

Renewed Remembering: The Newsletter of the Conneaut Area Historical Society and the David Cummins Octagon House

Volume II, Issue
15

March 2024



We Remember

“Remembering” was the name of the original Conneaut Area Historical Society newsletter. Joan Barnett was the last editor, and with her death and the Covid pandemic the newsletter has not been published for a time. It seemed fitting to name this new

version of the old newsletter “Renewed Remembering,” in honor of the former editors including Louise Legeza and Joan Barnett who edited and published the newsletter for so many years. We hope you enjoy it!



The President’s Paragraph

The Conneaut Area Historical Society wants to thank you for your continued support. As always, new members are welcome. You can call: 440-599-6011 with further questions or write to Conneaut Area Historical Society, P.O. Box 563, Conneaut Ohio, 44030. Our Historical Museum street address is: 518 Mill Street and our David Cummins Octagon House address is 301 Liberty Street. We are reopening the Octagon House along with the Conneaut Area Historical Museum in May. We hope that you will come and visit both. Jim Jones, President

Please pick up a copy of this newsletter and share it with your friends. Or read your copy on our Conneaut Historical Society website: <https://capturingconneauthistory.com/>

Time Travel Tuesday

On Tuesday March 19 from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Villa on the Lake, Historical Society Vice- President Jerry Janco will present a program about the Conneaut Creamerie. Please mark your calendars and come and hear Jerry’s presentation.

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Barn Quilt Square No.3

Conneaut Woman Rescues Dog

The Cleveland Plain Dealer of September 14, 1905, printed a poignant Conneaut story. During a visit to Cleveland, Mrs. J.F. Lane, a handsome woman wearing a stylish fawn colored suit, walked into the Central Police Station with a black and tan dog under her arm. She sat the dog down on Lt. Walker's desk and told the lieutenant her

story.

Visiting from her home on Main Street in Conneaut, Mrs. Lane had been walking near Bond and Superior Streets in Cleveland when she saw a little dog sitting near the curb. A large man repeatedly kicked the dog and the dog yelped with pain. Several men stood around watching the man kick the dog, but none of them tried to stop him. Mrs. Lane grabbed the man by the arm and threatened to have him arrested if he did not stop beating the dog. She searched for a policeman, but she did not see any and while she searched the dog beater melted into the crowd.

Mrs. Lane stood at the curb with the dog trembling at her feet. Without hesitating, Mrs. Lane picked up the dog, snuggled him in her arms, and inquired her way to the Central Police Station. The dog struggled to escape, leaving dirty paw prints on her fashionable fall suit, and ripping it with his claws. By the time Mrs. Lane arrived at the Central Police Station, her dress looked as bedraggled as the dog's fur coat.

"You will take care of him, won't you?" Mrs. Lane asked Lt. Walker.

Lt. Walker assured her he would take care of the dog.

Mrs. Lane still worried about her rescued friend.

She told Lieut. Walker to notify her at No. 201 Main street, Conneaut, if he could not find a humane owner for the dog. "I'll give him a good home in Conneaut if you can't take care of him," she said.

Lt. Walker fed the dog a big supper and provided a sleeping place for him in the haymow over the police station. He promised Mrs. Lane that he would do his best to find a new owner for the dog from the first precinct patrolmen. He assured her that if he had not found the dog a home within a week, he would ship the dog to Conneaut, C.O.D.

Research reveals that a Mrs. J.F. Lane from Conneaut did exist. She was Iva J. Turner before she married J.F. Lane. The Lanes had six children, before Jared was killed in a railroad accident in 1893. Iva Lane, a dressmaker, lived on Main Street in Conneaut with her family and her obituary describes her as "one of Conneaut's most universally beloved women and one of its noblest." People considered her a loyal friend and always willing to help those in distress, even a skinny dog from Cleveland.

Iva and Jared Lane are buried in City Cemetery in Conneaut.

Needed: Museum Volunteers!

We need Enthusiastic and Dedicated Volunteers to help us help the Conneaut Area Historical Museum and the David Cummins Octagon House realize their full historical potential. Even though we are closed for the season, we have not stopped working to improve the Conneaut Area Historical Museum. We could use some help organizing collections and updating the inventory. Lend us your willing hands, hearts, and minds to help our museum grow. Be a Museum Volunteer!

