below in that portion of this article which reproduces, Mr. Birdlebough’s paper as given last evening.”

March 22, 1950, Wednesday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Clock Struck \$10,500 at Antique Auction

By Maria T. Welych

“PHOENIX — Money and memories were everywhere at Saturday’s auction in the front lawn of the John C. Birdlebough residence in Phoenix.

“The sale of 91 antique clocks alone added close to \$80,000 to the coffers of Birdlebough’s heirs. More than 300 additional items were auctioned at the sale.

“An ornate Dutch tall case clock fetched the highest price, \$10,5000. It was sold to Irene and George Hartwick of London, Ontario, who have a collection of more than 300 pieces.

“‘That was a great buy,’ Mrs. Hartwick said. ‘We were lucky to get it. Two or three other people were interested in it but it’s like anything else. You pay enough and you’ll get it.’

“The dispersal of the former principal’s famous clock collection meant an irrevocable loss to the community.

“‘Whether it’s the clock collection of J. C. Birdlebough or the collection of any prominent resident, it’s a shame to see it dispersed,’ said Charles Marks, a teacher at E. J. Dillon Middle School. ‘I hate to see one man’s lifetime hobby be sent literally to half the states and Canada.’

“‘He (Birdlebough) was a fixture in the community. His passing was a real loss.’

“Birdlebough, who was district principal of the Phoenix Central School District from 1931 to his retirement in 1963, died in September 1981, said his nephew, Gary Oaks.

“An avid collector of antiques and especially clocks, he began his interest through an uncle who collected clocks.

“He had clocks from all over Europe — Scotland, England, France, Holland, Germany,’ Oaks said. ‘They date back to the late 1600s.’

“Birdlebough also repaired clocks in his garage, Oaks said. On Friday, a sale of items not to be auctioned was held in that garage.

“I’m interested in clocks, but I don’t have the expertise to be able to keep them running,’ Oaks said. ‘It’s not really hard to see them sold because somebody else will eventually have them up in their homes and will enjoy it as much as my uncle did.’

“Birdlebough enjoyed sharing his collection with everyone. He often showed his collection to village children.

“We used to come over on Saturday to wind up his clocks when I was nine or 10,’ said Phoenix Police Chief Charles Mower. ‘I’d love to buy one, but they’re out of my price range.’

“Bill Cromie also remembered visiting the house as a child.

“His house was always open to kids,’ Cromie said. ‘My oldest brother brought his daughter there to see the clocks before he (Birdlebough) got sick. Birdlebough really enjoyed showing his collection.’

“Marks remembered once visiting the house on the hour, when all 91 clocks chimed at once.

“It was quite an experience,’ he said. ‘I went on a tour with a class. I remember that he was the principal and was awe-inspiring.’

“Birdlebough’s collection helped some folk decide to start collecting clocks. Don House of DeWitt got his start through Birdlebough and another collector.

“Through another old-time collector, Mr. Birdlebough let me see his collection,’ he said. ‘Between the two of the them, I got hooked.’

“House now owns more than 400 clocks. He also repairs and sells the antiques. He added two to his collection at Saturday’s auction.

“The clocks ranged from 18th century grandfather clocks to electric telechron beehive clocks, from a miniature German porcelain clock with a three-inch diameter face to wooden Cuckoo clocks.

“The auctioneers, Bob and Tom Knapp, kept up a constant, barely understandable chatter as bidders raised their numbered cards to indicate a bid.

“Clocks like this don’t come around often,’ Bob said, trying to encourage higher bids. ‘We’ve had more calls and comments on this particular clock.’

“There was a round of applause when the clock, a miniature glass-boxed clock dating to 1880, sold for \$2,000.

“Robert Greene of Buffalo came to get started on his collection. He shelled out \$745 to purchase three 19th-century American clocks.

“He said he became hooked on clock collecting as an indirect result of his career.

“I’m an attorney, and we bill on a time basis,’ he explained. ‘Watching clocks is an everyday occurrence for me. That and visiting museums got me interested in clocks and I began reading on it. I got stung when someone gave me an antique clock a year and a half ago.’

“Although the majority of Birdlebough’s clocks were scattered across the country by Saturday’s sale, at least one will remain in Oswego County.

“Oaks said Birdlebough donated a clock that used to be in the home of the Schroepel family, founders of the town of Schroepel, to the Oswego County Historical Society and can be viewed at its new home in the Richardson-Bates House Museum.”

September 10, 1984, Monday, Syracuse Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

Conclusion

It's tempting to conclude that John Birdlebough had found the money that Ray Carter had supposedly buried on his property and that was how Birdlebough was able to amass his collection of antique clocks. This was a collection which had been described in a 1950 newspaper article *as one of the largest and most interesting maintained by any horologist in the state*.

Birdlebough's interest in antique clocks began in 1937 according to him and he was lecturing on the topic of clock making in 1942, the year before he purchased the Carter property. After taking a dive into an online platform where clock collectors share information and their thoughts on the hobby/obsession of clock collecting it quickly became obvious to the author that none of these individuals were drawn to the activity with the hope of becoming rich. This hobby was not considered by any of these individuals as a financial investment opportunity. The usual approach was to look for clocks, at a reasonable price, that had been neglected and were in need of a good cleanup and some minor repairs. Even though returning these clocks to operating condition would increase their value the collectors usually didn't sell the clocks but instead added them to their growing collections.

Suppose Birdlebough had found Carter's money. If he hadn't used it to finance his clock collecting then what would he have done with it? The story, according to John Adolphi, was that Helen Carter had made an agreement with Birdlebough when she sold him her house. If he found the money that her husband had buried then they would split it. If Birdlebough had found the money the story would have certainly made the papers but no such stories appear in the newspaper archives of the local papers. Therefore, if he had found the money, he must have devised a way to keep it quiet and it doesn't seem to have disappeared into his collection of antique clocks. Investments in the stock market and commercial real estate are possible avenues for the found money, although these investments would leave a paper trail available to the public. It's possible that he put it all into the stock market and then made some bad investment choices and lost all the money. Perhaps he had a gambling habit and an extremely long losing streak absorbed his new found fortune.

Barbara Dix related stories to the author about John and Jessie Birdlebough's acts of kindness for those in financial need and the local children. After hearing those stories, this author has concluded that Birdlebough would have probably split any found money with Helen Carter. It's not beyond the realm of possibility that the generous John Birdlebough might have given her all the money if he had found it.

Analysis of the Buried Money Story

An extensive search (1930 to 2024) of the Fulton History Newspaper archives and the Post-Standard archives found not even a single hint of buried money, or anything else of value, in the Phoenix area. The examination of John C. Birdlebough's finances and spending habits did not show any signs that he had come into a financial windfall. The only real surprise came in the settlement of Ray Carter's estate in 1934 which was considerably smaller (gross estate valued at about \$86,000) than would have been expected given that Carter had sold the R. L. Carter Company for \$250,000 in late 1929. After the settlement of the estate his next of kin received only \$28,639.84. The relatively low value of the estate could be taken as evidence of 'missing money.' So far, the only hint, story, or rumor that have been uncovered as to where the money might have gone, aside from the buried money story, is from Barbara Carter's memoir that her father was a known gambler and the comment from the Town of Schroepfel historian that Carter might have had a gambling problem.

At this point the only source for Ray Carter burying some of his money is the story told by John Adolphi. The Statements in the following table were taken from the introduction of this paper which is the story of Carter's buried money as told by John Adolphi.

Statements	Facts	Comments
"Ray Carter had a patent on the wood router and he ran a pattern making company in Phoenix that routinely used routers in their business."	Carter had been granted well over two dozen patents related to routers. In 1924-5 Carter moved the R. L. Carter Company from Syracuse, NY to Phoenix, NY. In 1927 Carter incorporated a pattern making company. The following year the name was changed to the Phoenix Pattern Works.	It was the tool company that was sold, not the pattern making company. In 1930 Ray's brother Francis Carter and their nephew Floyd Yates were working at the pattern making company. By 1940 Francis and Floyd were running the pattern company that they had probably purchased from the Carter estate.
"On one Thanksgiving Day he went next door from his shop, grabbed the food and brought it back for himself and his workers who he had made work on Thanksgiving." – John Adolphi.	"Few people seem to care about others' prosperity, but Ray did. He paid his men well, and that reputation preceded him. The Phoenix paper mills tried, unsuccessfully, to keep him and his higher wages out of town. Later, when the unions wanted to get into the R. L. Carter Co., the guys kept them out because Ray took such good care of them." From Barbara Carter's memoir <i>Tangerine From Chestnut Street, A Memoir</i> , 1999	I initially thought that the thanksgiving story was a negative statement about Carter since he was making his employees work on Thanksgiving Day. After reading his daughter Barbara's description of her father, the emphasis should be more on the meal he served them than the fact they were working on a holiday.

Statements	Facts	Comments
<p>“In 1929 he sold the router patent to the Stanley company for \$250,000.”</p>	<p>“She said her mother told her that after Carter had sold his hand sander, routers and shapers to the Stanley Works for a <u>quarter of a million dollars...</u>” From Barbara Carter’s memoir <i>Tangerine From Chestnut Street, A Memoir</i>, 1999</p> <p>“In late 1929 the business (R. L. Carter Company) was acquired by The Stanley Works and relocated to Stanley's hometown of New Britain, CT. For a while the business continued to do business as R. L. Carter Co. Inc., but eventually it operated as the R. L. Carter Division of Stanley.” Manufacturer’s Index — R. L. Carter Co., Inc. Vintage Machinery at www.vintagemachinery.org Note: There are conflicting dates as to when the sale of the company took place. The above source gives December 1929. According to a law suit brought by Stanley Works in 1931 the date was August 12, 1930. According to another article in the Syracuse Journal the date was August 8, 1929</p>	<p>It wasn’t just the patent that Carter sold; it was the entire tool company and all of his long list of router related patents. Initially, the <u>actual sales price</u> of the Carter Company had not been confirmed. So an exercise to estimate the income statement for the company at the time of the sale shows that \$250,000 was a reasonable amount. Later the \$250,000 amount was verified in Barbara Carter’s memoir.</p>
<p>“a Brinks armored truck came to the Carter home one day with a large amount of money.”</p>	<p>“She said her mother told her that after Carter had sold his hand sander, routers and shapers to the Stanley Works for a quarter of a million dollars, the <u>company sent the money in an armored truck to their house on Chestnut St.</u> This was 1929.” From Barbara Carter’s memoir <i>Tangerine From Chestnut Street, A Memoir</i>, 1999</p>	<p>The Brinks Truck story was correct. Where did Adolphi hear this story?</p>
<p>“Ray had been investigating types of wood that would be resistant to water.”</p>	<p>So far not able to confirm or refute.</p>	

Statements	Facts	Comments
<p>“In 1934 Ray took a trip up to the St. Lawrence River supposedly to pay back a debt that he owed to a bootlegger. One story is that Ray never returned from that trip.”</p>	<p>Ray did take a trip to the St. Lawrence in 1934 but it was for a fishing trip. A rouge wave swept Ray and three other fishermen overboard and they drowned. Ray’s body was recovered a few days later and returned to Phoenix. He is buried in Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY</p> <p>Perhaps there was a little truth in the bootlegger story. “The <u>financing of bootleggers</u> may have produced even more income than the stock market for Ray. At any rate, it was another ongoing, lucrative avenue of his investment.” This was from Barbara Carter’s memoir <i>Tangerine From Chestnut Street, A Memoir</i>, 1999.</p>	<p>This bootlegger debt story seemed easily disproved since the actual saga played out for several days in the local newspapers at the time.</p> <p>However, maybe the debt went the other way. Perhaps Ray was collecting a debt that the bootlegger owed him. And he took in a fishing trip along the way.</p>
<p>It was rumored that Ray Carter buried a large amount of money on his property.</p>	<p>This story was related to us by John Adolphi. No other corroborating evidence has been found. I contacted John again. He said the story had been told to him by Phoenix citizens Janet Harder and Wesley VanDyke.</p> <p>Harder had spoken of Carter burying the money. Did she say anything about Birdlebough finding the money?</p> <p>VanDyke only spoke of Birdlebough finding money. Did he associate this money with Carter?</p>	<p>What initially made people think that Carter had buried any money?</p>
<p>“The <u>story goes</u> that Helen Carter had an agreement with Mr. Birdlebough, that if he ever found the money, she wanted him to split it 50:50 with her.”</p>	<p>In the 1943 deed to the Birdleboughs Mrs. Carter had only 2 conditions: one was that the parties of the second part should “quietly enjoy the said premises”; secondly the party of the first part would forever warrant the title to the premises. This would have been the perfect place to insert a condition on the sharing of any found money — but Helen Carter didn’t include such a condition. There was no mention of money found on the property anywhere in the deed.</p>	<p>Who was telling this story?</p> <p>Was there ever such an agreement? Why would Mrs. Carter have relied on a verbal agreement with Birdlebough when she had a legal document at her disposal? Verbal agreements seldom stand up in court.</p>

What Was the Source of the Story?

So, where did John Adolphi hear the story about Ray Carter burying some money?

“**Janet Harder** a local Phoenix woman told me the initial story. She used to play with the Carter girl **Diane**. Janet is gone and not sure about Diane. **Wes Van Dyke** a local to Phoenix also knew about it. Birdlebough attorney **Bob Coulter** would neither confirm nor deny the story when I asked him if Birdlebough found the loot.”

“She (**Janet Harder**) shared this story initially in her home on one visit inspired by my treasure stories. The reason Janet Harder shared the buried money story was because I was over (at) her home either talking history or real estate. I was an avid treasure hunter and owned several metal detectors. I was pulling out many items from Lake Neatahwanta in Fulton at the time (1997).”

A little research soon showed that all of the people mentioned in John’s email were now deceased.

Barbara Diane Carter - b. Dec 12, 1923, d. Oct 1998 - No obituary found.

Correct birth year: 1928. In 2024 it was determined that Barbara was still alive and living in Rowley, MA, See, [“The Mysterious Fate of Barabara Diane Carter,”](#) in the Appendix.

Janet Fay Donovan Harder - b. Feb 16, 1929, d. Jan 5, 2010

Wesley Franklyn VanDyke - b. Sept 28, 1933, d. Jan 4, 2011, age 77

Robert Coulter - b. Dec 12, 1925, d. April 9, 2021, age 95

Janet Harder was probably the best source since she would have been around Barbara Diane and her mother Helen on many occasions. She would have been privy to Barbara Diane’s secrets and she might have also picked up on conversations that Helen was having. Barbara Diane’s actual birth date was Nov or Dec 1928 and she and Janet would have only been a few months apart in age. Both girls would have been about 5-1/2 years old when Barbara Diane’s father drowned on that fatal fishing trip in the St. Lawrence River.

Janet Harder’s maiden name was Donovan and the census records show that the Donovan family was living in Syracuse, NY in 1935. (See [“The Donovan Family,”](#) in the Appendix). Therefore, Janet and Barbara Diane didn’t meet until sometime between 1935 and 1940 when the girls would have been between 6 and 11 years old.

Barbara Diane and her mother traveled to California in late 1943 after selling the family home to John Birdlebough. Barbara remained in CA and Helen returned to Syracuse shortly thereafter. In the summer of 1946 Barbara returned from California after graduating from high school. Mrs. Carter had rented a house at 123 Ashworth Place in Syracuse back in 1943, where she, her son, and later her daughter resided. Where Barbara had been residing in California and with who is unknown although it has been determined that it wasn’t a member of the Carter or Speirs families.

Wesley Franklyn VanDyke didn’t take up residence in Phoenix until 1957. He was the owner of VanDyke Construction and the Sewing Place / Canvas Repair. By the time VanDyke arrived in Phoenix Barbara Carter was long gone. At some time prior to 1971 Helen Carter had moved back to Phoenix and was residing at 628 Main St. at the time of her death in 1971. In a 1968 obituary Helen was described as living in Phoenix. VanDyke might have picked up on the buried money story from Janet Harder or from Helen Carter herself.

Newspaper Articles

The selected newspaper items below demonstrate the relationships among the people supposed to have a knowledge of Ray Carter burying some money.

“Subdeb Club gave a farewell party Friday evening at the home of **Miss Janet Donovan** for **Miss Barbara Carter**, who is leaving Phoenix to make her home in California.”

November 1, 1943, Monday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Note: Barbara Carter was born in Dec 1928. At the time of her exit to California she was 14 years-old and just about to turn 15. According to Barbara Dix, Barbara’s mother, Helen Carter, accompanied her daughter to California and then returned to NY shortly thereafter. The lack of any deeds in Helen’s name in the Onondaga County Clerk’s Office suggests that she was renting the house at 123 Ashworth Place.

“**Miss Janet Donovan** has accepted a position in Marcy for the summer vacation period. She has recently completed her freshman year at St. Lawrence university.”

June 27, 1947, Friday, Oswego Palladium Times, Oswego, NY

“The Century Club met Wednesday at the home of **Mrs. Richard Donovan** with **Mrs. Janet Harder** guest speaker. The newly elected president, **Mrs. Robert Coulter** presided. An afternoon of cards followed with high scores won by Mrs. Paul Scusa and Mrs. John Paveto. Hostess for the next meeting will be Mrs. Robert Jarvis.”

April 3, 1969, Thursday, The Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Note: There are several interesting connections found in this short announcement. **Richard Donovan** is the brother of **Janet Harder**. **Mrs. Robert Coulter** is the wife of **Robert Coulter** who was **John C. Birdlebough**’s lawyer.

Cleanup Days On Agenda

“PHOENIX — The Greater Phoenix Improvement Association will meet at 8 p.m. Wednesday at the home of **Mrs. Janet Harder**.

“**Mrs. Barbara Dix** will report on preparations for the annual spring cleanup days jointly sponsored by the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce.”

March 19, 1973, Monday, Syracuse Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

“**Mrs. Janet Harder** and **Mrs. Marvin (Barbara) Dix** visited the Yorker Club of the Emerson J. Dillon Middle School on Volney St. this week. They presented a program to this group telling of the architecture in Oswego County of particular houses in the Phoenix area.”

June 11, 1975, Wednesday, Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Summary

It has been shown that Ray Carter had acquired a large amount of money, \$250,000, for the sale of his tool company and patents in 1929. However, in 1935 Ray Carter's final estate was only \$28,639.84, which raises the question: Where did all that money go?

Some more insight into the situation was found in his daughter's memoir. The following is from Barbara Carter's memoir *Tangerine From Chestnut Street, A Memoir* (1999), via Barbara Dix who has a draft copy of the memoir.

She says she has been told that her father played stocks heavily. "His buys and sells shook the market, a friend of his, the Syracuse chief of police, told my mother. Ray, along with anyone else in the country who still had money, looked elsewhere to invest it, or hide it. Apparently, he had gauged the stock market with his usual acumen, because my brother didn't remember, and I never heard, stories of losses."

"The financing of bootleggers may have produced even more income than the stock market for Ray. At any rate, it was another ongoing, lucrative avenue of his investment. We never felt the depression. We lived on its flip side."

Ray Carter might have misinterpreted the stock market crash as a "dip" and so he bought into it — in a big way. Then with the stock market continuing to drop Carter eventually lost most or all of his money. Since he was a business owner who was viewed by most people in the village of Phoenix as a success in financial matters, he couldn't admit that he had lost all his money in the stock market. So, he might have invented the buried money story as a way to cover up the fact that he had lost his money. However, his daughter said she never heard any stories of his losses.

Keeping a large amount of in cash in a private home is a dangerous practice. Since Carter had the money from the sale of his company brought to his home in an armored truck, there must have been some secure location in the house where the money was stored. It might have been a safe or some hidden compartment built into a wall of one of the many rooms in the old house. According to Barbara Carter, her father had financed many bootleggers. Carter would have needed easy access to his money for this activity and he wouldn't want the local bank to be aware of that flow of cash. Burying all of his money would have been an impediment to this activity. Perhaps he only buried a portion of his money and kept the rest of it hidden in the house to facilitate his financing of bootleggers.

Janet Harder was given as one source of the buried money story by John Adolphi. According to Barbara Dix, "Janet (Harder) was a friend of mine. She made up her own history as she went along." Janet and Barbara often talked about the Carter house on Chestnut Street. Barbara said that Janet had never mentioned anything to her about buried money. This would seem to cast some doubt on the notion that Ray Carter had buried money.

Birdlebough's lawyer might have just been being cagey when he responded to John Adolphi, "What money?" Or, maybe Birdlebough never did find the money — and it's still out there, if it was ever out there. Perhaps somewhere in that historic old house up on Chestnut Street there is a hidden compartment, continuing to safeguard its contents. All that money could just be waiting for someone to find the secret lever that will cause the panel to open and to let in the light once again after almost 100 years of darkness.

Appendix

Ray L. Carter and Helen L. Spiers

Henry L. Carter
b. Oct 30, 1844, Clay,
Onondaga Co, NY
d. Dec 17, 1917,
Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem,
Clay, NY

= **Priscilla Beecraft**
b. 1848, Morehouseville
d. Jan 20, 1933, Syracuse
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

Lived in Syracuse for 50 years
15 grandchildren
13 g-grandchildren

— **Albert W. Carter**
b. Mar 20, 1867, Clay, NY
d. May 17, 1916, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

Never married

— **Grace L. Carter**
b. Nov 1868, NY
d. May 5, 1953, North Wolcott, Wayne Co, NY
bur Westbury Cem, Butler, Wayne Co, NY

= **FNU Garvey (1)**
d. bef 1892

Christian C. Born (2)
b. 1864
d. Nov 14, 1933, Victory, Cayuga Co, NY
bur Westbury Cem, Butler, Wayne Co, NY

— **Elijah Spencer Carter**
b. Nov 9, 1870, Clay, Onondaga Co, NY
d. Apr 26, 1924, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Anna Hughes**
b. 1867
d. Oct 16, 1918, Syracuse, NY
bur St. Paul Cem, Oswego, NY

Was a minister in
Granby, Oswego Co in
1920.

— **Rev. Francis E. Carter**
b. Jun 28, 1875, Paris, Oneida Co, NY
d. Nov 18, 1958, Schroepel, Oswego Co
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Artie Louisa Bailey (1)**
b. Jul 31, 1873, Baldwinsville, Onondaga Co, NY
d. May 29, 1921, Granby, Oswego Co, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Margaret A. LNU (2)**
b. 1884, Scotland
To US 1885

— **Esther M. Carter**
b. Jul 14, 1876, Schroepel, Oswego Co, NY
mar 1894
d. Nov 22, 1950, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Charles Augustus Yates**
b. Dec 29, 1872, Syracuse, NY
d. Dec 21, 1956, Ponce, Ponce Municipality,
Puerto Rico
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY
125 Hillsdale Ave in 1933

— **Ray Leonard Carter**
b. Dec 25, 1884, NY
d. May 10, 1934, Cape Vincent, NY
Drowned in St. Lawrence River
bur. Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

= **Helen L. Speirs**
b. Jul 21, 1891, East Aurora, NY
mar 1909
(Not mar at time of 1910 census)
d. Feb 1, 1971, Syracuse, NY
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

In Rowley, MA in 2024
at age of 96.

Married **Gordon Shea**.
In Syracuse, NY in 1950
In Beverly, MA in 1971

— **Ray L. Carter, Jr.**
b. 1922
d. Aug 10, 1997, Phoenix
bur Pine Plains Cem, Clay, NY

Barbara D. Carter
b. 1928
d.

Charles Yates is related to Floyd C. Yates who was working at Ray Carter's Phoenix Pattern Works. Charles Yates is the father of Floyd C. Yates. Floyd is Ray Carter's nephew. In the 1910 census the Yates family was living in the 5th Ward of Syracuse on 205 Buena Vista Street and Floyd was the oldest of 8 children. Floyd was 15 years old and he was working in a Foundry as a

Pattern Maker. Living next door to the Yates family, at 202 Buena Vista Street was the William Spiers family. Their 19-year-old daughter, Helen, was the future wife of Ray Carter.

Census Records

1892 NY Onondaga Salina ED03

Henry L. Carter, 48, US, C, Farmer
Pricilla Carter, 44, US, C, Wife
Albert W. Carter, 25, US, C, Mechanic
Eliza S. Carter, (M?), 22, US, C (actually Elijah)
Francis E. Carter, (F?), 19, US, C, Housekeeper
Esther M. Carter, F, 16, US, C, Assistant
Roy L. Carter, M, 7, US, C, School
Grace L. Garvey, 24, US, C, Widow

Note: The census enumerator wrote **Eliza** but the 1915 census shows this is a male named **Elijah**. Grace is the daughter of Henry and Pricilla.

1915 NY Onondaga Syracuse WD03 AD01 ED05

309 Wadsworth

Henry L. Cater, Head, 62, US, 62 yrs, C, Foreman, Press Co
Brasillo M. Carter, Wife, 64, US, 64 yrs, C, Housework (Pricilla)
Ray L. Carter, Son, 29, US, 29 yrs, C, Patternmaker

301 Wadsworth

Elijah J. Carter, Head, 44, US, 44 yrs, C, Patternmaker
Anna H. Carter, Wife, 46, US, 46 yrs, C, Housework
Florence M. Carter, Dau, 21, US, 21 yrs, C, No occupation
William Carter, Son, 15, US, 15 yrs, C, School
Edna M. Carter, Dau, 13, US, 13 yrs, C, School
Warner Carter, Son, 11, US, 11 yrs, C, School

1920 NY Onondaga Syracuse WD19 Dist 0227

101 Berwyn Avenue, Res 165, Fam 165, Owns home with a mortgage

Ray L. Carter, Head, 34, M, NY, NY, NY, Manufacturer, Sanding Mach., Wage
Hazel Carter, Wife, 29, M, NY, NY, NY, None

1925 NY Oswego Schroepfel AD01 ED04

Chestnut Street

Ray L. Carter, Husband, 39, US, C, Mfg of Wood Working Machines, OA
Helen L. Carter, Wife, 34, US, C, Housewife
Shelley Carter, Son, 4, US, C

1930 NY Oswego Schroepfel Dist 0058

21 Chestnut Street, Res 12, Fam 12, Owns home, **\$20,000**, Radio

Ray L. Carter, Head, 43, M, Mar @ 21, NY, Eng, NY, **Manufactures wood working machinery**
Helen L. Carter, Wife, 38, M, Mar @ 26, NY, Northern IR, Scotland, None
Shelley R. Carter, Son, 8, S, NY, NY, NY, None
Diane C. Carter, Dau, 1-5/12, S, NY, NY, NY, None
Marie Braendle, Servant, 62, Wd, Mar @ 19, Switzerland, Switzerland, Switzerland, Servant, Private family

Note: Carter sold the R. L. Carter Co., Inc. to the Stanley Works Co either in **December 1929** according to one source or on **August 12, 1930** according to another more reliable source. In the 1930 census (census date **April 1, 1930**) Carter would have still been in the tool manufacturing business until he sold the business in August later that year, according to the second source. However, there was an article in the

August 9, 1929 edition of the Syracuse Journal which announced that the R. L. Carter Company, Inc., had been sold to the Stanley Works of New Britain, Conn. **Diane C. Carter** was born in November 1928.

1940 NY Oswego Phoenix 38-75

21 Chestnut Street, Res 191, Owns **\$10,000**, Farm

Helen Carter, Head, 46, Wd, H-4, NY Same house, No occupation

Ray L. Carter, Son, 18, S H-3, NY, Same house, No occupation

Barbara D. Carter, Dau, 11, S, 6, NY, Same house, No occupation

Note: The children seemed to have changed their names. Perhaps they were using their middle names as their first names. At this point Helen appears to have no income, however she must have had money from Ray Carter's estate that she and her children were living off of. Over the course of the Great Depression the Carter home has dropped by 50% in value.

1950 NY Onondaga Syracuse 71-256 (Census Date April 1, 1950)

123 Ashworth Place, Apt 1, Res 150

Helen L. Carter, Head, 59, Wd, Other Occ, Practical Nurse, Hospital

Barbara D. Shea, Dau, 21, Mar, NY, Housekeeping

Gordon F. Shea, Son-in-law, 24, Mar, NY, Working, Worked 41 hrs., Counterman, Meat Market

Gordon B. Shea, Grandson, 8 mo., No, Florida

Sample Questions for Helen L. Carter

21. Living in same house last year: YES

25. Where were parents born: Father: Ireland, Mother: Scotland

26. Highest grade attended: S10

27. Completed grade: YES

28. Attended school since Feb 1st: 30 or over

29. Weeks looking for work: 1

30. Number of weeks worked in 1949: 20

31a. Money earned in 1949: \$200

31b. Income: None

31c. Money received outside of earnings: \$540

32a. How much did relatives in house earn in wages or salary in 1949: None

32b. How much did relatives in house earn in own business, professional practice or farm in 1949:
None

32c. How much did relatives in house receive in other than earnings in 1949: None

1950 NY Oswego Phoenix Dist 38-92

13 Fulton Street, Res 345

Frances Spriggs, Head, 63, Wid, NY, Working, 40 hrs, Housekeeper, Private home

Ann Spriggs, Dau, 17, Never married, NY, OT

Ray Carter, Lodger, 28, Never married, NY, working, 45 hrs, Owner Machine Shop, Machine Shop,
Owner

Phoenix Pattern Works

New Phoenix Corporation

“**The Phoenix Hardwood Manufacturing Company, Inc.** has filed incorporation papers with the Secretary of State, Albany and the county clerk’s office. The capital stock is \$25,000, being 250 shares of \$100 each.

“Present stockholders are **Helen L. Carter**, 2 shares; **Ray L. Carter** and Clifford A. Robinson, each 30 shares.”

September 7, 1927, Wednesday, Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

“The **Phoenix Hardwood company** has filed notice with the secretary of state, changing its name to the **Phoenix Pattern Works, Inc.**”

September 26, 1928, Wednesday, The Fulton Patriot, Fulton, NY+

“Phoenix Pattern Shop, lots 4, 5, 6 and 19 bd n by Donald, e by rr, s by st, w by Carter...\$35.33”

“Carter, Helen, lots 13, 18, ins, bd n by Donald, e by Phoenix Pattern works, s by st, w by Trobridge ... \$202.31.”

July 8, 1939, Saturday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Note: This shows that Helen Carter’s house and the Phoenix Pattern Shops were on adjacent parcels of land.

Census Records – Carter and Yates

1910 NY Onondaga Syracuse WD05 Dist 0119

205 Buena Vista Street, Res 41, Fam 44, Owns home with a mortgage

Charles Yates, Head, 38, M, 16 yrs, NY, NY, NY, Cloth Cutter, Factory

Esther Yates, Wife, 35, M, 16 yrs, Children: 8/8, NY, NY, NY, None

Floyd Yates, Son, 15, NY, NY, NY, Pattern Maker, Foundry

Julius Yates, Son, 13, NY, NY, NY, None

Henry Yates, Son, 11, NY, NY, NY

Charles F. Yates, Son, 9, NY, NY, NY

Kenneth Yates, Son, 6, NY, NY, NY

Earl Yates, Son, 6, NY, NY, NY

Edwin Yates, Son, 4, NY, NY, NY

Leon Yates, Son, 2, NY, NY, NY

Note: Ester Yates was the sister of Ray L. Carter. The Yates family was living across the street from the Speirs family at 202 Buena Vista. Hellen Spiers, age 19, would later marry Ray Carter. Julius was actually Junius.

1930 NY Oswego Schroepel Dist 0058

49 Bridge Street, Res 390, Fam 391, Rents \$37/mo, Has a radio

Francis E. Carter, Head, 55, M, mar @ 20, NY, NY, NY, **Manager, Pattern shop**

Maragret A. Carter, Wife, 46, M, mar @ 26, Scotland, Scotland, Scotland, 1885, Na, None

George W. Perry, Step Son, 17, S, NY, Eng, Scotland, None

47 Bridge Street, Res 391, Fam 292, Rents \$37/mo, Has a radio

Floyd C. Yates, Head, 35, M, mar @ 27, NY, NY, NY, **Manager Pattern shop**

Edna M Yates, Wife, 30, M, mar @ 22, NY, NY, NY, None

Ruth E. Yates, Dau, 6, S, NY, NY, NY, None

Note: Yates appears to have taken up residence in Phoenix in about 1930 (see census below). **Francis Carter** was **Ray Carter**’s older brother. Ray listed his occupation in the 1930 census as “Manufactures

wood working machinery.” This demonstrates that the tool manufacturing and the pattern manufacturing were two separate businesses.

1930 NY Oswego Schroepel Dist 0058

54 Main Street, Res 449, Fam 451, Owns home \$3,000, Has a radio

Junius Yates, Head, 33, M, Mar @ 23, NY, NY, NY, Superintendent, Electrical Manf.

Anna E. Yates, Wife, 32, M, Mar @ 22, NY, NY, NY

Arliss M. Yates, Dau, 9, S, NY, NY, NY

Evelyn P. Yates, Dau, 5, S, NY, NY, NY

1940 NY Oswego Phoenix 38-75

42 Lock Street (to RR) Res 205 Rents \$23/mo, Not a farm

Floyd Yates, Head, 45, M, 8th, NY, Same House, worked 45 hrs, Pattern Maker, Wood Pattern Shop,

OA, Worked 45 wks, Income: Blank, Income Other: Yes

Edna Yates, Wife, 40, m, 8th, NY, Same House, None

Ruth Yates, Dau, 16, S, H-2, NY, Same House, None

Note: It appears that Yates is the owner of the Pattern Shop.

3 Lock Street, Res 243, Rents \$25/mo, Not a farm

Francis Carter, Head, 65, M, 8th, NY, Rural, Oswego, NY, Worked 60 hrs, Wood & Metal pattern maker, Own Account, OA, worked 42 weeks, Income: Blank

Margaret A. Carter, Wife, 55, M, H-4, Scotland, Na, Rural, Oswego, NY

Note: It appears that Carter might also have an ownership interest in the Pattern Shop.

Floyd C. Yates Succumbs at 80; Services Today

“PHOENIX — **Floyd C. Yates**, 80, of 1493 Main St. died Friday night at home, following a long illness.

“Born in Syracuse, he had resided in Phoenix for 45 years. He was a former pattern maker and was the owner of the **Phoenix Pattern Works**. During World War II, he was a pattern maker on shipbuilding projects.

“He was a past master of Callimachus Lodge 369, F&AM, and high priest of Oswego River chapter 270, past patron of the Order of the Eastern Star 172 of Phoenix, a member of the Ancient Scottish Rite Valley of Syracuse and of Media Shrine of Watertown.

“He was a Republican-chairman for the Town of Schroepel for 25 years.

“Surviving besides his wife, the former **Edna Vault**, are four grandchildren, Mrs. Ronald Pearsons, Mrs. Donald Den Bleyker, Jr., and Bradford and Michael Clark, all of Phoenix; three great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

“Services will be at 2 p.m. Monday at Allanson-Glanville-Tappan Funeral Home, 919 Main St. Burial will be in Phoenix Rural Cemetery.”

September 15, 1975, Monday, Syracuse Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

Note: Searching the Post Standard archive for “Phoenix Pattern Works” during 1923 – 2024 only produced nearly identical obituaries for Floyd C. Yates in two different newspapers. These were the only hits for this search covering a period of 101 years.

Newspapers – Carter Company Business Related

Jury Selected in Wright Suit

“Ousted as sales and export manager after he had worked a year under a 10-year contract, he claims, Thorpe W. Wright of New York City is asking \$329,471 damages in a suit against the **R. L. Carter Company Inc.**, of Phoenix, and Ray L. Carter as president of the corporation. A jury is drawn and the case ready for trial before Justice Clayton I. Miller in supreme court.

“Wright alleges that June 1, 1929, he entered into a contract with the defendants to act as sales and export manager for a period of 10 years. The company manufactures a portable wood-working machine.

“He claims that he carried out his part of the contract in every detail, but that the defendants breached the contract and dismissed him June 16, 1930.

“Wright estimates that his commissions would range from \$10,250 the first year up to \$63,400 for the final year of the 10-year period. Wright claims that Carter, as president of the corporation, personally guaranteed the contract.”

October 9, 1931, Friday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

Wright Loses Suit for \$329,000 On Contract

“At the close of a bitterly contested five-day court battle Thorpe W. Wright lost his fight to recover \$329,000 in a suit against **R. L. Carter Company, Inc.**, of Phoenix and R. L. Carter individually as president of the corporation, the jury returning a verdict of no cause of action to Justice Clayton I. Miller at midnight Monday.

“Wright sued to recover on a 10-year contract which he claimed he made with the company and which he alleged was personally guaranteed by Carter, to act as export manager and sales manager.”

October 20, 1931, Tuesday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

SYRACUSE TOOL FIRM SUED

“Seeking to restrain the Unit Electric Tool Company, Inc., from infringing on its patent rights, the Stanley Works, Inc., New Britain, Conn., makers of a portable routing and profiling machine, Thursday filed suit for recovery of damages and profits.

“Suit was filed today by Benjamin E. Shove of Hancock, Dorr, Kingsley & Shove in United States district court now in session in Utica.

“The Stanley Works, Inc., according to Mr. Shove, took over the R. L. Carter Company of Phoenix, Aug. 12, 1930, securing in the contract the patents and rights to make the machines with improvements.

“It claims Ray L. Carter, inventor of the machine was granted a patent on the machine **Sept. 29, 1923**, and in **1929** assigned the papers to R. L. Carter Company, Inc.

“According to Mr. Shove, the Stanley Company notified the Unit Electric Tool Company of the violation of the patent and it failed to heed them.”

February 19, 1931, Thursday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

NOTE: According to the Syracuse Journal the sale of the R. L. Carter Co., Inc. to the Stanley Works Company was announced on August 8, 1929. See copy of article on the following page.