Museum Steering Committee

Karl Rowbotham

Jerry Anderson

Delmas Bennett

Jerry Janco

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President- Jim Jones

Vice President – Jerry Janco

Secretary-Debbie Jones

Treasurer- Pat Jones

Historian-Kathy Warnes

Newsletter Editor- Kathy Warnes

Printed by Andy Pochatko, Topky Library



On Sunday, November 6, 1892, the news of the approach of an ore boat, the steamer Charles J. Kershaw, spread around town. The Kershaw was preparing to tie up at the newly completed first ore dock built in Conneaut. A large crowd of Conneaut citizens watched the Kershaw unload the first cargo of iron ore in Conneaut. The Kershaw's load of ore totaled 1, 130 tons which dock workers unloaded the next day in about 16 ½ hours. That was the entire total of iron ore received in Conneaut that year.

Dock Talk Tales

February 1981

Conneaut, the Way It Was



This picture shows the Leavitt & Hunt Feed and Flour Mill in 1915. The picture is from the John Tyler collection of old prints and he took the second picture almost 66 years later on January 24, 1981, to show a comparison.

The 1915 picture was taken from the north side of Old Main Road in East Conneaut where the Picard's Grocery Store Building is located. Old Main Road and the C&E Trolley Line turn in a northwesterly direction at this point to cross the old High-Level Bridge into Conneaut.

In the second picture, the Model A in the left foreground, the tourist cars at the south and east sides of the mill, the bicycle in the center, and the trolley whose tracks are visible in the center of the road were the major modes of transportation 66 years ago.



The building in the center of the top picture housed the Leavitt & Hunt Mill which sold “All kinds of Feed and Flour.” More than a feed mill and gathering point for the community, the building also housed the fire bell for the sounding the general alarm. The bell can be seen at the top center.

When the new High-Level Bridge was constructed, U.S. Route 20 carried the bulk of the traffic along the south side of the mill building to its approach from the east. West of the mill roof is now the residence of Mrs. Glenna D. Stasny. The second, which originally had a front porch, was occupied by Sanger Realty, operated by William C. Sanger who is Cindy L. Meinke’s step-father.

Frank M. Gibson was retired storekeeper John R. Gibson’s father. Frank was very active in the community, and during the Second World War he was a member of the Selective Service Board. H. Ray Gibson was John’s grandfather. From him John picked up his middle name.

In about 1920, Frank M. Gibson bought Mr. Leavitt’s part of the mill and it became Gibson & Hunt. Lynn Hall then bought Mr. Hunt’s interest and the business was renamed Gibson & Hall. Then John’s grandfather H. Ray Gibson purchased Lynn Hall’s portion of the partnership. The business then operated as Gibson & Gibson Feed and Flour Mill. John does not recall having to work very often in the family mill.

In the early 1930s, the demand for feed and flour had declined to such a point that when Norman Dunn made the Gibsons an offer to buy the business, the deal was closed. Duun razed the building and built a gasoline service station on the site. Among the owners and operators of

the station since that time have been Earl Torrence, Joe Griffey (brother of ore-dock clerk Gordon Griffey), and now Steven Bartone's Service Center.

Thanks to the many individuals who offered bits of information which we have included here. It helps to bring an old print to life and we begin to realize how it used to be many years ago. That's what the Conneaut: The Way It Was series is all about.

The Top of the Octagon- Cummins Cupola Chronicles



Maxine Morgan Photo of the Octagon House

Regeneration, Rebirth, and Renewal

Conneaut and Ashtabula County could accurately be called an “Octagon House Oasis.” Conneaut alone boasts two Octagon houses, and although the Octagon Houses reside in different parts of the county they are as firmly connected by history as their physical eight sides and exterior and interior arrangements create a unified building.