According to the Directory of American Tool and Machinery Patents
Ray L. Carter applied for this patent for a portable routing and profiling machine on Sep. 29, 1923 and it was granted on Nov. 11, 1924 (US Patent: 1,514,894).

<https://www.datamp.org/patents/displayPatent.php?id=22638>

“On Nov. 7, 1929, The Stanley Works filed for incorporation of a new subsidiary, Stanley Electric Tool Co. The new firm immediately purchased the assets of Unishear Co., Inc. and Ajax Electric Hammer Corp., both of New York City. The next month it announced the purchase of Crowe Safety Saw Co., Inc., of Cincinnati, and **R. L. Carter Co., Inc.**, of Syracuse, NY.”

Manufacturer’s Index — Stanley Works, Stanley Electric Tools

Vintage Machinery at www.vintagemachinery.org

“Sometime between 1924 and 1928, [actually it was in 1925] the company relocated from Syracuse to Phoenix, NY. *In late 1929 the business was acquired by The Stanley Works and relocated to Stanley's hometown of New Britain, CT.* For a while the business continued to do business as R. L. Carter Co. Inc., but eventually it operated as the R. L. Carter Division of Stanley.”

Manufacturer’s Index — R. L. Carter Co., Inc.

Vintage Machinery at www.vintagemachinery.org

R. L. Carter Tool Company of Phoenix Sold

“**The R. L. Carter Company, Inc.**, of Phoenix, manufacturer of portable electric wood-working tools, has been sold to the **Stanley Works of New Britain, Conn.**, it was announced today. The Stanley Works makes hinges, locks, carpenter tools, etc.

“R. L. Carter founded the R. L. Carter electric tool industry in ...

MISSING

“...starting production in a small way. The industry experienced a steady growth and eventually was moved to Phoenix, where the company employs about 50 persons.

“It is understood the Carter plant will be continued at Phoenix, as at present, and that the industry will be expanded under the ownership of the Stanley Works. No change in the organization at Phoenix is ...”

MISSING

August 8, 1929, Thursday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

NOTE: It is interesting to note that Carter sold his company prior to the stock market crash in October of 1929.

NOTE: The above article was found in the Fulton History Newspaper Archive and the bottom portion of the page had been cut off. The Post-Standard Archive didn’t have the August 8, 1929 edition of the Syracuse Journal.

R. L. Carter Co. Inc - Estimated Income Statement 1929-1930

Company Sales Price	\$250,000
Good Will	\$25,000
Annual Sales	\$225,000
50% - Material	\$112,500
50% Gross Profit	\$112,500

Avg Tool Price	\$365
Annual Tool Sales	616
Monthly Tool Sales	51
No. of Employees	50
Avg Salary	\$750
Carter's Salary	\$3,000

	Fixed
	Adjustable
	Calculated

GROSS PROFIT	
Salaries and Benefits	\$40,500
Profit	\$13,500
Marketing	\$15,750
R&D	\$15,750
Debt Repayment	\$11,250
Overhead	\$15,750
TOTAL	\$112,500

Profit	6.0%	of Sales
Marketing	7.0%	of Sales
R&D	7.0%	of Sales
Debt Repayment	5.0%	of Sales
Overhead	7.0%	of Sales

The income statement shown above was estimated from the assumed sales price for the company of \$250,000 and the fact that Carter had 50 employees. Nominally a company would sell for an amount equal to its income and here some extra money in the form of "Good Will" was added. This extra amount will cover some of the Carter patents, the company name and its current customers. Based on these assumptions the company sales were \$225,000. Typically, the cost of materials is doubled to arrive at a selling price for the tools and this leaves a Gross Margin of \$112,500. Out of the Gross Margin is taken Salaries and Benefits, Marketing, R&D, Debt Repayment, Overhead and if anything is left then the company makes a Profit. In the calculations above it was the Overhead that was left flexible to hold the Gross Margin constant. The percentages for the other categories were varied so that the Overhead remained positive and all the other elements of the gross margin seemed in the proper proportions.

The purpose of this exercise was to see if a selling price of \$250,000 for the R. L. Carter Company seemed reasonable since no other confirmation of the actual price has been found. And it now appears that a \$250,000 price was reasonable.

Carter - Shea Engagement

The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY
Sunday, December 29, 1946



Miss Barbara Carter
Engaged to Gordon F. Shea

University College Students Affianced

Mrs. Ray Carter of 123 Ashworth pl. has announced the engagement of her daughter, Miss Barbara Carter, to Gordon F. Shea, son of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Shea of 262 Whittier ave. The engagement was made known at a Christmas eve gathering.

Both Miss Carter and Mr. Shea are enrolled in University college, extension division of Syracuse university. Miss Carter recently returned from Hollywood, Calif. Mr. Shea was discharged in July after serving 28 months with the army air force.

Barbara Carter moved to California in late 1943 when she had just turned 15 years old. One would have to assume that her mother went with her and that she finished high school out there. In the December 29, 1946 engagement announcement it was noted that Barbara had just returned from Hollywood, California. Whether her mother was also out in California all this time is not known. Since Barbara was enrolled at University College it is obvious that she had finished her high school studies. Her future husband, Gordon P. Shea, was discharged from the Army Air Corps the previous July. It seems likely that Barbara and Gordon must have met at University College. It doesn't seem possible that the former Phoenix girl would have met the Tipperary Hill boy before they met at University College.

Phoenix Wedding

Shay - Carter

PHOENIX — **Miss Diane Carter**, formerly of Phoenix and now a student in Syracuse University was married Nov. 25 to **Gordon Shay**, also a Syracuse University student. The ceremony was performed by **Judge Abelson** at his residence. Attendants were **Miss Eleanor Woods** and **Ray Carter**, both of Phoenix. Immediately following the ceremony Mr. and Mrs. Shay left for a brief honeymoon in Washington, D.C.

For her bridal costume she chose a green suit and her flowers were gardenias. Miss Woods wore a black suit and her flowers were pink roses.

December 7, 1948, Tuesday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

Land Records

No Onondaga County deeds or mortgages for Helen L. Carter
1/1/1940 – 12/12/1972

Obituaries – Helen Carter

Learns Of Sister's Death

“PHOENIX — **Mrs. Helen Carter** has been notified of the death of her sister, **Mrs. Grace Hines**, of 101 East Lafayette avenue, Syracuse. The death occurred Monday, and funeral services and burial will be held in Syracuse Wednesday afternoon.”

January 5, 1948, Tuesday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

“Private services for **MISS AGNES JEAN SPEIRS**, 81, of Kingston Road, Elbridge, who died Friday at St. Mary's Hospital after a short illness, will be at the convenience of the family. Burial will be in Maple Grove Cemetery, Jordan

“A native of Buffalo, Miss Speirs had resided in the Elbridge area 30 years.

“She is survived by a brother, **Russell F. Speirs**, professor of English at Colgate University, and two sisters, **Mrs. Helen Carter of Phoenix** and **Mrs. Edwin C. Delaney of Camillus**.

“There will be no calling hours. Arrangements are by **B. L. Bush and Sons Funeral Home**, Jordan.”

June 30, 1969, Monday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

Note: This shows that Helen Carter was once again residing in Phoenix by June 30, 1969.

MRS. HELEN CARTER

“PHOENIX — **Mrs. Helen L. Carter**, 80, of 628 Main St., died Saturday at St. Mary's Hospital in Syracuse.

“She was born in Buffalo. She was the widow of **Raymond L. Carter**. Surviving are a daughter, **Mrs. Barbara D. Shea** of Beverly, Mass.; a son, **Raymond L. Carter** of Phoenix, several grandchildren; a sister, **Mrs. Hazel Delaney** of Syracuse; a brother **Russell Speirs** of Elbridge.

“Services will be at 2 pm Monday at the [Allanson-Glanville-Tappan Funeral Home](#), Main Street.

“Burial will be in Phoenix Village Cemetery. Friends may call 1 to 2 pm Monday at the funeral home. Contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society.”

February 1, 1971, Monday, The Post Standard, Syracuse, NY

Ray L. Carter

“WILLIAMSTOWN — **Ray L. Carter**, 76, of 12 Case Road died Sunday at his home.

“Mr. Carter was from Syracuse and lived most of his life in Phoenix. He moved to Williamstown in 1980.

“For more than 50 years, Mr. Carter owned and operated machine shops: Car-Wel Corp. in Phoenix and C-W Co. of Williamstown.

“Mr. Carter was an Army Air Corps veteran of World War II. He was a member of Callimachus Masonic Lodge 369, Phoenix, and Hastings-Gorski American Legion Post 1128.

“His wife, **Dorothy Bartlett Carter**, died in 1972.

“Surviving are a son, **Russell** of Jacksonville, Ark.; four daughters, **Cynthia Schmidt** of Fulton, **Priscilla Carter** of Pompey, **Helen Carter** of Syracuse and **Valery Sarid** of Israel; a sister, **Barbara Carter** of Rowley, Mass.

“Graveside services are 11 a.m. Thursday in Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay.

“Calling hours are 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at Mr. Carter’s home.

“Contributions may be made to Oswego County Hospice, 70 Bunner St., Oswego 13126, or to Roswell Park Alliance Foundation, Roswell Park Cancer institute, Box 631, Buffalo 14240-9856.

“Traub Funeral Home, Central Square, has arrangements.”

August 12, 1997, Tuesday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

Find A Grave – Carter Family

Parents	
Ray Leonard Carter BIRTH: 25 Dec 1884, NY DEATH: 10 May 1934 (aged 49), Cape Vincent, Jefferson County, NY BURIAL: Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY MEMORIAL ID: 60381118 Note: PLOT: Sec 2, Lot 32, Grave 16	Helen L Speirs Carter BIRTH: 29 Jul 1891, East Aurora, Erie County, NY Death: 1 Feb 1971, Syracuse, NY Interment: 16 Apr 1971 (aged 79), Phoenix, NY BURIAL: Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY MEMORIAL ID: 60381141 Note: The death date is from Helen's obituary. The Find A Grave death date is actually the interment date. PLOT: Sec 2, Lot 32, Grave 18
Children of Ray and Helen	Spouses
Ray Leonard Carter (Jr.) BIRTH: 28 May 1921, Syracuse, NY DEATH: 10 Aug 1997 (aged 76), Phoenix, NY BURIAL: Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY MEMORIAL ID: 60380968	Dorothy Bartlett Carter BIRTH: 21 Nov 1924 DEATH: 29 Apr 1972 (aged 47) BURIAL: Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY PLOT: <u>Sect 2 Lot 32</u> MEMORIAL ID: 60381001
Ray's Brother	
Rev Francis E Carter BIRTH: 28 Jun 1875, Paris, Oneida County, NY DEATH: 18 Nov 1958 (aged 83), Schroepfel, NY BURIAL: Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY MEMORIAL ID: 60381208	

Barbara D. Carter

BIRTH: 12 Dec 1923

DEATH: Oct 1998 (aged 74)

BURIAL: Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, Onondaga County, NY

PLOT: Sect 2 Lot 32

MEMORIAL ID: 263322898

Note: Daughter of Ray and Helen Carter. This was checked with the Pine Plains Cemetery and these are the Birth and Death dates that they have on record. They said they usually get the information from the obituary. The cemetery did not know the date of interment. The cemetery said that the funeral was handled by the Murphy Funeral Home, Salem MA — however the Murphy Funeral Home had no record of such a person. On the receiving end the Allanson - Glanville - Tappan Funeral Home of Phoenix had no record of such a person.

Created by: **Cheryl Parsons**; Added: **Jan 23, 2024**; Find a Grave Memorial ID: 263322898

Citation: Find a Grave, database and images

(https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/263322898/barbara_d-carter: accessed November 11, 2024), memorial page for Barbara D. Carter (12 Dec 1923–Oct 1998), Find a Grave Memorial ID 263322898, citing Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, Onondaga County, New York, USA; Maintained by **Cheryl Parsons (contributor 47903075)**.

The Mysterious Fate of Barbara Carter

On February 5, 2024 I spoke with Cheryl of the Pine Plains Cemetery. She was the source for the detailed cemetery information in the paragraphs below.

Ray Carter's body was eventually been recovered later in 1934. All three bodies were recovered in less than a week after the accident. The interment of Ray L. Carter took place at Pine Plains in 1934 (no month or day given). He was buried in Lot 32, Sec 2, Grave 16.

Ray's wife Helen died on Feb 1, 1971 and was interred in Lot 32, Sec 2, Grave 18 on April 16, 1971. Also in the same set of Graves are Ray and Helen's son Ray L. Carter, Jr. who died in 1997. In addition, there is a Warner Carter and a Francis Carter buried with them. Francis was Ray's brother and Warren might be Ray's oldest brother Albert W. Carter.

Cheryl said that there was also a September 8, 1998 letter from Barbara Diane Shea who was Ray and Helen's daughter. In her letter she stated that her father, mother and brother were buried in Pine Plains Cemetery and that she also wanted to be buried there. At some time between her mother's death in 1971 and her brother Ray's death in 1997 Barbara reverted back to her maiden name. In 1971 she was residing in Beverly, MA and in 1997 she was residing in Rowley, MA. Initially that request seemed to have never been fulfilled. There is no record of an interment for Barbara Shea being buried there. However, according to the Find A Grave website there is a Barbara Carter buried in Lot 32, Sec. 2 of Pine Plains Cemetery, with her family.

There is some Find A Grave information that matches up with the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) information of a Barbara D. Carter. However, it isn't the information for the Barbara Carter formerly of Phoenix, NY. The birth date, issue date, and last address are problematic. The SSDI reported that Barbara D. Carter was issued a SS card before 1951 in the state of Washington. This Barbara from the SSDI had a last address of 98204, Everett, Snohomish, Washington and her date of death given as October 1998.

The birth date from the SSDI was Dec 12, 1923 which agreed with the Pine Plains Cemetery Find A Grave information (no gravestone photo available). However, it doesn't agree with Barbara Carter's first three appearances in the census records. 1930: Age 1-5/12 (b. November 1928); 1940: Age 11 yrs. (b. 1929); 1950: Age 21 yrs. (b. 1929).

The records of the Pine Plains Cemetery, Clay, NY were checked. Barbara D. Carter's date of birth was December 12, 1923 and her date of death was October 1998. This agreement with the SSDI information for another Barbara D. Carter might be just a strange coincidence or else the Pine Plains information is just wrong. Cheryl of the cemetery said that the funeral arrangements had been handled by the Murphy Funeral Home of Salem, MA. The Murphy Funeral Home was contacted and they searched all of their records and there was no record of a Barbara Carter. They suggested that I try the F. S. Roberts & Son Funeral Home in Rowley, MA. Back in the day Murphy and Roberts had an agreement "to cover for one another" and Barbara Carter's last known address (1997) was Rowley, MA. The Roberts Funeral Home searched their records and they also could not find a Barbara Carter. I was told they "didn't do the service" and they did not do what they called a "ship out," where the body of the deceased is transported to an out of town funeral home.

On the receiving end I talked with the Allanson-Glanville-Tappan Funeral Home in Phoenix and the Maurer Funeral Home at Moyers Corners. Neither funeral home had a record of performing any service for a Barbara Diane Carter or Shea. No obituaries have been found for Barbara Carter/Shea she hasn't been found in the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) under Carter, Shea or Shay. The death of Barbara Diane Carter was becoming a bigger and bigger mystery.

Another Barbara D. Carter

In the following extract from the 1950 census is shown a Barbara D. Carter, age 26, born in approximately 1924. This is probably the Barbara D. Carter who died in Oct 1998 and showed up in the SSDI, and Carter was her married name. At the time of the 1950 census Barbara D. Carter Shea, age 21, born approximately 1929, was living in Syracuse, NY, and Carter was her maiden name.

1950 Washington, King County, Other Places Dist 17-261 (April 10, 1950)

15568 9th NE Res 229, Not a farm, Not on over 3 acres

Vincent A. Carter, Head, 36, Mar, Washington, Printer, Printing Office

Barbara D. Carter, Wife, 26, Mar, Utah

Coralee Carter, Dau, 10, Nev(er married), Washington

Gary V. Carter, Son, 7, Nev(er married), Washington

Barbara Donna Carter – from Find A Grave

BIRTH: 12 Dec 1923

DEATH: 15 Oct 1998 (aged 74)

BURIAL: Acacia Memorial Park and Funeral Home, Lake Forest Park, King County, WA

PLOT: G14 (Magnolia Garden), Lot 51C, Sp. 4

MEMORIAL ID: 33047224



Barbara D. Carter - SSDI

SSN: 534-24-0522

Birth: Dec. 12, 1923

Issued: Before 1951, in Washington State

Last Residence: 98204, Everett, Snohomish, Washington

Death: October 1998

Note: The birth and death dates found in the above SSDI entry are exactly the same dates as those given for Barbara Diane Carter by the Pine Plains Cemetery in Clay, NY. However, these dates do not belong to the Barbara D. Carter, who was the daughter of Ray and Helen Carter of Phoenix, NY.

A Visit to Pine Plains Cemetery

On November 8, 2024 Colette and I visited the Pine Plains Cemetery in Clay, NY, about 20 minutes north of Syracuse. Following the online map of the cemetery it was fairly straight forward to find Lot 132 in Section 2 of the cemetery. There were about 15 monuments in a rectangular area of Lot 132 marked out by corner stones engraved with the letter “C.” With the

exception of a gravestone for “Yates,” a Carter cousin, all the others were for various Carter family members.

Along the western edge of this rectangular Carter area were the gray granite gravestones of Helen Carter and her husband Ray L. Carter sitting side by side and facing west. In back of Helen’s gravestone was a smaller, flat, in the ground marker, for Barbara Diane Carter. It was made of reddish granite and it was almost touching the backside of Helen’s gravestone. The placement of Barbara’s small stone reminded Colette of a cremation burial. The information engraved on the marker was puzzling. Barbara’s birthdate was given as Oct. 30, 1928, which was not the date given to me from the cemetery records. However, it was right on with Barbara’s birth dates inferred from her ages in the 1930, 1940, and 1950 census records. Another surprise was that the date of her death had been left blank. The cemetery records had her death as October 1998, but they no date of her interment. This required a trip over to the nearby cemetery office to review their records again but this time in person.

One of the cemetery workers greeted us at the door of the adjacent garage and we explained to him our confusion. We followed him into the office where another person was working on a computer. While the first man was looking up some information on an Excel spreadsheet the second man found Barbara Diane Carter’s records. According to the records she had been born on Dec. 12, 1923 and she had died in October 1998 and they hadn’t found an obituary. It was the same information I had previously been given when I called the cemetery. I explained to them that the birth date was wrong and that the information appeared to have come from the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) and it belonged to a Barbara Donna Carter from Washington State. Curiously those were the exact same dates found in the Find A Grave listing for Barbara Diane Carter, who was supposedly buried in Pine Plain Cemetery according to them.