Since the time of the Ancient Greeks, probably before that, the octagon shape and octagon house has symbolized regeneration, rebirth, and renewal. We at the Conneaut Area Historical Society are working to regenerate, rebirth, and renew this gem on Liberty Street to polish its continuing story. We are opening the Octagon House along with the Conneaut Historical Museum during Memorial Day weekend in May 2024. We are creating a library room on the second floor that will recognize the contributions of Jack Mathay, and the other Conneaut

people who founded the Conneaut Area Historical Society and acquired the Octagon House. We are planning an open house in May and will provide further information on our museum website and newsletter and fliers around town. Please mark your calendar and come visit us.

We can't accurately claim that the house itself is true to the Civil war period when David Cummins built it, because its owners after David Cummins remodeled it to create an Italianate look and with modern amenities like indoor plumbing and electricity. We can continue its tradition of period furniture in some of its rooms, and tell the stories of the people who lived there, including the Cummins family. We can highlight its history that extends far beyond Liberty Street in Conneaut.

Some of the furniture in the Octagon House symbolizes its connections with Conneaut. Amirus Darrow made two rockers that sit in the upstairs bedroom. He made the table in the dining room of the Octagon house which is too small to hold all of the figurative historical and genealogical place mats that rightfully belong there. The centerpiece of the dining room table is David Cummins who built the Octagon House and gradually founded a canning business in his kitchen according to the traditional story. His tomatoes and pumpkins shipped internationally and are still marketed today.

At the head of the table is a placemat for Amirus Darrow who crafted the table. Amirus, the father of Clarence Darrow, graduated from Meadville Theological Seminary in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. After a year of preaching as a Unitarian minister, he became an agnostic and earned the title of "village infidel" in Kinsman, Ohio. Amirus Darrow and his family lived in an Octagon house in Kinsman for a number of years and there, in his adjoining wood shop, he built the table that presides over the Cummins Octagon House dining room.

Next to the Amirus Darrow is a Jack Mathay placemat. Jack, who passed away in June 2023, was a long-time board member, past president, friend, and patron of the Conneaut Area Historical Museum and Octagon House. He lived in Kinsman and Conneaut and intermingled the history of Ashtabula County towns and cities.



Current Conneaut Historical Society President Jim Jones recalled that Jack Mathay regularly collected period furniture for the Society's Octagon House and made certain that records of its pedigree and placement were in place. "He had an abiding interest in Conneaut History and helped the Society attract members and expand its historical presence in the community besides contributing furniture and historical knowledge," Jim said.

Two Boyhood Friends- Clarence Darrow and Alfred Kinsman

Clarence Darrow and Alfred Kinsman have adjoining placemats. Clarence Darrow, born in 1857, a son of Amirus Darrow and Alfred Kinsman, born in 1858, a grandson of John Kinsman, came from opposite backgrounds, but experienced similar family dynamics. Clarence Darrow, the son of the "village infidel" and Alfred Kinsman, "prodigal son" of the wealthy Kinsman family, attended the Kinsman Academy next to the church together and became good friends.

Clarence Darrow

The fifth son of Amirus and Emily Darrow, Clarence Darrow was born in Farmdale, Ohio, but raised in Kinsman, Ohio. His father Amirus practiced ardent abolitionism and despite training for the ministry and preaching for a time, he was a religious freethinker to the point where the residents of Kinsman daubed him “the village infidel.” Emily Darrow early supported female suffrage and advocated women’s rights. The Clarence Darrow Octagon House in Kinsman commemorates Clarence’s childhood home.

Clarence attended Allegheny College and the University of Michigan Law School, but after only a year at Allegheny College, the Panic of 1873 forced him to teach a winter district school for three years instead of graduating from Allegheny College. He studied law on his own and in 1876, his family encouraged him to study at the University of Michigan Law School. After a year at the University, he decided it would cost less to read law in a law office to prepare for the bar exam. He took and passed the Ohio Bar exam, and became a member of the Ohio bar in 1878.



In 1879, Clarence graduated from the University of Michigan Law School and he spent a year in the village of Harvard, Illinois. After successfully trying one of his first cases, he returned to Ohio, opening a law office in Andover. After a few years in Andover, he moved his practice to Ashtabula, Ohio where he entered Democratic politics and served as town counsel.