This was causing some confusion so the first man began digging deeper into some index card files and consulted a Rolodex. He was able to find a letter sent to the cemetery by Barbara Carter herself, dated September 8, 1998. The person I had talked to when I called the cemetery earlier had mentioned this letter and had shared some of the information in it with me over the phone. He read the letter slowly and picked up on some information that the earlier person had missed. In the letter Barbara stated that after her death she had made arrangements for her body to be cremated by the Murphy Funeral Home of Salem, MA. She wanted her ashes to be buried on top of her mother, which would explain the placement of the small marker behind her mother’s larger gravestone. This also explained why no funeral home was involved on the receiving end because no special permit is required for transporting ashes. After an exhaustive search of their records, it was the conclusion of one of the men that Barbara Diane Carter was not buried at the Pine Plains Cemetery. He told us of cremation situations where people took a long time to decide where to bury the ashes of a deceased loved one or where to scatter the ashes. It was entirely possible, he said, that Barbara Carter’s ashes were in an urn and still sitting on someone’s mantle.

That all seemed reasonable and so we thanked them for their time and began our short drive back to Syracuse. I was puzzled by how the Find A Grave people had gotten it so wrong. They usually copy down the inscriptions from the gravestones correctly and then supplement it with information from obituaries and other sources. It was also troublesome that the cemetery seemed to have gotten their birth and death date information from Find A Grave, rather than the other way around.

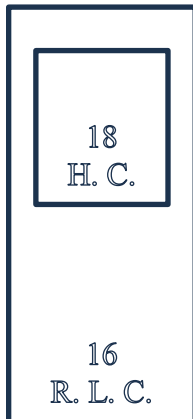
I was plotting my next move while Colette was driving. Perhaps the Murphy Funeral Home kept their cremation records separate from the regular burials. Colette asked me when

Barbara had been born and I answered 1928. Her response, “She might still be alive,” opened up a whole new possibility.

I had been having a very difficult time finding any definitive and consistent records concerning Barbara’s death. This could all be explained by the fact that she had never died. If she were still alive, she would have turned 96 last October 30th. As soon as we arrived back at the house I got on the computer and Googled, “Barbara Diane Carter Rowley MA.” The first hit was a phone directory item for a 95-year-old Barbara Carter, Rowley, MA, along with her land line number. This was why it had been so difficult to determine the details of her death — Barbara Diane Carter was still alive.

I shared the new found information with the Pine Plains Cemetery folks and they replied. “That explains it. Well at least we know where she will be buried.” Cheryl Parsons of Pine Plains Cemetery was the person who was responsible for the Find A Grave information for Barbara Diane Carter. I contacted her and she said that she would correct the situation.

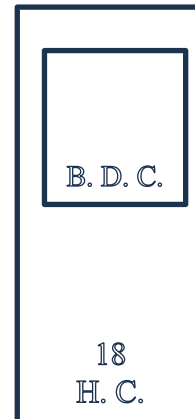
Grave Diagrams



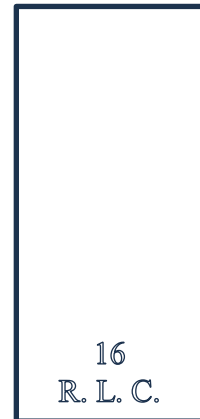
In record now



Correct for side-by-side graves



With Barbara's Marker



Helen Carter and Ray L. Carter



Barbara Diane Carter

The Speirs Family

US Census Records

1900 NY Erie Buffalo WD18 Dist 0152

16 Littlefield Avenue, Res 40 Fam 42, Rents home

William C. Speers, Head, May 1858, 42, M, 15 yrs, IR, IR, IR, 1885, 15 yrs, Carpenter,
Louisa Speers, Wife, Sept 1858, 41, M, 15 yrs, Children: 7/6, Scotland, Scotland, Scotland, 1885, 15
yrs

Agnes Speers, Dau, May 1886, 14, S, NY, IR, Scotland, At school

Grace Speers, Dau, Mar 1888, 12, S, NY, IR, Scotland, At school

Hellen Speers, Dau, July 1889, 10, S, NY, IR, Scotland, At school

Hazel Speers, Dau, June 1893, 6, S, NY, IR, Scotland, At school

Mildred Speers, Dau, May 1895, 5, S, NY, IR, Scotland

Doratha Speers, Dau, Dec 1898, 1, S, NY, IR, Scotland

1910 NY Onondaga Syracuse WD05 Dist 0119

202 Buena Vista Street, Res 40, Fam 43, Owns home with a mortgage

William Speirs, Head, 51, M, 25, IR, IR, IR, 1884, Papers, Carpenter, House

Louise Speirs, Wife, 51, M, 25, Children 5/5, Scotland, IR, Scotland, None

Agnes Speirs, Dau, 23, S, NY, IR, Scotland, None

Hellen Speirs, Dau, 19, S, NY, IR, Scotland, None

Hazel Speirs, Dau, 16, S, NY, IR, Scotland, None

Dorothy Speirs, Dau, 11, S, NY, IR, Scotland, None

Russell Speirs, Son, 9, S, NY, IR, Scotland, None

In 1940 **Russell Speirs** was single and was an instructor at a college, probably Hamilton College, in Hamilton, NY. Therefore he couldn't have been a Speirs relative living in CA that Barbara could have lived with. All the other Speirs siblings were female and their married names would need to be researched to see if any of them were living in CA in 1940.

In the 1950 census **Agnes Speirs** and **Dorothy Speirs** were living together in Elbridge and both were single. **Hazel Spiers** was not found in the 1950 census.

1940 NY Onondaga Syracuse, Dist 66-212

728 Irving Avenue, Res 16, Rents \$30/mo, Not a farm

Frank L. Hines, Head, 54, M, H-2, NY, Same place, Factory Dept, Chemical Specialty, 30 wks,
\$400

Grace D. Speirs, Wife, 50, M, 8th, NY, Same place

Hazel Speirs, Sister-in-law, 45, S, H-2, NY, Same place

1940 NY Onondaga Elbridge Dist 34-24

RD Elbridge Res 79, Owns \$1000, Not a farm

Jean Spears, Head, 53, S, 8th, NY, Same house, No occupation

Dorothy Spears, Sister, 43, S, H-2, NY, Same house, No occupation

In The Newspaper

“**Speirs, Hazel M.**, Farm Lot 83, 5 acres, Town of Elbridge. Tax... 20.49”

August 31, 1935, Saturday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

“**Speirs, Hazel**, farm lot 83, 5 acres, Town of Elbridge, described in Book of Deeds, **572**, page **426**, Onondaga County Clerk’s Office. Tax....17.52”

September 7, 1942, Monday, Syracuse Herald-Journal, Syracuse, NY

((Syracuse OR Oswego OR Fulton OR Phoenix) w/2 NY) AND ((Agnes OR Hazel OR Dorothy) w/2 ((Speirs OR Speers OR Spears))) AND (filename contains(1950~~1999))

Land Records - Spiers

Only 1 Speirs deed record in Onondaga County 01/01/1920 to 12/12/1972

Parties of 1st Part: Hazel M. Speirs, Hazel Speirs Delaney (Hazel’s married name)

Parties of 2nd Part: Madalon S. Hoffman, Russell F. Speirs (Hazel’s sister and brother)

Book 1199, Page 214

File Date: 04/09/1946

Elbridge Lot 84

Farm Lots: 30-36; 45-50; 57-62; 70-75; 81-86; and 91-96

No other Speirs: 1920 – 1972

Obituaries - Spiers

“**MRS. LOUISA A. SPEIRS — Mrs. Louisa A. Speirs**, 72, died suddenly this morning at her home, 153 Lincoln av., before the arrival of a physician. Death was believed due to a heart attack. Surviving are her husband, **William C. Speirs**; six daughters, **Mrs. Frank Hinds**, **Mrs. R. L. Carter** of Phoenix and **Mrs. N. F. Hossman** of Syracuse and the **Misses Jean, Hazel and Dorothy Speirs**, and a son **Russell Speirs** of Syracuse. Funeral services will be conducted at the home Monday afternoon at 1 o’clock.”

October 3, 1930, Friday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

“**WILLIAM C. SPEIRS —** Funeral services for **William C. Speirs**, 80, who died Tuesday at his home in Kingston rd., near Elbridge, after an illness of two years, will be conducted at the home Friday at 10:30 a.m. The body will be taken to Rochester for cremation. A native of Ireland, he came to this country a half century ago and made his home in Syracuse for many years before moving to Elbridge 10 years ago. Speirs was a retired cabinet maker and had been employed by the Kingan Provisions Company of Syracuse. He was a member of Local 12, Syracuse Carpenters Union. Surviving are a son, **Russell Speirs** of Elbridge; six daughters, the **Misses Jean (Agnes), Hazel and Dorothy Speirs** all of Elbridge. **Mrs. Frank L. Hines (Grace D.)** and **Mrs. N. F. Hoffman (Mildred)**, both of Syracuse, and **Mrs. R. L. Carter (Helen)** of Phoenix, and two grandchildren.”

July 6, 1938, Wednesday, Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NY

Mrs. Grace Hines’ Rites Wednesday

“The funeral of **Mrs. Grace Hines** of 101 East Lafayette Avenue, who died Monday, will be conducted at 2 P.M. Wednesday at the **Wilber W. Newell** funeral home, 2503 South Salina Street, the **Rev. William J. McKnight** officiating, with burial in Oakwood Cemetery.

“A native of Buffalo, she is survived by her husband, **Frank Hines**; five sisters, the **Misses Agnes, Dorothy and Hazel Spears** of Syracuse, **Mrs. Helen Carter** of Phoenix and **Mrs. Madaline Hoffman** of Syracuse, and a brother, **Prof. Russell F. Spears** of Hamilton.”

January 4, 1943, Monday, Syracuse Herald-Journal, Syracuse, NY

“Private services for **MISS AGNES JEAN SPEIRS**, 81, of Kingston Road, Elbridge, who died Friday at St. Mary’s Hospital after a short illness, will be at the convenience of the family. Burial will be in Maple Grove Cemetery, Jordan.

“A native of Buffalo, Miss Speirs had resided in the Elbridge area 30 years.

“She is survived by a brother, **Russell F. Speirs**, professor of English at Colgate University, and two sisters, **Mrs. Helen Carter** of Phoenix and **Mrs. Edwin C. Delaney** of Camillus.

“There will be no calling hours. Arrangements are by b. L. Bush and Sons Funeral Home, Jordan.”

June 30, 1969, Monday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

“Services for **MRS. HAZEL SPEIRS DELANEY** of 4970 w. Genesee St., Fairmount, who died Friday at a local nursing home after a long illness, will be at 11 a.m. tomorrow at the B. L. Bush and Sons Funeral Home, 15, N. Main St., Jordan.

“Born in Buffalo, Mrs. Delaney was a resident of Fairmount for 15 years. She was a graduate of Vocational High School.

“Surviving are a brother, **Dr. Russell F. Speirs**, professor emeritus of English at Colgate University, and several nieces and nephews.

“There will be no calling hours. Contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society.”

February 22, 1971, Monday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

Find a Grave

Agnes Jean Speirs

Birth: 1888, Buffalo, Erie County, NY

Death: 27 Jun 1969 (aged 80–81), Syracuse, Onondaga County, NY

Burial: Maple Grove Cemetery, Jordan, Onondaga County, NY

Plot: Section H

Memorial ID: 66320116

Hazel and Dorothy Speirs were not found in any NY cemetery on Find A Grave.

John Chester Birdlebough

Birdlebough became the Principal of the Phoenix High School in 1931. In 1940 he and his wife were living at 93 State Street and paying a rent of \$30 per month. In 1939 his salary as a principal was \$3,300. Also in 1939, his wife's father, Ezra Oaks of Angelica, Alleghany Co., died and left his estate to his daughter Jessie and her brother Charles. The estate consisted of a \$1,200 personal estate and \$5000 in real estate. In 1940 Charles Oaks was running the family farm so it hadn't been sold to settle his father's estate. Most likely he bought out Jessie's half of the farm for \$2,500 and she would have split the \$1,200 with him. So, in 1940, Jessie had an inheritance of \$3,100, which was only a couple hundred dollars less than her husband had earned the previous year. Her inheritance was probably what she and John used to buy the property at 21 Chestnut Street from Mrs. Carter in 1943.

This raises the question as to where Birdlebough got all the money for his clock collection. In March 1950 the collection was described as follows: "...the Birdlebough collection of clocks which is one of the largest and most interesting maintained by any horologist in the state."

John C. Birdlebough and Jessie Oaks

(s/o William Robinson Peckham and
Maria **Schermerhorn** Kettle)
(d/o Father and Mother)

(s/o Peter Smith Birdlebough and
Mary E. Russell)
(d/o Father and Mother)

Charles Peckham
b. Oct 21, 1839, Truxton,
NY
d. Aug 18, 1915,
Cortland, NY
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **Rosannah Suggett**
b. Jun 1851, NY
mar 1870
d May 22, 1930
bur Cortland Rural Cem

**Joseph R.
Birdlebough**
b. 1846, NY
d 1907
bur Cortland Rural
Cem

= **Aldula Rexford**
b. 1844, NY
d. Jan 25, 1923
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **Gertrude Louise Peckham**
b. May 14, 1873
mar May 4, 1892, Cortland
d Jul 4, 1904, Cortland
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **C. Frank Birdlebough**
b. Dec 3, 1869
d. Apr 3, 1897, Cortland, NY
bur Cortland Rural Cem

= **John C. Birdlebough**
b. Apr 1894, NY
d. Sep 3, 1981, Syracuse, NY
bur Fisk Cem, Angelica, NY

= **Jessie Oaks**
b. Oct 18, 1887, Angelica
mar Feb 2, 1923. Walden,
NY
d. Apr 30, 1963
bur Fisk Cem, Angelica,
NY

NOTE: Dates were extracted from census records, cemetery records and newspaper articles.

Census Records - Birdlebough

1900 NY Cortland Cortland WD01 Dist 0091

81 Homer Avenue, Res 185, Fam 200, Owns home with a mortgage

Charles A. Peckham, Head, Oct 1839, 60, M, 30 yrs, NY, NY, NY, Marble Polisher

Rosannah Peckham, Wife, June 1851, 48, M, 30 yrs, Children: 1/1, NY, Eng, Eng

Gertrude Birdlebough, Dau, May 1873, 27, Wd, Children: 1/1, NY, NY, NY, Teacher

John C. Birdlebough, Grandson, April 1894, 6, S, NY, NY, NY

1920 NY Cortland Cortland Cortland WD01 Dist 0002

81 Homer Avenue, Res 81, Fam 88, Owns home free of mortgage

Rosanna Peckham, Head, 68, Wd, NY, Eng, Eng, None

John C. Birdlebough, Grandson, 25, S, NY, NY, NY, Asst Manager, Paper Box Factory

1925 – Not found

1930 NY Tompkins Trumansburg Dist 0039

54 Cayuga Street, Res 104 Fam 116 – One of 3 renters - \$25/mo. Has a radio

John Birdlebough, Head, 36, Mar, Mar @ 29, NY, NY, NY, Principal, Public School

Jessie Birdlebough, Wife, 40, Mar, Mar @ 33, NY, NY, NY, Teacher, Public School

1940 NY Oswego Phoenix 38-75

93 State Street, Res 29, Rents \$30/mo

John C. Birdlebough, Head, 45, M, C-5, NY, same house, Principal, Public School, Worked 40 wks, Income \$3,300

Jessie B. Birdlebough, Wife, 50, M, C-4, NY, same house, Income \$0

1950 NY Oswego Phoenix 38-91

21 Chestnut, Res 201

John Birdlebough, Head, 56, Mar, NY, Principal, Phoenix High School

Jessie Birdlebough, Wife, 60, Mar, NY, No occupation

Sample Questions for Jessie Birdlebough

21. Living in same house last year: YES

25. Where were parents born: Father: US, Mother: US

26. Highest grade attended: C5

27. Completed grade: YES

28. Attended school since Feb 1st: 30 or over

30. Number of weeks worked: None

31a. Earned from wages or salary: None

31b. Income for own business, professional practice or farm: None

31c. Money received outside of earnings: \$5,000

NOTE: Perhaps Jessie had left her half of the farm invested and she was paid a share of the earnings every year.

Newspapers

BIRDLEBOUGH — OAKS

Former Cortland Young Man Weds at Walden

“Recent announcement has been made of the marriage of **J. Chester Birdlebough** of Trumansburg, a former resident of Cortland, and **Miss Jessie L. Oaks** of Walden, N.Y.

“The ceremony was performed at Walden on Feb. 2 by the **Rev. E. L. Bowie**, pastor of St. Andrew’s Episcopal church of Walden. The young couple were unattended.

“The groom is the principal of the Trumansburg High school, while his bride will take the place on the faculty recently made vacant by the resignation of **Miss Andrews**.

“The couple will make their home at Trumansburg.”

February 19, 1923, Monday, Cortland Standard, Cortland, NY

NOTE: Trumansburg is in Tompkins Co a few miles northwest of Ithaca, NY. Walden is in town of Montgomery in Orange Co in the southern tip of New York State. It appears that Miss Oaks was teaching in Walden and that was probably where the two had met.

Obituaries - Birdleboough

Mrs. John Birdlebough

“**Mrs. Jessie Oaks Birdlebough** of Phoenix, N.Y., died at her home Tuesday, April 30, 1963, after a long illness.

“She was born in the Town of Angelica on October 18, 1887, a daughter of **Ezra and Adella Baker Oaks**.

“A private service was conducted at her home Thursday at 9:30 a.m., followed by a private funeral service in St. John’s Episcopal Church, Phoenix, at 10 a.m.

“The body then was brought to the Oaks homestead, Peavy Road, Angelica. Friday, the body was interred in Fisk Cemetery at Allen, following graveside services at 9:30 a.m., conducted by the **Rev. Roger Derby** of St. Paul’s episcopal Church, Angelica.

“Mrs. Birdlebough is survived by her husband, John; a brother, **Charles S. Oaks**, Peavy Road, Angelica; two brothers, **Russell S. Oaks** of Trumansburg and **Major Gerald E. Oaks**, USAF, Willbraham, Mass; two nieces, **Mrs. I. M. Weiss** of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and **Mrs. Raymond Coombes** of Belfast; nine grandnephews, and five grand-nieces.”

Source: Find A Grave – newspaper unknown

John C. Birdlebough

“PHOENIX — **John C. Birdlebough**, 87, retired district principal of education for the Phoenix School District, died Thursday at St. Joseph’s Hospital, where he had been a patient since Aug. 19.

“Services will be private and at the convenience of the family in Allen Cemetery, Angelica.

“A native of Cortland, Birdlebough compiled a distinguished record in the field of education in New York State.

“After he retired as Phoenix district principal on June 30, 1963, after 32 years with the school district, the high school at 470 Main St., Phoenix was named in his honor.

“He lived in Phoenix since 1931, residing at 422 Chestnut St.

“Birdlebough was educated in Cortland Public schools and at Cortland Normal School, where he was the 1915 class president and was awarded the Principal’s Appointment. He

received his bachelor's degree from New York University and his master's degree from Cornell University

"Birdlebough taught mathematics and science at Walden High School. He was principal of Trumansburg High School for 10 years and later became principal of Phoenix High School in 1931.

"He was a member of the United Presbyterian Church of Cortland. The Trumansburgh Masonic Lodge 157. F&AM, Fidelity Chapter 77 of the Royal Arch Masons. Phi Delta Kappa Fraternity, the New York State Association of Retired Teachers, the Oswego Historical Society, the national Watch and Clock Collectors, and a life member of the Parent-Teachers Association.

"Surviving are four cousins, **Charles Birdlebough** of Manlius, **Mrs. C. W. Richardson** of Orlando, Fla., **Donald Robinson** of Bradenton, Fla., and **Mrs. Clifford Cole** of Cortland.

"Contributions may be made to the Phoenix Fire Department Ambulance Fund.

"The Allanson-Glanville-Tappan Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements."

September 8, 1981, Tuesday, Oswego County Messenger, Oswego, NY

Ezra Oaks Estate

"**John C. Birdlebough**, Phoenix, was granted letters of administration on the \$1,200 personalty and \$5,000 realty estate of **Ezra Oaks**, Angelica, who died July 23. Heirs are a son, **Charles S. Oaks**, Angelica, and a daughter, **Jessie O. Birdlebough**, Phoenix."

October 19, 1939, Thursday, The Patriot and Free Press, Cuba, NY

"**John C. Birdlebough**, Phoenix, administrator of the estate of **Ezra Oaks**, Angelica, was granted a discharge and release."

July 4, 1940, Thursday, The Patriot and Free Press, Cuba, NY

Find A Grave – Birdlebough

John Chester Birdlebough

BIRTH: 12 Apr 1894, Cortland, Cortland County, NY

DEATH: 3 Sep 1981 (aged 87), Syracuse, Onondaga County, NY

BURIAL: Allen Cemetery, Allen, Allegany County, NY

MEMORIAL ID: 51873485

NOTE: Parents: C. Frank Birdlebough — 1869-1897 and Gertrude L. Peckham Birdlebough — 1873-1904

Jessie L. Oaks Birdlebough

BIRTH: 18 Oct 1889, Angelica, Allegany County, NY

DEATH: 30 Apr 1963 (aged 73), Phoenix, Oswego County, NY

BURIAL: Allen Cemetery, Allen, Allegany County, NY

MEMORIAL ID: 51873510

NOTE: Parents: Ezra Oaks — 1859-1939 and Adell Baker Oaks — 1860-1926

Ezra's parents: Seth Oaks — 1826-1899 and Margaret Scott Oaks — 1831-1911

The Shea Family

Census Records

1940 NY Onondaga Syracuse Dist 66-120

262 Whittier Avenue, Res 215, Rents \$25/mo, Not a farm

James Shea, Head, 56, M, 8th, NY, Same house, Fireman, Housing Project, 40wks, \$400 (1939)

Mabel Shea, Wife, 41, M, H-4, NY, Same house

Kenneth Shea, Son, 19, S, H-4, NY, Same house, Bus Boy, Hotel, 46 wks, \$427 (1939)

Gordon Shea, Son, 14, S, 8th, NY, Same house

Donald Shea, Son, 12, S, 7th, NY, Same house

Robert Shea, Son, Son, 10, S, 4th, NY, Same house

Francis Shea, Son, 20, M, H-2, NY, Same house, Bar Porter, Hotel, 50 wks, \$900 (1939)

Ellen Shea, Wife, 23, M, C-4, Ohio, Same place, Hostess, Hotel, 36 wks, \$800 (1939)

Barbara and Gordon Events and Locations

Barbara			Gordon	
Year	Location	Event	Year	Location
1930	Chestnut St., Phoenix, NY	CENSUS	1930	262 Whittier Ave, Syr., NY
1940	Chestnut St., Phoenix, NY	CENSUS	1940	262 Whittier Ave, Syr., NY
1943	Chestnut St., Phoenix, NY	Sept 22, 1943 Home sold to Birdlebough		
	Unknown address	Dec 1943 - Moved to California		
		Newspaper: 05-21-44 Evening Star	1944	Washington, D.C. In military - May 21, 1944
1946	123 Ashworth Place, Syr., NY	Returns from Hollywood, CA	1946	262 Whittier Ave., Syr., NY
		Engagement		
1948	123 Ashworth Place, Syr., NY	Married Nov 25th	1948	123 Ashworth Place, Syr., NY
1949	Florida	Son Gordon born in Florida - Aug 1949	1949	Florida
1950	123 Ashworth Place, Syr., NY	CENSUS	1950	123 Ashworth Place, Syr., NY
		City directory	1956	932 Belgian Ave, Apt 1B Baltimore, MD
		James Shea obit	1958	Washington, D.C
		The 1960s		
1971	Beverly, MA (Mrs. Barbara D. Shea)	Helen Carter obit		
		Kenneth Shea obit	1984	Beltsville, MD
		Shea was a consultant	1985	Beltsville, MD
		Mabel Shea obit	1993	Maryland
		Phone Directory	1995	11356 Cherry Hill Road Beltsville, MD 20704 Phone: 301-937-7230
1997	Rowley, MA (Barbara Carter)	Ray Carter, Jr. obit		

1998	Probably Rowley, MA	Barbara was residing here		
		Donald Shea obit	2008	Beltsville, MD
		Gordon Shea died	2012	Maryland

Some Newspaper Articles

MORE DOGS NEEDED

Two Owned in Oswego County Left for War Yesterday

“SYRACUSE — Shipment of 14 dogs from the K-9 induction center at the Syracuse SPCA yesterday depletes the supply of dogs volunteered by owners according to Paul shaver of DeWitt, director of Dogs for Defense, who announces the Army still needs dogs.

.....

“In the shipment yesterday were a Chesapeake Bay retriever owned by Mrs. H. E. Spath of Pulaski and a Dalmatian owned by **Miss Barbara Carter of Phoenix.**”

October 27, 1943, Wednesday, Oswego Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

“**Pvt. Gordon F. Shea**, son of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Shea, 262 Whittier Avenue, has been assigned to the radio school, A.A.F. Training Command, Truax Field, Madison, Wis.”

June 8, 1944, Thursday, Syracuse Herald-Journal, Syracuse, NY

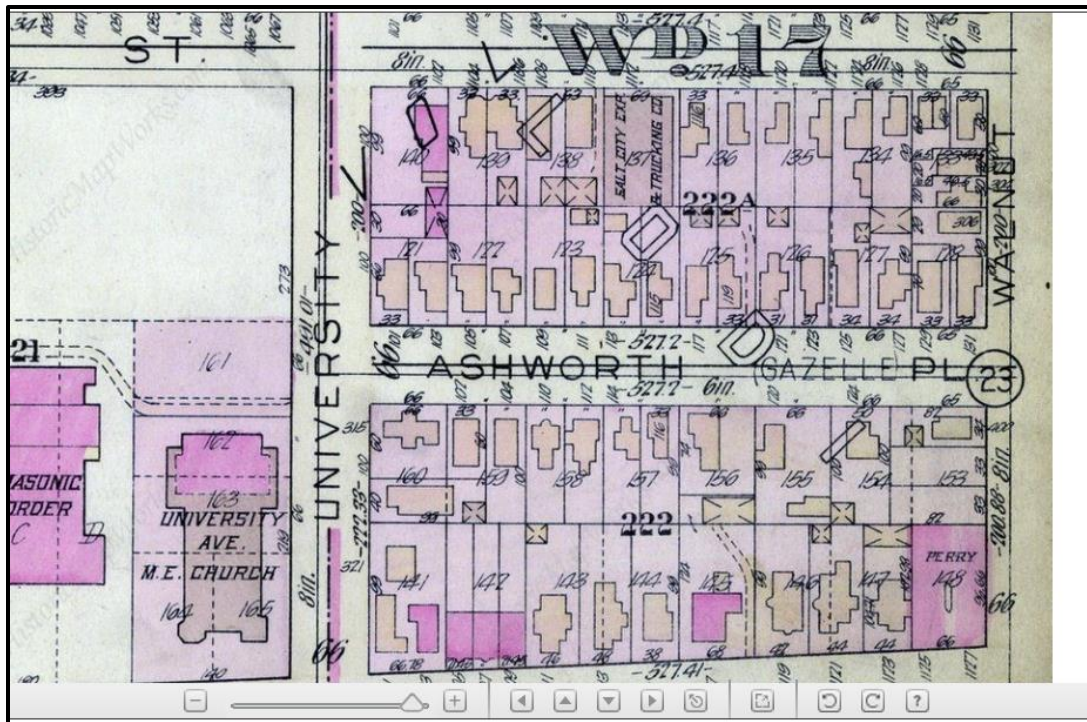
RELEASES

“**Sgt. Gordon Shea**, 262 Whittier ave.”

July 7, 1946, Sunday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

“**Carter, Helen L.**, 123 Ashworth pl. Tax Book Map1, plate 117, parcel 22, block 222, part lot 126. 31x100 feet. Wood house. Tax....228.31”

January 31, 1949, Monday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY



Part of Plate 004. Syracuse and Suburbs 1924, New York, Published by G. M. Hopkins Co. in 1924.

The Post-Standard,
Syracuse, NY
Friday, January 27, 1950



BARBARA SHEA, housewife and mother of a small boy, is working for a degree in psychology. "I have all my housework and shopping to do during the day," she says, "and then like many other married women, I leave my husband home with the baby, while I study at University College evenings."

Obituaries - Shea

James Shea Dies; Veteran of WWI

“**James E. Shea**, 73, of 262 Whittier Ave. died yesterday at the Veterans Administration Hospital after a long illness.

“A veteran of World War I, he served eight years in the Navy. He was a member of the Veterans of foreign Wars, the National Association of Retired Civil Service Employees, and prior to his retirement about five years ago, he was a stationary engineer at Bolling Field, Washington, D.C.

“A native of Camillus, surviving are his wife, **Mabel Johnson Shea**; six sons, J. Carleton, Francis A., Kenneth J., Donald T, acting in the Syracuse Police Department; and Robert P. Shea, all of Syracuse, and **Gordon F. Shea of Washington, D.C.**; two sisters, Mrs. Marie Stevens, Washington, D.C.; and Catherine Shea of Geneseo; two brothers, Edward J., and Thomas J. Shea of Syracuse; 14 grandchildren.

“Funeral services will be held at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Edward J. Ryan Funeral Home and at 10 a.m. in St. Patrick’s Church where a solemn Mass of Requiem will be celebrated.

“Burial will be in St. Mary’s Cemetery. Friends may call today and tomorrow from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. at the Funeral Home.”

March 9, 1958, Sunday, Syracuse Herald-American, Syracuse, NY

Kenneth J. Shea

“Services will be at 8:30 a.m. Friday at Edward J. Ryan & Son Funeral Home and at 9 a.m. in St. Patrick’s church for **Kenneth J. Shea**, 63, of 708 Park Ave. He died Tuesday at the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

“Calling hours are 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday.

“Burial will be in St. Mary’s Cemetery, DeWitt.

“Mr. Shea was a native Syracusan and was formerly employed by the New York Central Railroad. He was an Army Air Corps veteran of World War II.

“Mr. Shea was a communicant of St. Patrick’s Church. He was a member of Tipperary Hill American Legion Post 1361.

“Surviving are two daughters, Patricia Wheeler and Kathleen Nichols; his mother, Mabel; five brothers, Francis of San Jose, Calif., **Gordon of Beltsville, Md**, Carlton, Donald and Robert; and six grandchildren.”

May 30, 1984, Wednesday, Syracuse Herald-Journal, Syracuse, NY

Mabel M. Shea

“**Mabel M. Shea**, 94, of Whittier Ave., Syracuse died at Community-General Hospital Saturday after a long illness.

“A native of Cedarville, Mrs. Shea lived most of her life in the Syracuse area. She worked as a telephone operator at Easy Washing Machine Corp., and at the Hotel Syracuse before retiring from the Veteran Administration Medical Center as telephone operator in 1969. *She made medical history in 1919 as the first woman in Syracuse to be operated on for appendicitis while pregnant.* Her husband, **James**, died in 1958, and two sons, **Francis** and **Kenneth**, died in 1984.

“She was a communicant at St. Patrick’s Church and was a member of its Altar Rosary Society. Mrs. Shea was a member of the National Association of Federal Employees and a member of the American Association of Retired Persons.

“Surviving are four sons, **J. Carlton, Donald** and **Robert**, all of Syracuse, and **Gordon of Maryland**; 18 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren.”

November 21, 1993, Sunday, Syracuse Herald American, Syracuse, NY

Find A Grave

James Edward Shea

BIRTH: 19 Oct 1883, Camillus, NY

DEATH: 8 Mar 1958 (aged 74), Syracuse, NY

BURIAL: Saint Mary's Cemetery, DeWitt, NY

MEMORIAL ID: 214019341

Mabel Mae Johnson Shea

BIRTH: 30 Mar 1899, Litchfield, Herkimer County, NY

DEATH: **17 Nov** 1993 (aged 94). Syracuse, NY

BURIAL: Saint Mary's Cemetery, DeWitt, NY

MEMORIAL ID: 214019549

Note: Mabel died on Saturday, **November 20th** according to her obit.

Kenneth John Shea

BIRTH: 5 Aug 1920, Syracuse, NY

DEATH: 29 May 1984 (aged 63)

BURIAL: Saint Mary's Cemetery, DeWitt, NY

PLOT: Sec 85 Lot 32 Space 3A

MEMORIAL ID: 255347821

Patricia M. Langford Shea

BIRTH: 21 Mar 1921

DEATH: 11 Sep 1967 (aged 46)

BURIAL: Saint Mary's Cemetery, DeWitt, NY

PLOT: Sec 85 Lot 32 Space 4A

MEMORIAL ID: 255347940

SGT Gordon F Shea

BIRTH: 21 Sep 1925

DEATH: 31 Jul 2012 (aged 86)

BURIAL: Maryland Veterans Cemetery, Cheltenham, Prince George's County, MD

PLOT: Sect: H2 Site 382

MEMORIAL ID: 109692694

SSDI

Gordon F. Shea; SSN: 067-18-7920, Issued before 1951 in New York

Birth Date: September 21, 1925; Death Date: Jul 31, 2012



The Donovan Family

Census Records - Donovan

1930 NY Onondaga Syracuse Dist 0079

237 Fitch Street, Res 62, Fam 79, Rents \$35/mo, Has a radio

Ward K. Donovan, Head, 28, M, Mar @ 19, Mass, NY, NY, Trimmer, Auto Mobile Factory

Hazel K. Donovan, Wife, 29, M, Mar @ 19, NY, NY, NY, None

Richard N. Donovan, Son, 8, S, NY, Mass, NY, None

Janet F. Donovan, Dau, 1-1/12, S, NY, Mass, NY, None

Sivilla Salladin, Aunt, 68, S, NY, France, Germany, None

Ephraim Lancaster, Roomer, 58, S, NY, NY, NY, Barber, Barber Shop

1940 NY Oswego Phoenix Dist 38-75

70 Main Street, Res 82, Rents \$25/mo, Not a farm

Ward Donovan, Head, 38, M, H-3, Mass, Syracuse, NY, Worked 84 hrs, State Police, Oneida

Barracks, 52 wks, \$2,300

Hazel Donovan, Wife, 39, M, H-4, NY, Syracuse, NY

Richard Donovan, Son, 18, S, H-4, NY, Syracuse, NY, Occupation blank, 4 wks, \$20

Janet Donovan, Dau, 11, S, 5th, NY, Syracuse, NY

70 Main Street, Res 83, Owns \$10,000, Not a farm

Lena Sweet, Head, 69, Wd, H-4, NY, Same house, Worked 4 hrs, Vice President, Paper Mfg Co., 52 wks, \$2,500

Note: The Donovan family was all living in Syracuse, NY on April 1, 1935.

Family not found in the 1950 census

Obituary

Ward K. Donovan, Former Criminal Deputy, 58, Dies

“PHOENIX — **Ward K. Donovan**, 58, former Oswego County criminal deputy sheriff and also a former member of the New York State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation, was found dead in bed this morning at the home of his mother, **Mrs. Elizabeth Donovan**, 311 Adams St., where he resided. He is believed to have suffered a heart attack during the night.

“At the time of his death he was employed as a guard by the Roth Steel Co. in Syracuse. He had previously been employed by the New York State Barge Canal system after leaving the sheriff’s department.

“Mr. Donovan’s son, **Richard N. Donovan** of this village, is Oswego County Surrogate.

“He retired from the county sheriff’s department about 10 years ago and is survived by his son, his mother, a daughter, **Mrs. John (Janet) Harder** of Patchogue, L.I., and six grandchildren. He was a member of the Masonic fraternity.

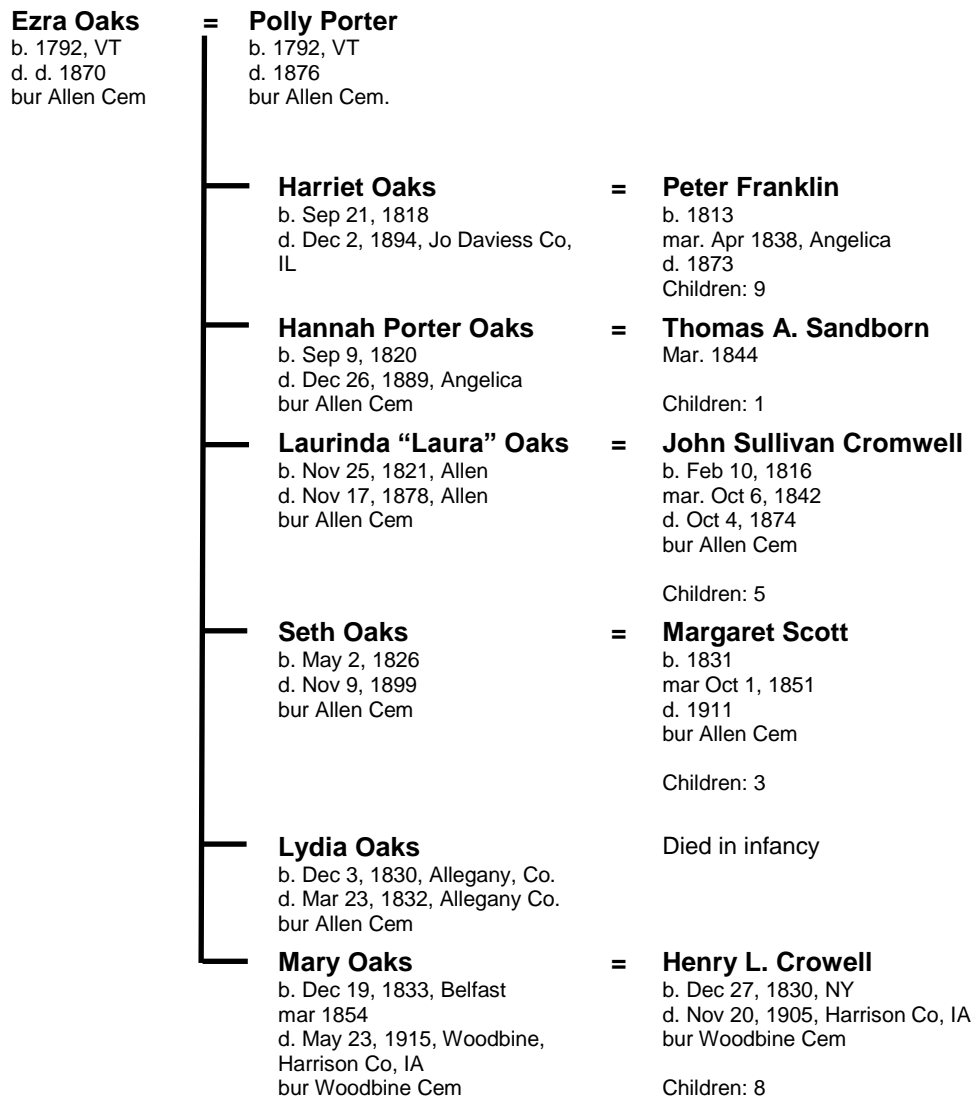
“Funeral services will be Tuesday at 2 p.m. at the Allanson-Glanville funeral home here. Friends may call at the funeral home Sunday and Monday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m.”