In 1880, Clarence married Jessie Ohl and in 1883, their son Paul Edward Darrow was born. In 1888, the Darrows moved to Chicago and slowly Clarence built a reputation for involvement in the Democratic party, his oratorical ability, and his advocacy of labor causes. He worked for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Company and in 1894, resigned from the Railroad Company to represent Eugene V. Debs, head of the American Railway Union, when the Federal government prosecuted him for leading the Pullman Strike of 1894. In one trial he acquitted Eugene Debs, but in another he did not manage to keep Debs from going to jail.

Although Clarence could not know it at the time, another 1894 case foretold a trial where his childhood friend Alfred Kinsman, would be tried for murder with the same defense. In 1894, Clarence defended his first murder case when he joined the defense team after Patrick Eugene Prendergast, “the mentally deranged drifter,” was convicted of murdering Chicago mayor Carter Harrison, Sr. Clarence pleaded insanity as a defense, but Prendergast was hanged. Out of the fifty murder cases in his career, the Prendergast case was the only one where the defendant was executed.

Between 1894 and 1907 when Clarence came to the defense of his boyhood friend Alfred Kinsman, he steered the trajectory of his career from corporate to more labor law cases, divorced

his wife Jessie in 1897, and in 1903, married Ruby Hammerstrom, a journalist sixteen years his junior. Clarence and Alfred would meet again in 1907, in the Trumbull County jail.

Alfred Kinsman

One of the Connecticut Land Company members who followed his money with movement, John Kinsman purchased land in Ashtabula County and moved to Ohio to build his home and a new life on a site which later became Kinsman. John's son Thomas established a prosperous farm and a famous herd of Durham cattle. In 1847, he married Sophia Burnham and built an Italianate house where he and Sophia raised a family of four daughters and two sons. Thomas Kinsman, Jr., Alfred's brother, graduated from Oberlin College and served in the Ohio General Assembly for decades.

Alfred didn't fare as well as his brother Thomas. In his will, their father disinherited Alfred, instead bequeathing his fortune to his wife, son Thomas Jr. and two surviving daughters. His brother and sisters established a trust for Alfred to collect \$55.00 each month which they deposited in the Kinsman National Bank. His siblings appointed George W. Birrell, the longtime Kinsman bank cashier and owner of the large hardware and general mercantile store adjoining the bank to control Alfred's money. Each month, Alfred had to request his money and justify how he spent it. Alfred resented this and finally his resentment exploded with tragic results.

The Western Reserve Democrat of June 18, 1907, printed an account of what happened to George W. Birrell on the last day of his life. According to Thomas Kinsman, Jr., Alfred's brother, a slate roof triggered Alfred's homicide rage. When he returned from a shopping trip to Youngstown, he discovered a new slate roof on his house that he had not approved or agreed to have installed.

Thomas Kinsman Jr. had progressed in his life to Ohio state senator, a marriage to Bertha Wilson Smith, and a stately home, but Alfred struggled with his own way forward. For several years Alfred had dreamed of installing a new slate roof on his house, but banker George W. Birrell had consistently refused to give Alfred the money to pay for a new slate roof. Now, one had magically appeared, already installed without Alfred having any input into the project.

Instead of being glad to see his new roof, Alfred's anger and resentment made him see red and seek revenge. He snatched his 38 Winchester rifle and told his landlord he would be at his mother's house. The landlord called his mother to warn her about Alfred's anger, his gun, and his impending visit. Then he headed into Kinsman to warn George Birrell about Alfred.

Alfred also hurried to Kinsman and George Birrell's hardware store. He asked the clerk for a box of bullets for his rifle. Although he sensed troubled, the clerk set a box of bullets on the counter, but he told Alfred that the bullets would not fit his gun. The clerk could not fool Alfred. Instead, Alfred fooled the clerk. The clerk looked away for a moment and Alfred took a single bullet from the box and slipped it into the chamber of the 38 Winchester. The bullet fit perfectly.