September 17, 1960, Saturday, The Palladium-Times, Oswego, NY

The Descendants of Ezra Oaks

(s/o Father and Mother)

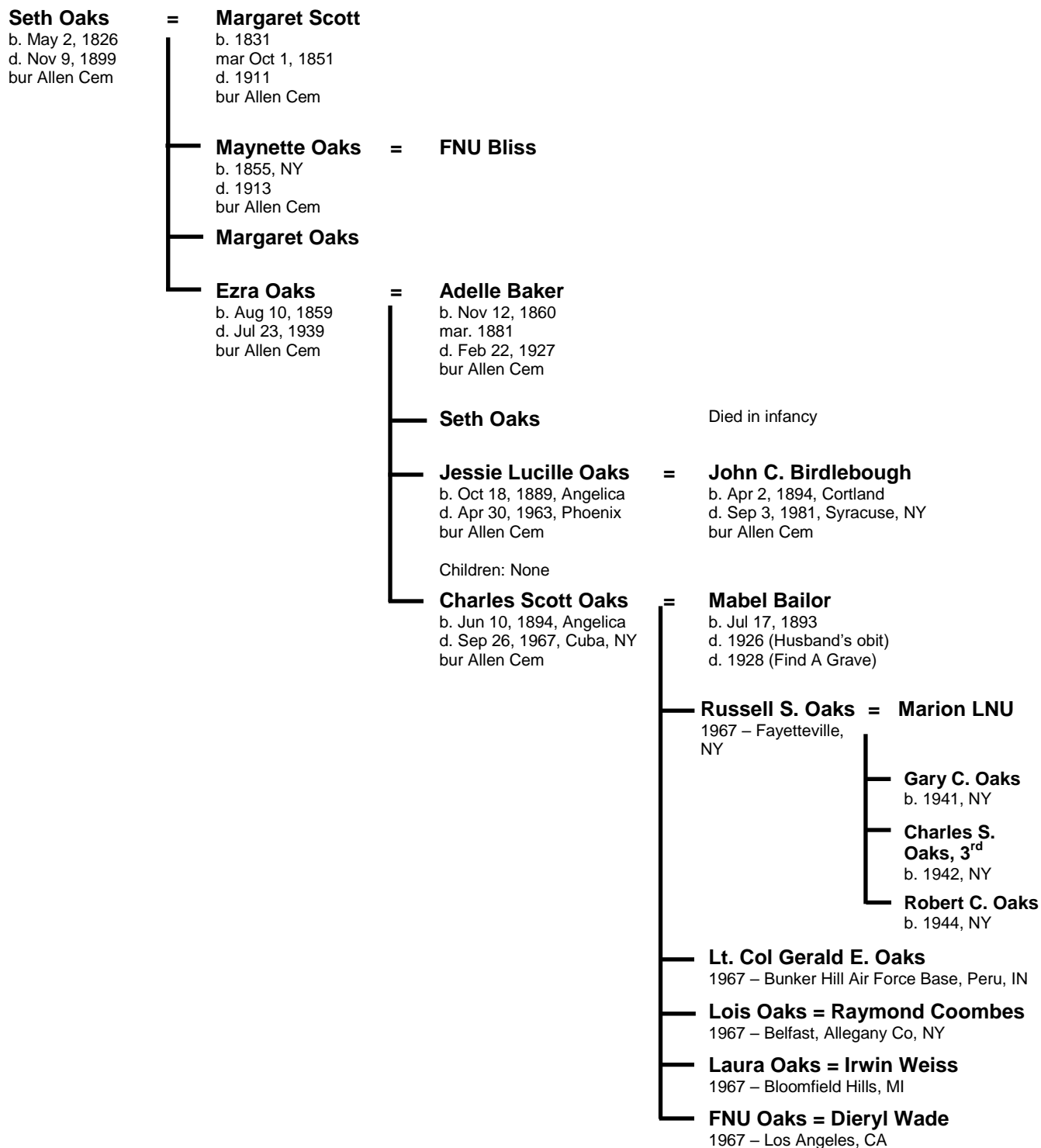
(d/o Father and Mother)



Seth Oaks and Margaret Scott

(s/o Ezra Oaks and Polly Porter)

(d/o Father and Mother)



Census Records – Oaks

1860 NY Allegany Angelica

Res 720, Fam 217

Ezra Oaks, 68, Farmer, Real Est \$7000, Per Est \$1200, Vermont

Polly Oaks, 68, Vermont

Seth Oaks, 33, NY

Margarett Oaks, 28, Scotland

Maynette Oaks, 5, NY, Attended school

Ezra Oaks, 9/12, NY

NOTE: Three generations of Oaks

1880 NY Allegany, Angelica Dist 007

Res 39, Fam 41

Seth Oaks, 52, M, Farmer, NY, VT, VT

Margaret Oaks, Wife, M, Keeping house, Scotland, Scotland, Scotland

Eddie Oaks, 20, Son, S, Works on Farm, NY, NY, Scotland

Maggie Oaks, Dau, S, At School, NY, NY, Attended school, Scotland

1900 NY Allegany Angelica Dist 0007

Res 284, Fam 295, Owns farm #50 free of a mortgage

Ezra Oaks, Head, Aug 1859, 40, M, 16 yrs, NY, NY, Scotland, Farmer

Della Oaks, Wife, Nov 1860, 39, M, 16 yrs, Children: 2/2, NY, NY, NY

Jessie Oaks, Dau, Oct 1886, 13, S, NY, NY, NY, At school

Charles Oaks, Son, June 1894, 5, S, NY, NY, NY

Gordon Clark, Boarder, Oct 1883, 16, S, NY, NY, NY, Farm laborer

Simpson Jennings, Boarder, Nov 1872, 27, S, NY, NY, NY, Farm laborer

Res 285, Fam 296, Owns home free of a mortgage

Margaret Oaks, Head, Feb 1841, 59, Wd, Scotland, Scotland, Scotland, 1857, 43 yrs

NOTE: Margaret is Ezra's mother

1920 NY Allegany Angelica, Dist 0011

Peavy Road, Farm, Res 16, Fam 16, Rents Farm #16

Charles Oaks, Head, 25, M, NY, NY, NY, Farmer, General Farm, OA

Mable Oaks, Wife, 26, M, NY, NY, NY, None

Russel S. Oaks, Son, 3-10/12, S, NY, NY, NY, None

Gerald E. Oaks, Son, 2-8/12, S, NY, NY, NY, None

Laura M. Oaks, Dau, 1, S, NY, NY, NY, None

Peavy Road, Res 17, Fam 17, Home owned: Unknown

Ezra Oaks, Head, 60, M, NY, NY, Scotland, Helps son, General Farm, W

Adella Oaks, Wife, 59, M, NY, NY, NY, None

1940 NY Allegany Angelica Dist 2-12

Res 99, Owns farm No. 72 worth **\$10,000**

Charles Oaks, Head, 45, Wd, **8th**, NY, Same house, farmer, farm, OA

Frances Jackson, Housekeeper, 41, S, **8th**, NY, Same house, housekeeper, private house, PW, 1939
income: \$192

Laura Oaks, Dau, 21, S, C-3, NY, Same house, In School

Lois Oaks, Dau, 15, S, Grade: HC(?), Same house, In School

Constance Beaver (Oaks), Adopted Dau, 7, S, Grade: "0", Bath, Steuben, NY

NOTE: Charles Oaks only went to the 8th grade in school while his sister **Jessie Oaks** completed 4 years of college.

1950 NY Tompkins Trumansburg 55-58

56 South Street, Not a farm

Russell S. Oaks, Head, 34, Mar NY, Working, Worked 40 hrs, Credit Mgr, G.L.F. Produce

Marion Oaks, Wife, 32, Mar, NY, Keeping house

Gary C. Oaks, Son, 9, Nev, NY

Charles S. Oaks, 3rd, Son, 8, Nev, NY

Robert C. Oaks, Son, 6, Nev, NY

Florence Kelly, Fourth Cousin, 3, Nev, NY

Agricultural Census Records

1860 Agricultural Census

	1	Ezra Oaks
Improved Land (acres)	2	200
Unimproved (acres)	3	50
Value of Farm (\$)	4	\$7,000
Value of Farm Impl & Machinery (\$)	5	\$150
Horses	6	4
Mules and Asses	7	
Milch Cows	8	6
Working Oxen	9	
Other Cattle	10	12
Sheep	11	84
Swine	12	2
Value of all livestock	13	\$800
Wheat (bushels)	14	30
Rye (bushels)	15	
Indian Corn (bushels)	16	
Oats (bushels)	17	300
Rice (lbs.)	18	
Tobacco (lbs.)	19	
Ginned Cotton (bales (400 lbs.))	20	
Wool (lbs.)	21	400
Peas and Beans (bushels)	22	5
Irish Potatoes (bushels)	23	100
Butter (lbs.)	30	700
Cheese (lbs.)	31	400
Hays (tons)	32	18
Maple Syrup (lbs.)	42	170
Value of Animals Slaughtered (\$)	48	\$70

1870 Agricultural Census

	1	Seth Oaks
Improved Land (acres)	2	160
Woodland (acres)	3	100
Other Unimproved (acres)	4	—
Value of Farm (\$)	5	\$8500
Value of Farm Impl & Machinery (\$)	6	\$300
Wages and Board Paid	7	275
Horses	8	6
Mules and Asses	9	
Milch Cows	10	9
Working Oxen	11	4
Other Cattle	12	11
Sheep	13	120
Swine	14	2
Value of all livestock	15	\$2575
Spring Wheat (bushels)	16	
Winter Wheat (bushels)	17	128
Rye (bushels)	18	
Indian Corn (bushels)	19	
Oats (bushels)	20	350
Barley (bushels)	21	20
Buckwheat (bushels)	22	20
Rice (lbs.)	23	
Tobacco (lbs.)	24	500
Cotton (bales (150 lbs.))	25	3
Wool (lbs.)	26	120
Peas and Beans (bushels)	27	
Irish Potatoes (bushels)	28	80
Sweet Potatoes (bushels)	29	
Orchard Products (\$)	30	
Wine (gallons)	31	100
Produce of Market Gardens (\$)	32	
Butter (lbs.)	33	
Cheese (lbs.)	34	100
Maple Syrup (lbs.)	44	250
Sugar Cane (Hhds (1,000 lbs.))	45	
Molasses (gallons)	46	
Value of animals slaughtered or sold to be slaughtered (\$)	51	\$210
Est value of all farm production	52	\$1705

1880 Agricultural Census

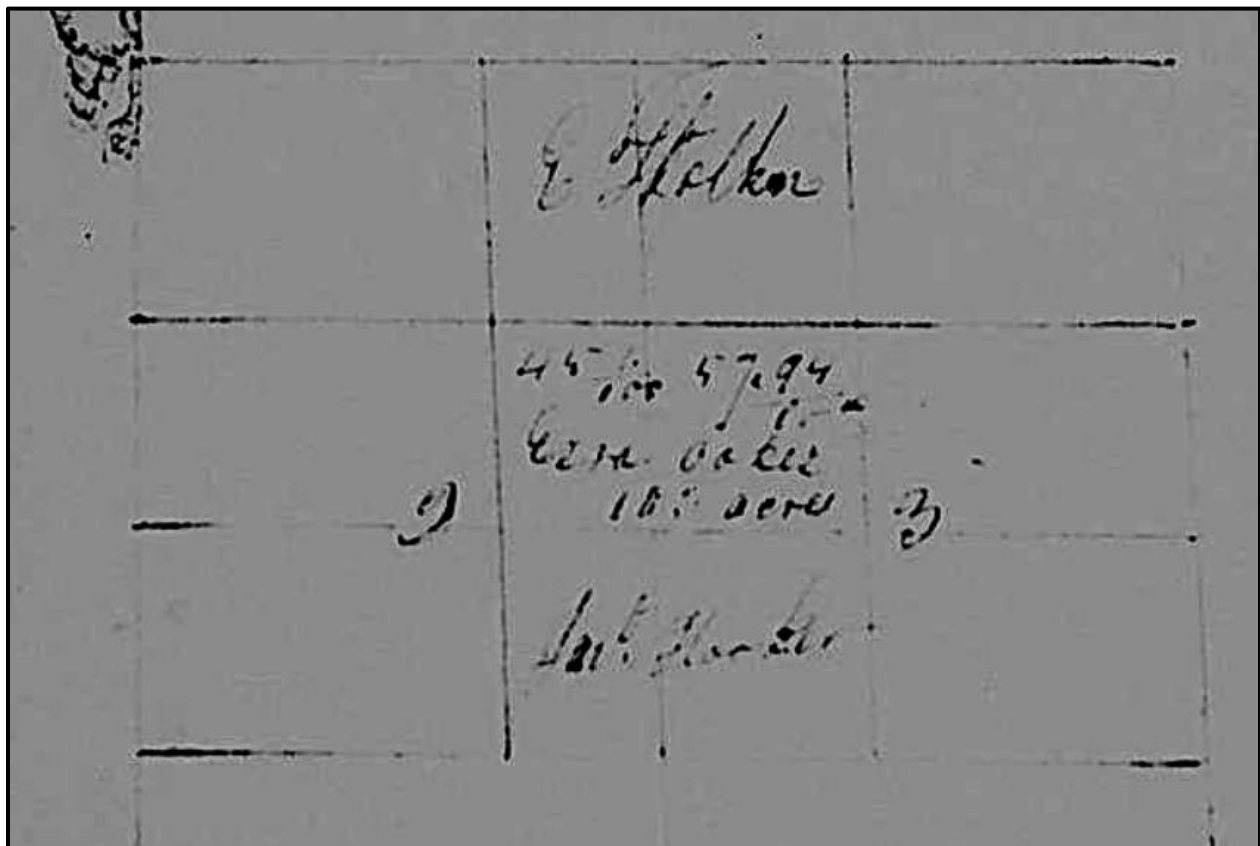
	1	Seth Oaks
Owner	2	1
Rents for fixed money Rental	3	—
Rents for shares of products	4	—
Tilled (acres)	5	150
Meadows, Pastures, Orchards	6	60
Woodland or Forest (acres)	7	50
Value of Farm (\$)	9	\$7800
Value of Farm Impl & Machinery (\$)	10	\$400
Value of Live Stock (\$)	11	\$1500
Cost of Building & Repairing (1879) (\$)	12	\$30
Farm labor hiring (1879) (\$)	14	250
Weeks Hired labor in 1879	15	42
Est Value of all production (1879) (\$)	16	\$2000
Mown Grass (acres)	17	75
Hay (tons)	19	100
Horses of all ages (Jun 1, 1880)	22	7
Milch Cows (Jun 1, 1880)	25	13
Other (Jun 1, 1880)	26	13
Calves Dropped (1879)	27	2
Cattle Sold living (1879)	29	7
Milk sold or sent to butter or cheese fac (1879) (gal)	32	4290
Butter made on farm (1879) (lbs.)	33	400
Sheep on hand (June 1, 1880)	35	80
Lambs dropped (1879)	36	21
Sheep & lambs slaughtered (1879)	39	1
Sheep & lambs died of disease (1879)	41	2
Fleece shorn or to be shorn (Spring 1880) (no.)	43	80
Fleece (lbs)	44	400
Swine on hand (June 1, 1880)	45	4
Barnyard poultry (June 1, 1880) (no.)	46	30
Other Poultry (June 1, 1880) (no.)	47	9
Egg production (1879) (doz.)	48	120
Barley Area 1879 (acres)	49	2
Barley Crop 1879 (bushels)	50	50
Indian Corn Area 1879 (acres)	53	4
Indian Corn Crop 1879 (bushels)	54	75
Oats Area 1879 (acres)	55	18
Oats Crop 1879 (bushels)	56	300
Wheat Area 1879 (acres)	59	4
Wheat Crop 1879 (bushels)	60	30
Maple Sugar 1879 (lbs.)	72	500
Maple Molasses 1879 (gallons)	73	15
Irish Potatoes Area 1879 (acres)	78	2
Irish potatoes Crop 1879 (bushels)	79	150
Apples Acres 1879 (no.)	84	3
Apples Bearing Trees 1879 (no.)	85	150
Apple Bushels 1879 (no.)	86	200
Total Value of Orchard Products Grown or Eaten 1879	90	80
Forest Prod – Amt Wood Cut 1879 (cords)	99	16
Forest Products – Value of all prod sold or consumed in 1879 (\$)	100	\$32

Oaks Family Land Transactions

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Town	Range	Tract	Lot	Size
1820 (1825)	William Short	Ezra Oaks	D, 57	4	2	MR	2 3	45.06 ac 57.94 ac
1835	John Hooker Jr. & Wife	Ezra Oaks	L, 577 (628)	4	2	MR		\$65 10 ac.
1838	James Thomas & Wife	Ezra Oaks	4, 282	4	2	MR	1 & 2 Sh O	\$575 99.67 ac
1843	Enoch Sandborn et al	Ezra Oaks	16, 404	5	2	MR	51	
1847	George L. Walker	Ezra Oaks	22, 146	5	2	MR	51	
1869 (1864)	Henry Crowell	Ezra Oaks	81, 374	4	2	MR		50 ac 25 ac
1877 (1857)	Henry Crowell & wife	Seth Oakes	106, 142	5	2	MR		Allen 32.5 ac
1890	Oscar H. Walker et al	Ezra Oaks	148, 44	5	2	MR		
1899	Nathan A. Bennett	Adell Oakes	173, 584	3	2	MR	Vill 94	
1843	Ezra Oakes	Lysander L. Walker	15,143	5	2	MR		
1857	Ezra Oaks et al	Cyrus Jennings	47, 655	5	2	MR		
1869	Ezra Oaks et al	Thomas A. Sandborn	81, 376	4	2	MR	16 & 17	50 ac 25 ac
1886	Seth Oakes & wife	Ezra Oakes	139, 178	4	2	MR		
1901	Seth Oakes Strs of	Maynette Bliss	169, 143	5	2	MR		
1901	Ezra & Margaret Oaks	Margaret A. Piatt	169, 175	5	2	MR		
1918	Adell Oaks	Henry Travis	237, 288	3	2	MR	Vill 94	

The double dates, such as, 1869 (1864) result from the difference between the year the deed was registered (first year) and the year that the deed was created (second year). The situation might be the same with some or all of the other deeds in this table created from the Grantees Index. However, it was only noticed for the deeds that were actually looked up in the Deed Books.

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Town	Range	Tract	Lot
1825	William Short	Ezra Oaks	D, 57	4	2	MR	2, 3
Date of Indenture:		January 12, 1825					
Grantor:		William Short of the City of Philadelphia by Allen Aynault his attorney by virtue of a power of Attorney dated 28 th day July 1823 and recorded in the Clerk's office in the County of Allegany.					
Grantee:		Ezra Oaks of the Town of Allen, County of Allegany					
Amount:		\$266.51					
Description:		<p>All that certain tract or parcel of land situated and being in the <u>town of Angelica</u> county of Allegany and State of New York and in the tract which (illegible) — 57.94 acres.</p> <p>From the west end of the north Subdivision of <u>Lot number three</u> in <u>township number four</u>. The same to be let off by a line running parallel with the west line of said lot number three also forty five acres and six hundredth part of acre off from the <u>East end of the north Subdivision of Lot number two</u> in Said <u>township number four</u> to be let off by a line running parallel with the East line of said Lot number two making in all Agreeable to the Survey of the said tract made by Moses Van Campin & of William Jones <u>one hundred and three acres Land</u> be the same more or less and is partially represented in a map or plate at the margin hereof. (See Below)</p>					
Date Recorded:		January 12, 1825					



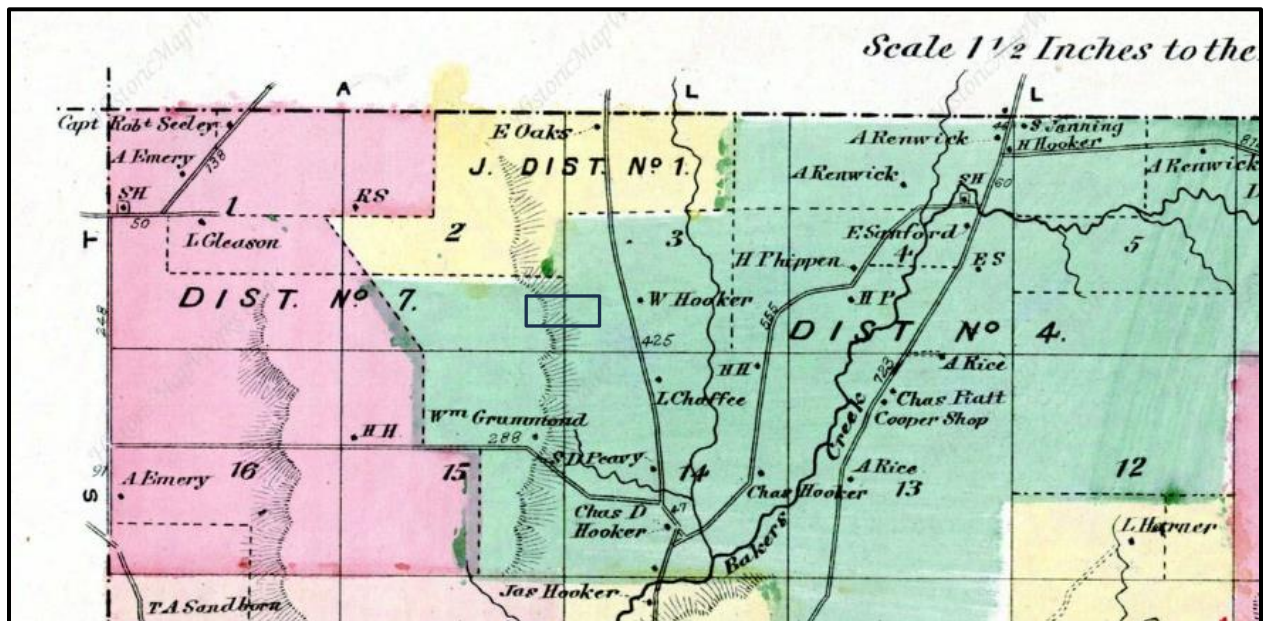
Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Town	Range	Tract	Lot
1838	James Thomas & Wife	Ezra Oaks	4, 282	4	2	MR	1 & 2 Sh O
Date of Indenture:		January 4, 1835					
Grantor:		James Thomas Jr. and Lovina Thomas his wife					
Grantee:		Ezra Oaks					
Amount:		\$575					
Description:		<p>All that certain piece or parcel of Land situate and being in the <u>Town of Angelica</u> in County Allegany and State of New York and in the tract which D. B. and T. L. Ogden Esqrs Conveyed to William Short that is to say <u>ninety nine acres and Sixty seven hundredths of an acre</u> in south Subdivision of <u>Lot numbers one and two</u> in <u>Township number four</u> the said Lots and Subdivision being known according to the survey of Moses Van Campen and of William Jones and <u>ninety five acres and eighty four hundredths</u> of the above land is bounded</p> <p>West on the line of Lots North on the Subdivision line of said lot, East on lands of John Hooker and South on the South line of said tract, and <u>three acres and eighty three hundredths</u> lay in the North East corner of said Lot, seven chains and ninety links, East on the line of Lot nine chains and seventy two links, and south westerly by a diagonal line from one to the other of the aforesaid points</p> <p>They being the same parcels of Land conveyed by William Short to the said James Thomas Jr. by deed bearing date the third day of July Eighteen hundred and thirty two reference being had to the said Deed and the record thereof will more fully appear containing in the whole <u>ninety nine and sixty seven hundredths of an acre of land</u> be the same more or less</p>					
Date Recorded:		January 16, 1838					

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Town	Range	Tract	Lot
1869	Henry Crowell	Ezra Oaks	81, 374	4	2	MR	50 ac 25 ac
Date of Indenture:		September 13, 1864					
Grantor:		Henry Crowell & Mary his wife of the town of Belfast, County of Allegany, N. Y. State					
Grantee:		Ezra Oaks of Angelica County & State aforesaid					
Amount:		\$1,400					
Description:		<p>All that tract or parcel of land situate in the town of Angelica Township No. Four in the County of Allegany in Morris Reserve Second Range and Bounded as follows:</p> <p>Beginning at the North west corner of said lot and running <u>Easterly</u> on the North line of said lot 25 chains.</p> <p>Thence <u>South</u> one degree west 20 chains</p> <p>Thence <u>Westerly</u> on a line parallel to the North line of said lot 25 chains to the transit line.</p> <p>Thence <u>North</u> on the said transit line 20 chains to the place of beginning containing <u>fifty acres</u> of land be the same more or less being the same land deeded by Calvin T. Chamberlain & wife to Thomas Sanborn deed bearing date July 3, 1852.</p> <p>Also all that other piece or parcel of land on lot sixteen in the township and range aforesaid.</p> <p>Beginning at the North west corner of the aforesaid parcel of land in the transit line running thence <u>Easterly</u> along the North line of the parcel of land above described to the North east corner thereof.</p> <p>Thence continuing Easterly 20 rods and to the lands of Henry Hooker.</p> <p>Thence <u>Northerly</u> along said Hooker's west line 5 chins and 65 links.</p> <p>Thence <u>Westerly</u> & parallel with the North line of the lot or parcel of land first above described to a stake.</p> <p>Thence <u>Northerly</u> & parallel with said transit line to lands heretofore conveyed by the said Thomas Sanborn & wife to Miron H. Burr.</p> <p>Thence <u>Westerly</u> along the south line of lands so conveyed Miron H. Burr to the transit line.</p> <p>Thence <u>Southerly</u> along the said transit line to the place of beginning. Containing <u>Twenty five acres</u> of land be the same more or less.</p>					
Date Recorded:		September 13, 1864					

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Town	Range	Tract	Lot
1869	Ezra Oaks et al	Thomas A. Sandborn	81, 376	4	2	MR	16 & 17
Date of Indenture:		October 2, 1868					
Grantor:		Ezra Oaks & Polly Oaks his wife of Allen Allegany County, N.Y.					
Grantee:		Thomas A. Sanborn of the same place					
Amount:		\$1,500					
Description:		Same as purchased by Ezra Oaks from Henry Crowell on September 14, 1864 – See description above					
Date Recorded:		October 2, 1868					

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Town	Range	Tract	Lot
1877	Henry Crowell & wife	Seth Oakes	106, 142	5	2	MR	32.5 ac
Date of Indenture:		December 16, 1857					
Grantor:		Henry Crowell & Mary his wife of the Town of Allen, County of Allegany & State of New York					
Grantee:		Seth Oakes of the Town of Allen County & State aforesaid					
Amount:		\$800					
Description:		<p>All that Tract of Parcel of Land situate in the <u>Town of Allen</u> Commencing at the south west corner of Lands owned by Erastus Wake and lands deeded by the party of the first part to George Everetts Deed bearing date the 16th day of December 1857 and running north so far as the line comes in deed from Sullivan Crowell & wife to Henry Crowell deed bears date the 18th day of April 1857 & to contain <u>thirty two acres and a half</u> off of & from the north side of lands conveyed by deed from Enich Sandborn & Fanny his wife to William Bently bearing date the 26 day of August A.D. 1845 and recorded in Book No. 19 of Deeds Page 476 & on the 28th day of August 1845 at 11 A.M. reference thereto had will more fully appear in the reference to other deeds mentioned in said conveyance in the Allegany Court Clerk's Office to contain <u>32 & a half acres</u> of land off & from the north side of the last mentioned lands.</p> <p>This deed was recorded in the Deed Book Volume 106 for year 1877. For the date filed the text was preprinted "... in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy ____." However the word "seventy" was crossed out and "fifty seven" was written in the blank.</p>					
Date Recorded:		December 28, 1857					

1869 Map – Northwest Corner Angelica County, NY



1869 map of the northwestern corner of the Town of Angelica, Allegany Co. The blue rectangle shows approximate where Ezra Oaks purchased 100 acres in 1825.



The Morris Reserve

Obituaries - Oakes

EZRA OAKS

“**Ezra Oaks**, a lifelong resident of the Town of Angelica, died at his home Sunday, July 23, aged 79 years, 11 months, and 18 days. His expressed desire to live until his eightieth birthday was not granted.

“**Ezra Oaks** was born August 10, 1859, his father being **Seth Oaks** and his mother, **Margaret Scott Oaks**. In 1881 he was married to **Adelle Baker**, who died in 1927. Three children were born to them: **Seth**, who died in infancy, **Jessie Lucille**, and **Charles Scott**.

“He is survived by a sister, **Margaret Platt** of Ridgway, Pa.; his son and daughter, above mentioned; and four grandchildren: **Russell Scott Oaks** of Perry, N.Y., **Gerald Ezra Oaks** of Bemus Point, N.Y., and **Laura Margaret Oaks** and **Lois Emily Oaks**, both of Angelica.

“Services were held at the late home on Tuesday, July 25, the **Reverend E. H. Dickinson**, D. D., of Sheldrake Springs, officiating. Interment was made in the Fiske cemetery.

“**Ezra Oaks** was the third generation of the name to live on the farm which his grandfather as a pioneer carved from the wilderness. In him, as was said at the services, the five generations of the family were united, he being the bond which held them together. Known far and wide as a good neighbor, and remembered by many for the kindness which always characterized his relations with his fellow men, he was truly, as was said at the funeral, ‘one of God’s gentlemen.’”

August 3, 1939, Thursday, The Angelica Advocate, Angelica, NY

ADELLA BAKER-OATS

“**Adella Baker Oats**, daughter of **Owen** and **Gennie Baker** was born Nov. 12, 1860. She passed away Feb. 22, 1927 after a long illness.

“**Adella Baker** was married to **Ezra Oaks** on Angelica, Dec. 15, 1882. Three children were born to them: **Jessie L.**, **Charles S.**, and **Seth Oaks**. Seth died in infancy.

“Mrs. Oaks became a Christian in early life and affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. She was a very earnest Christian, a faithful wife and a loving mother.

“She is survived by her husband, **Ezra Oaks**, two children, **Mrs. (John) Chester Birdelbaugh**, N.Y., and **Charles S. Oaks** of Angelica, also one sister, **Mrs. Cora Reynolds** of Wellsville, N.Y.

“The funeral was held at the home, Feb 24, 1927 and burial in the Fisk Cemetery of Allen, **Rev. A. E. Bailor** officiating.”

March 3, 1927, Thursday, The Angelica Advocate, Angelica, NY

CHARLES S. OAKS

“ANGELICA — **Charles S. Oaks**, Peavy Rd., RD 1 Angelica, died Tuesday (Sept. 26, 1967) in Cuba Memorial Hospital after a long illness.

“He was born June 10, 1894, in Angelica, a son of **Ezra** and **Adelle Baker Oaks**. He married **Mabel Bailor**, who died in 1926. He was a retired farmer.

“Surviving are two sons, **Russell S. Oaks** of Fayetteville, and **Lt. Col. Gerald E. Oaks** of the Bunker Hill Air Force Base at Peru, Ind.: three daughters, **Mrs. Raymond (Lois) Coombes** of Belfast. **Mrs. Irvin (Laura) Weiss** of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and **Mrs. Dieryl Wade** of Los Angeles, Calif.; 16 grandchildren; a great-grandson and several nieces and nephews.

“Friends may call 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. at the Richard E. Burt Funeral Home in Angelica where funeral and committal services will be held Friday (Sept. 29, 1967) at 2 p.m. The **Rev.**

David Stanley, vicar of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, will officiate. Burial will be in the Allen Cemetery."

September 28, 1967, Thursday, Orleans Times Herald, Orleans, NY

Charles Oaks's phone number - HOpkins 6-3301

August 25, 1960, Thursday, The Belfast Blaze, Fillmore, NY

Find A Grave –Oaks

Charles S. Oaks

BIRTH: 1894

DEATH: 1967 (aged 72–73)

BURIAL: Allen Cemetery, Allen, Allegany County, New York, USA

MEMORIAL ID: 15392342

Mabel Lavine Bailor Oaks

BIRTH: 17 Jul 1893, New York, USA

DEATH: 1928 (aged 34–35)

BURIAL: Allen Cemetery, Allen, Allegany County, New York, USA

MEMORIAL ID: 15661913

Ezra Oaks Estate

"**John C. Birdlebough**, Phoenix, was granted letters of administration on the \$1,200 personalty and \$5,000 realty estate of **Ezra Oaks**, Angelica, who died July 23. Heirs are a son, **Charles S. Oaks**, Angelica, and a daughter, **Jessie O. Birdlebough**, Phoenix."

October 19, 1939, Thursday, The Patriot and Free Press, Cuba, NY

"**John C. Birdlebough**, Phoenix, administrator of the estate of **Ezra Oaks**, Angelica, was granted a discharge and release."

July 4, 1940, Thursday, The Patriot and Free Press, Cuba, NY

61 Chestnut St., Phoenix, NY



Herald American photo by John Berry

**Oswego County Opportunities is considering using this
Fulton home as a group residence for handicapped people.**

61 Chestnut Street, Phoenix, NY - November 16, 1986 – Syracuse Herald-American

When Was the House Built?

Statement	Source
The Birdlebough house was a “110-year-old house.”	December 13, 1986, Post Standard, Syracuse, NY Note: This implies that the house was built in 1876 .
“118-year-old building”	November 16, 1986, Herald American, Syracuse, NY Note: This implies the house was built in 1868 .
“The home of Mr. Sweet, in a lovely part of the village, consists of the brick residence which he built in 1868 and which today presents as good appearance as the more modern dwellings.”	Phoenix, N.Y., and Vicinity, Historical Souvenir Series No. 14, <u>1902</u> , p. 14

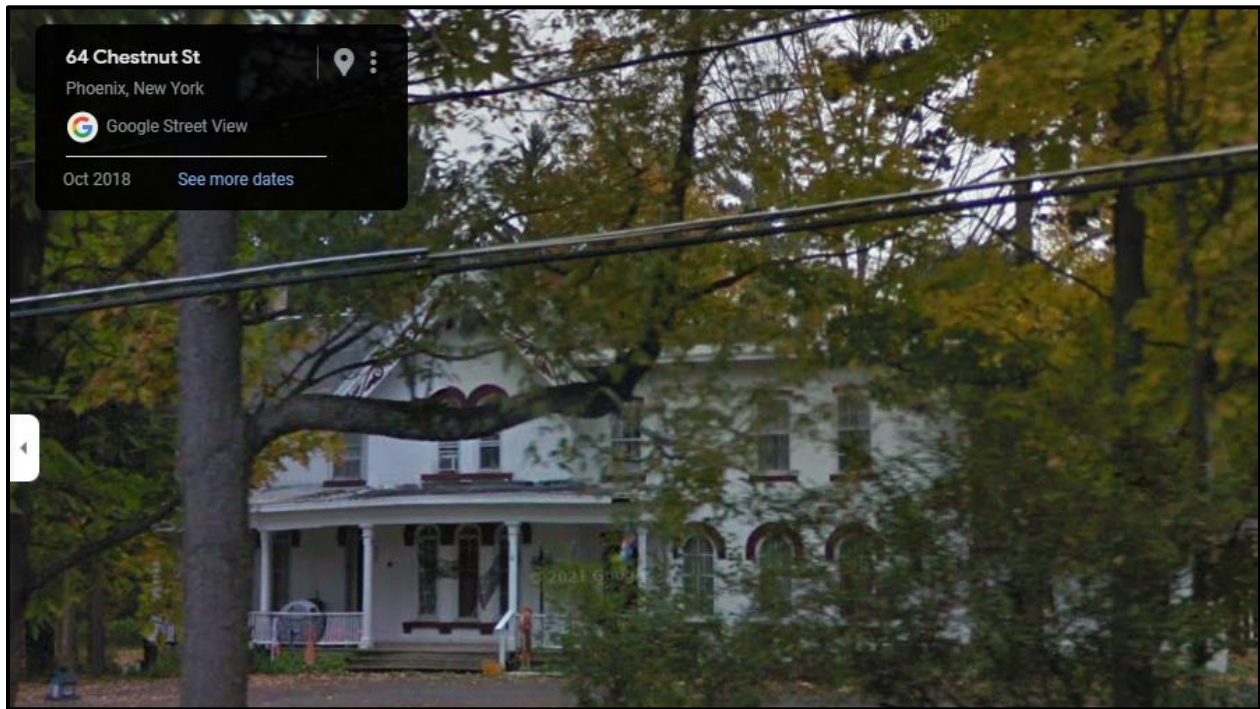
Statement	Source
<p>“...J. C. Birdlebough of 422 Chestnut St. He’s got 62 clocks to prove it.”</p> <p>“<u>Thirty years</u> of collecting clocks has given Mr. Birdlebough one of the most unique assortments of time pieces that can be found anywhere.”</p> <p>“Mr. Birdlebough is probably the most discriminate clock buyer in the nation.</p>	<p><u>June 8, 1967</u>, Oswego Valley News</p> <p>Note: This article implies that Birdlebough began collection clocks in 1937. At the time of the 1940 census Birdlebough had been the district principal of the Phoenix schools for nine years and had yet to purchase a house. He was renting at \$30/month and he was making \$3300 per year. He wouldn’t purchase the Carter house on Chestnut St. until 1943.</p>