In a moment of terrible timing, George Birrell opened the door of his hardware store and walked toward Alfred Kinsman and the clerk. George had just passed Alfred's landlord who had rushed to town to warn him about Alfred's reaction to the new slate roof. The landlord found

George outside his hardware store, but George laughed off his warning and entered his store. George saw Alfred, greeted him with a smile, and walked past him. The sound of George greeting him prompted Alfred to spin toward his target. He raised his rifle, pulled the trigger, and the bullet smashed into George Birrell's left shoulder. For a short time, George managed to fight Alfred for the gun before they both crashed to the floor. Onlookers separated the two men and asked George Birrell if he had been hit.

George Birrell told them he had been hit in the shoulder, but he did not have time to say too much more. The bullet had severed an artery and sixty-five-year-old George Birrell bled to death without being able to get up off the floor.

On June 18, 1907, in a courtroom in Boise, Idaho, Clarence Darrow neared the end of a trial which demonstrated his persuasive and oratorical powers. The trial highlighted fifteen years of struggle between the Western Federation of Miners and the Western Mine Owners' Association. Fifteen years of union bombings and murders, fifteen years of mine owner intimidation and greed, fifteen years of government inroads into process and denials of liberties came to a head in the trial. Clarence Darrow performed at the top of his legal game when he defended William "Big Bill" Haywood, a Western Federation of Miners leader. "Big Bill" Haywood and two other leaders were accused of orchestrating the murder of former Idaho governor Frank Steunenberg who they considered an enemy, on December 30, 1905, at his home in Caldwell, Idaho. A bomb blast blew him ten feet into the air with an explosion that "shook the earth."

Clarence Darrow's equally explosive defense shook up the jurors enough for them to return a verdict of not guilty. With the end of the trial, Clarence headed back to Ohio to visit his old friend Alfred who also faced a murder charge. Sitting in his Warren jail cell, Alfred Kinsman welcomed his boyhood buddy's visit. Clarence agreed to defend him, but he first had to defend another union member charged with murder in Idaho. In September 1907, returned to Idaho, expecting to return to finish the case in time to defend Alfred.

Preoccupied with his trials and defenses, Clarence had not given health considerations much attention until he developed a painful infection which spread to the mastoid bone behind his ear. He continued the trial, but by the time he presented his closing argument in late November, Clarence was seriously ill. His defense had divided the jury so it could not reach a verdict, causing the union official to walk free. But by the end of the year, Clarence fought for his own life in a Los Angeles hospital and by January 1908, he hovered so near death that a Chicago newspaper sent Los Angeles reporters a telegram asking them to record and forward the last words of Clarence Darrow.

Apparently Clarence Darrow recovered his sense of humor before totally recovering his health because he survived and quipped that he had been granted a "continuance."

While Clarence recuperated, his friend Alfred went on trial in Warren. The local newspaper reported that on December 9, 1907, the jury that heard the kinsman sanity case could not agree and was discharged, after deliberating about three days. The deadlock, from first to last stood seven to five in favor to declare that Alfred Kinsman was insane. The court ordered the case to



be retried and he was found guilty but insane and sent to the Lima State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. He lived there for nearly 26 years until his death on October 7, 1933. He is buried in Kinsman Presbyterian Cemetery.

Five years before his boyhood friend Alfred died, Clarence Darrow returned to Ashtabula County to finish his career in the same county and courtrooms where it had begun. Even though he had gained national fame as a lawyer, he still wanted to bask in the acceptance, respect, and appreciation of his old friends and colleagues in a sun-warmed retirement. Clarence agreed to defend Warren businessman-bootlegger James Munsene, who was indicted for bribing Trumbull County sheriff J.H. Smith for protection for a gambling club. A jury found Munsene guilty and he was sentenced to three years in prison. He appealed his sentence and an appeals court granted him a new trial. A second trial also produced a guilty verdict that was again appealed and reversed and he won a third trial.

Clarence Darrow, now 71 and just ending the famous Scopes Monke trial, agreed to defend him free of charge. The trial was moved to Ashtabula County and began on May 7, 1928. The third and fourth trials produced hung juries. The fourth trial also featured a more tense dynamic than usual between defense lawyer Clarence Darrow and the new prosecutor George H. Birrell, the son of murder victim George Birrell. George H. Birrell never forgave Clarence Darrow for attempting to defend Albert Kinsman, who murdered his father.