Chestnut Street House Timeline

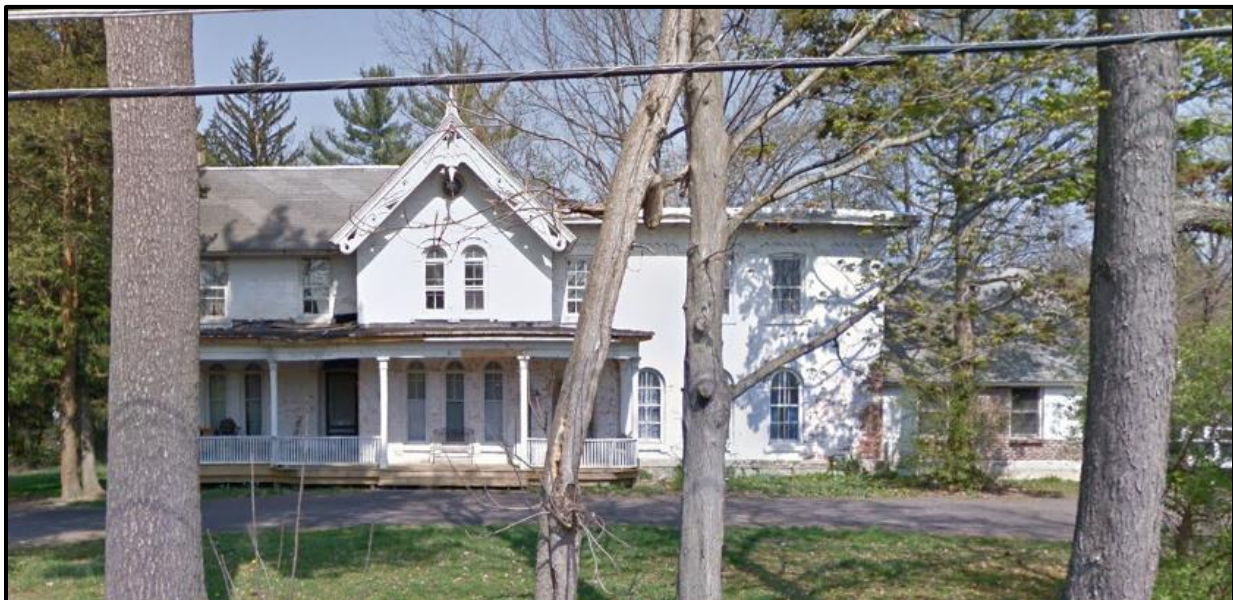
Date	Event
1868	House built for Gouverneur Morris Sweet
1925	Ray Carter moves business to Phoenix, NY from Syracuse. Bought property in the village of Phoenix for his tool making business.
1925	Ray Carter bought the property in the Town of Schroepel this year, but it wasn’t the house at 21 Chestnut Street. No deed for the purchase of the 21 Chestnut Street property by Ray Carter could be found in the records at the Oswego County Clerk’s Office. In the 1925 NYS census Ray Carter was living on Chestnut Street – no address given.
1929	Ray Carter sold the R. L. Carter Co. to the Stanley Co. for \$250,000.
1934	Ray Carter drowned in a boating accident on St. Lawrence River, near Cape Vincent.
1940	Mrs. Carter still residing at 21 Chestnut St.
1943	John C. Birdlebough purchased 21 Chestnut St. from Mrs. Ray Carter.
1947	John C. Birdlebough residing at 21 Chestnut St.
1950	Birdlebough has an exhibit of his antique clocks at 21 Chestnut St.
1950 - 1960	Sometime during this decade, the address 21 Chestnut St. became 422 Chestnut St.
1960-10-16	“An exhibition of antique clocks will be presented at Syracuse Antiques Club meeting Tuesday in the home of J. C. Birdlebough of 422 Chestnut St., Phoenix.”
1963-04-30	Mrs. Jessie Oaks Birdlebough died at her home in Phoenix but the address was not given in the obituary.
1963-06-30	John C. Birdlebough retires at Phoenix principal and superintendent
1981-09-03	John C. Birdlebough died at St. Joseph’s Hospital, Syracuse, NY
1984-09-08	Auction to settle the estate of John C. Birdlebough held at his home at 422 Chestnut St., Phoenix, NY
1986-12-13	<p>Oswego Co. Opportunities had bid \$97,000 for 422 Chestnut St. Bid was withdrawn due to renovation costs.</p> <p>“The building was later the home of Ray Carter, an inventor of power tools in the 1920s and ‘30s, and of John C. Birdlebough, who was principal and supervising principal of the Phoenix High School and school district from the 1930s to the early 1970s. (Retired in 1963).</p> <p>“The home now belongs to North Syracuse resident Florence DelConte.”</p>
1989-07-13	Imperial Homes of CNY Associates at 422 Chestnut St., Phoenix

Date	Event
1990-11-14	Russell Pope doing business as Phoenix Interiors, 422 Chestnut St., Phoenix
1993-05-20	Imperial Homes of CNY Associates at 422 Chestnut St., Phoenix
2024	422 Chestnut Street is now numbered as 61 Chestnut Street.

Pictures of the Chestnut Street House



61 Chestnut Street. October 2018 – Google Maps – Street View



61 Chestnut Street. April 2012 – Google Maps – Street View

Phoenix Land Transactions – Carter & Birdlebough

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg	Location
1925	Andrew V. Mogg et al	R. L. Carter Co. Inc	337, 459	Phoenix, Lots 7, 8, Blk 14
1925	Maxwell R. Karge & wife	Helen L. & Ray L. Carter	341, 112	Schroeppel – Doesn't include the Chestnut St. house.
1925	Anna M. Karge	R. L. Carter Co. Inc	341, 112	Phoenix
1925	Benjamin V. Green	R. L. Carter Co. Inc	341, 315	Phoenix
1926	Benjamin V. Green	R. L. Carter Co. Inc	342, 355	Phoenix, Lots 6,7, Blk 14
1930	R. L. Carter Co. Inc	Ray L. Carter	360, 8	Phoenix
1943	Helen L. Carter	John C. Birdlebough & wife	414, 507	Schroeppel – Chestnut St. house

Note: The Chestnut Street house was just outside of the Village of Phoenix and was considered to be located in the Town of Schroepel. The purchase by Birdlebough from Helen Carter was the correct house. However, R. L. Carter's 1925 purchase of land in the Town of Schroepel didn't include the Chestnut Street house. The 1925 purchase was only about an acre in size while the Chestnut Street purchase by Birdlebough in 1943 was 3.29 acres. There were no records of Ray Carter or R. L. Carter Company selling any land 1925-1935. The 1930 transaction might be Carter purchasing his home from his company prior to selling the company to Stanley Works.

Actual Property Purchased by Birdleough



61 (formerly 422) Chestnut Street. The former Birdleough property at 61 Chestnut Street, Phoenix, NY consisted of all of parcels 26.01 and 26.02 and about 30% of parcel 25.



Dimensions – Current Oswego County Tax Map

The map has been rotated about 30 degrees to the east.

Direction	Distance (Feet)	Distance (Chains)
SW to NW	384.45	5.825
NW to NE	380.16	5.76
NE to SE	392.04	5.94
SE to SW	380.02	5.758
Acres: 3.38		

Birdlebough's Purchase of the Carter Home

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Bk, Pg (IMG)	Location
1943	Helen L. Carter	J. Birdlebough & W.	414, 507	Schroeppel
Date of Indenture:		September 22, 1943		
Grantor:		Helen N. Carter of Phoenix, New York		
Grantee:		John Chester Birdlebough and Jessie Oaks Birdlebough , his wife, of Phoenix, New York		
Amount:		\$1.00		
Description:		<p>All That Tract Or Parcel Of Land, situate in the Town of Schroepel, County of Oswego and State of New York and known and distinguished as being part of LaHommedieu's third location in said Town of Schroepel and bounded and described as follows, viz:</p> <p>Beginning at a point in the center of the line of Chestnut Street <u>easterly</u> from the Village of Phoenix and two (2) chains, thirty-seven and one half (37-1/2) links East from the center line of Cherry Street;</p> <p>Thence North twenty-seven (27) degrees forty-nine (49) minutes West five (5) chains eighty-two and one half (82-1/2) links;</p> <p>Thence North sixty-one (61) degrees twenty (20) minutes East five (5) chains and seventy-six (76) links;</p> <p>Thence South twenty-seven (27) degrees and forty-nine (49) minutes East five (5) chains and ninety-four (94) links to the center line of Chestnut Street;</p> <p>Thence <u>Westerly</u> along the center line of Chestnut Street to the place of beginning,</p> <p>containing three and twenty-nine one hundredths (3-29/100) acres of land, and being premises facing on Chestnut Street in the Village of Phoenix, New York, and approximately bounded on three sides by a fence made up of Poplar Trees.</p> <p>To Have And To Hold the premises herein granted unto the parties of the second part, their heirs and assigns forever, And said party of the First Part does covenant as follows: FIRST. That the parties of the second part shall quietly enjoy the said premises. SECOND. That said Party of the First Part will forever WARRANT the title to said premises.</p>		
Date Recorded:		September 23, 1943 at 1:55 P.M.		

The price in the deed was listed as just one dollar (\$1.00). No mortgage was mentioned in the deed and no Birdlebough mortgage was found in the Mortgage books in the Oswego County Clerk's Office. There was also no record of Ray L. Carter having previously purchased this property. It is possible that Helen L. Carter took back a mortgage on the property from the Birdleboughs.

After Birdlebough's death his nephew Gary Oaks inherited the house and he sold it.

Plans Scrapped for Phoenix Group Home

By Kevin Ryan

“PHOENIX — Plans to convert the historic Birdlebough house into a group home for multiply handicapped adults have been scrapped because the cost of renovating the building is too high

....

“The Phoenix-Schroeppel Historic Preservation Commission last week named the building to the local register of historic places, a move that will prevent major changes or modernization of the outside of the building.

“The historic designation would not have affected Oswego County Opportunity’s plans for the building, which was built in 1868 for Gouverneur Morris Sweet who served two terms in the state legislature.

“The building was later the home of Ray Carter, an inventor of power tools in the 1920s and ‘30s, and of John C. Birdlebough, who was principal and supervising principal of the Phoenix High School and school district from the 1930s to the early 1970s. (Retired in 1963)

“The home now belongs to North Syracuse resident Florence DelConte.”

December 13, 1986, Saturday, The Post-Standard, Syracuse, NY

NOTE: The above article is useful in that it ties together Sweet, Carter and Birdlebough as owners of the same house and it states that the house was built in 1868. In a bit of irony, the owner of the property at the time of the article, Florence DelConte, was the mother of Larry DelConte who attended North Syracuse Central High School with me back in the 60s.

Occupations, Salaries and Housing in the 1940 Census

The salaries were for the year 1939

No.	Occupation	Employer	Salary	Weeks Emp	Class of Worker	Owens/Rents	Value
2	Physician	Private Practice	\$5,000	52	OA	Owens	\$10,000
14	President	Toilet Tissue Paper Mfg.	\$5,000	52	E	Owens	\$10,000
15	Superintendent	Paper Mill	\$3,960	52	PW	Rents	\$40
18	Professor (Wife of Doctor)	Medical College	\$3,500	50	PW	—	—
36	Principal	Public School	\$3,300	40	PW	Rents	\$30
10	Manufacturer	Paper Making	\$2,600	52	E	Owens	\$3,000
7	Salesman	Motion Picture Supplier	\$2,300	50	OA	Rents	\$20
20	Foreman Refining Dept	Swiss Chocolate Mfg.	\$2,236	52	PW	Rents	\$12
37	Machinist	General Machine Shop	\$2,080	52	PW	Rents	\$22
41	Machinist Lathe worker	Machine Tool & Die	\$2,050	51	PW	Owens	\$1,600
27	Maintenance Mechanic	Dredging	\$2,000	43	PW	Rents	\$20
28	Teacher	Public School	\$1,800	40	PW	Rents	\$25
31	Inspector	U.S. War Dept.	\$1,800	52	GW	Rents	\$25
17	Chief Chemist	Machine Works	\$1,560	52	PW	—	—
32	Machine Repair & Maintenance	Bottle Cap Dept Paper	\$1,500	52	PW	Rents	\$24
16	Watchman	Dredging	\$1,300	46	PW	Rents	\$30
3	Mechanic	Public Utility	\$1,200	52	PW	Rents	\$12
43	Truck Driver	Paper Mfg. Co.	\$1,200	52	PW	Rents	\$20
5	Grade Teacher	Public School	\$1,100	40	PW	Owens	\$3,400
8	Truckman	G.L.F. Mill	\$1,080	48	PW	Rents	\$20
44	Stationery Fireman	Paper Mill	\$1,060	52	PW	Rents	\$16
23	General Repair Man	Electric Power Co.	\$1,056	48	PW	Rents	\$20
33	Paper Maker	Tissue Paper Mfg.	\$1,052	37	PW	Owens	\$2,000
9	Beater Boss	Paper Making	\$1,050	30	PW	Owens	\$3,000
6	Time Clerk	Steel Mill	\$1,010	30	PW	Rents	\$18
30	Mill Wright	Crucible Steel Co.	\$960	44	PW	Rents	\$20
21	Machine Tender	Toilet Paper Mfg. Co	\$900	40	PW	Owens	\$2,000
45	Paper Man & Millwright	Paper Mill	\$800	45	PW	Owens	\$1,000
22	Clerical Worker	Typewriter Mfg. Co.	\$790	51	PW	—	—
4	Elementary Teacher	Public School	\$784	38	PW	—	—
46	Movie Machinist Projectionist	Local Motion Picture Theater	\$650	51	PW	Rents	\$22
39	Bookkeeper	Wholesale & Retail Lumber Co	\$624	52	PW	Rents	\$20
24	Waitress	Restaurant	\$600	20	PW	—	—
11	Clerk	Dept. Store	\$575	52	PW	—	—
29	Nelling Dept Labor	Crucible Steel Co.	\$510	21	PW	—	—
1	House Maid	Private Family	\$332	51	—	—	—
26	Electrician	Public Utility Co.	\$288	52	PW	Rents	\$15
12	Funeral Director	Undertaking	\$125	36	OA	Owens	\$4,500
13	Dentist	Private Practice	\$0	49	OA	Owens	\$6,000

No.	Occupation	Employer	Salary	Weeks Emp	Class of Worker	Owens/Rents	Value
19	Medical Doctor	General Practice	\$0	50	OA	Owens	\$4,000
25	Boat Builder	Boat Building	\$0	52	OA	Owens	\$500
34	Proprietor	Gas Station & Coal Yard	\$0	52	OA	Rents	\$20
35	Wood Finisher also Undertaker & Embalmer	Own Shop	\$0	26	OA	Owens	\$3,000
38	Truckman	For Self	\$0	52	OA	Owens	\$1,750
40	Proprietor Billiard Parlor	Billiard Parlor	\$0	52	OA	Owens	\$2,800
42	Day Laborer	Various work by hour	\$0	52	OA	Rents	\$15

Note: PW = Paid Worker, GW = Government Worker; OA = Own Account; E = Employer.

The information in the table above was extracted from the 1940 census for the page on which John Birdlebough appeared and for one page before and after his. It was collected by working backward from the bottom of the page after Birdlebough and the numbering is for the order in which the individual's information was transcribed. The information above has been sorted by "Salary." The numbering allows the entries to be resorted into the original order in which they were transcribed.

Birdlebough Estate Sale

IMPORTANT AUCTION

To Settle the Estate of John C. Birdlebough

422 Chestnut St., Phoenix, New York

ANTIQUA CLOCKS AND FURNITURE

PREVIEW: Fri., Sept. 7, 3 pm – 8 PM

AUCTION: SAT., SEPT. 8, 8 – 10 AM

Clocks to be sold starting at 12 noon

Auctioneers – Knapp Bros.

Auction Managed by

Hutchens & Caldwell, Inc.

417 Salt Springs Rd., Fayetteville, N.Y. 13066

(315-637-3377)

Illustrated catalog avail. - \$5

Over 90 AMERICAN, ENGLISH AND EUROPEAN CLOCKS:

Clocks	Furnishings
Ithaca calendar	Library of over 700 books
Thomas Tompian wag-on-wall	Boxed 2 Vol set of Wallace Nutting, Landmarks of Oswego County
New Haven statue	Historical and Statistical Gazetteer of NYS
Auguste Ferron Morbier	Many 1 st editions and printings
Advertising clocks	7 oriental rugs
Jeromes and Darrow	4-color Pennsylvania coverlet, signed and dated
Presentation banjo	Eastlake parlor set
Miniature Patti V.P.	Blue and white woven coverlet
Terry & sons pillar and scroll lyre	Quilts

Clocks		Furnishings
Robert Wood bracket		Victorian love seat and matching rocking chair
Seth Thomas fashion		Late 18 th early 19 th century breakfront
Asa Munger shell, E. Howard Wall		Antique one drawer stands
E.N. Welch shelf		Vose baby grand piano
Dutch hood		Mason and Hamlin oak pump organ
Act of Parliament		Antique cherry and tiger maple chest
S. A. Macqueen banjo		Pawfoot dining table
H. Smith banjo		Pine blanket chest
English lantern		Dropleaf tables
Waterbury #36		Sets of chairs
Swedish wag-on-wall		Grained step-back cupboard
Agir Boris wag-on-wall		4 Poster beds
French crystal regulator		Captain's chair, ladderback chairs and rockers
Jarold Arnold shelf		Victorian cradle
John Kirk shelf		Bennington ware, burl bowls, ironstone
A. Smith shelf		Hawkes goblets
Admiral Dewey shelf		Amberina lemonade set
Samuel Terry shelf		Antique children's furniture, toys and games
Columbus, German pendulum		Schoenhut Circus
French swinging doll		Comic books, Indian relics
Many open and cottage clocks		Mission oak rockers
Tall case clocks by:		Moreau bronze statue
M. V. Overloop		Orosden figural group
T. L. Vick		Much more
Joseph Cheetham		
George Bell		
Jacob Hasius		
Gerrit Bramer		
Seth Thomas and others		
Pocket watches, clock ??? and parts		

August 26, 1984, Sunday, Syracuse Herald American, Syracuse, NY