A new date of June 1930 was set for a fifth trial that never took place. The stock market crashed and Clarence Darrow, still representing Jim Munsene free, lost most of his savings. A plea bargain was negotiated and James Munsene was sentenced to one year probation and fined all taxable costs for the five trails, which amounted to a little over \$2,000. Clarence Darrow retired, at least for the time being.

Two boyhood friends, two octagon houses, a slate roof and a lifelong friendship are important parts of the David Cummins Octagon House history. The table that Amirus Darrow built in Kinsman and Jack Mathay brought to the Cummins Octagon House sits as solid as the people who sat around it telling their stories while the chairs that Amirus built creaked an accompaniment.

Patron's Pages

Join Our Patrons Program

The Conneaut Area Historical Museum is excited to announce a new Merchant Patron program which is available to any local business who desires to help our museum to function and improve. For \$50 per year (January to December) we will include your business name and phone number in the publications the museum produces, including a monthly newsletter, any future books the museum produces, and our website.

If interested, send your donation of \$50.00 to P.O. Box 563, Conneaut, Ohio 44030. We will include you in our list of great merchants and businesses in this area.

Angela's Café
268 Lake Road
Conneaut, Ohio 44030
440-593-6060

Castaways
877 Broad Street
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

American Legion Post 151
262 Broad Street
Conneaut, Ohio

Conneaut Creek Vet Clinic
382 West Main Road
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

Biscotti's Restaurant
186 Park Avenue
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

Conneaut Dairy Queen
1009 Main Street
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

Chris Brecht, State Farm
Insurance Agency
216 Main Street, Suite B
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

Crafty Shanty
183 Park Avenue
Conneaut, Ohio 44030
Jennifer Betts

Gerdes Pharmacy
245 Main Street
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

Kathi's Golden
Retrievers of Albion
11790 Penside Road
Albion, PA 16401

Leslie & Donald O' Bell
2 Bretenahl Place
Suite C
Bretenahl, OH 44108

Lynn
Armington 48
Ranch Road
Willoughby, OH 44094
440-951-3122

Photo Cabin O' Bliss taken in 1925.
Grandparents Irus and Ellen Sheldon.
Bliss experienced as they grew up in
Conneaut in the early years of the 20th
Century.

Marcy Funeral Home
208 Liberty Street
Conneaut, OH 44030

Susanne Trigg Canfield, OH
Normal for Norway is a culture
shock humor podcast where in
each episode two foreigners
living in Oslo discuss one weird
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Port Conneaut FCU
1002 Broad Street
Conneaut Ohio 44030
440-593-7350

Civil War Chapters

George K. Phelps Died of Germs, Not Guns

The Conneaut Creamerie has family roots going back to the Civil War. Born in Canton, New York on May 5, 1824, Sarah Batchelor came to Conneaut with her parents William and Olive Batchelor and her seven brothers and sisters as a child. In 1843, she traveled to Painesville to marry George W. Phelps and they had six children. Their son, George K. Phelps, joined Company G of the 105th Ohio Infantry, and he was mustered into the Army on August 20, 1862. In August 1862, the regiment was ordered to Covington, Kentucky and then to Lexington on August 25th. It retreated to Louisville, Kentucky from September 1 to 15th and pursued Bragg into Kentucky from October 1 to 12th. It fought in the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky on October 8 and marched to Mundfordville, Kentucky on October 12th where it remained on duty until November 30th. George K. Phelps died of disease on Nov 22, 1862, in Munfordville, Ky.

Captain W.S. Crowell of the 105th Regiment sent a letter to his mother which she shared with the Ashtabula Sentinel of November 27, 1862. Captain Crowell wrote:

“We leave here soon a few days at most, for a more extended tour in 'Dixie.' I am not very sorry for I have been here long enough. The Regiment cannot march from here with three hundred effective men. I have not thirty men. It makes me sick at heart to think of my one hundred and one noble men, reduced so low in number. Three were killed in action, four have died of their wounds, two disease, and some, I fear if not discharged soon, will receive the reward of their patriotic exertions in Death.

Perryville stands a monument to their valor and their sacrifice while we the few stand here still and ever ready to remember and avenge. The names of my noble men killed at Chaplin Hills, and who have since died of their wounds, are as follows : [A B. Spalding](#), and [Edward P. Levitt](#) of Monroe, [Delos Piper](#) of Lenox, [Daniel C. Gould](#), of Springfield, Pa., [Adra Waterman](#) and [William H. Gaut](#) of Pierpoint and [Jerome L. Smith](#) of Conneaut.

George K. Phelps died here suddenly last Saturday. We buried him with Military honors. He was a noble young fellow, robust and blooming cheerful and always ready. His death was a heavy blow to us. I tell you these are names worthy of place on any marble, the citizens of old Ashtabula can raise to their memory.

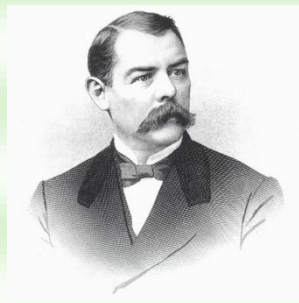
If treasured by no other, they have a place in my heart which time cannot efface. But I know they will not be forgotten. The noble people of our country treasure such history as these, with a zeal that will not let their patriotism and their glorious death be forgotten.”

Jerome L. Smith, also from Conneaut, was 39 when he enlisted in Company G of the 105th Ohio Infantry. He was wounded at Perryville, Kentucky and died of his wounds. He is buried at Camp Nelson National Cemetery in Nicholasville, Kentucky.

George K. Phelps is buried in Cave Hill National Cemetery, Louisville, Kentucky. His probabilities of dying of disease in the Army were significantly higher than being killed in action or dying of wounds like his fellow soldier Jerome L. Smith. Several diseases flourished among the soldiers who lived packed closely together without benefit of the germ theory of disease or effective medications. Soldiers contracted tuberculosis, measles, smallpox, dysentery, infections, and other serious health challenges as well as enduring hunger and fatigue, and battle weariness. Epidemics swept through both Union and Southern camps and communities. Historian Margaret Humphreys characterized the Civil War as “as the greatest health disaster that this country has ever experienced.”

Andrew M. Bell in *Mosquito Soldiers* stated that disease accounted for approximately 500,000 of the 750,000 thousand soldier deaths, which meant that they were more than twice as likely to be killed by deadly microorganisms than mortars or bullets.

The positive trends resulting from the Civil War disease statistics happened when both medical professionals and civilians learned new information about infectious diseases that helped revolutionize public health policies after the war. Many of the practices and policies used to fight modern epidemics stem from the experience and knowledge painfully learned from battling epidemics during the Civil War.



Albion Winegar Tourgee, lawyer, architect of Reconstruction policies, and diplomat enlisted in the 105th Infantry as a captain. He wrote about his experiences in the 105th Ohio Infantry in his book, *The Story of a Thousand*, published by S. McGerald & Son, in 1896. He described the regiment’s experiences in Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia and Sherman’s March to the Sea, concentrating on the lives and experiences of the enlisted soldiers. He examined the backgrounds of the men and how they served as citizens soldiers. He discussed the role of slavery as the cause of the war.

<https://archive.org/details/storyofthousand00tour/page/194/mode/2up?q=Crowell>

As president of the Ladies ‘Aid society during the Civil War, Sarah Phelps tirelessly collected and forwarded supplies to the soldiers in the field and hospitals. She was a charter member of Custer Corps, Woman’s Relief Corps, and her patriotism never lost its zest.



When Sarah Phelps died in 1913. one of the five grandchildren who survived her was Miss Iva Phelps who managed the Conneaut Creamery for many years.

Sarah Phelps is buried in East Conneaut Cemetery with her husband and granddaughter Iva Phelps.

Iva Phelps

Conneaut Area Historical Society

Membership Application



The dues period runs from January through December.

Single \$15.00 _____ Couple \$20.00 _____

Family \$25.00 _____ Patron \$50.00 _____

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Would you be willing to volunteer at the Museum or at the Octagon House during the summer months or help us with winter projects?

The Conneaut Area Historical Museum is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m., starting on Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day.

The David Cummins Octagon House is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day from noon until 5 p.m. We also plan on keeping the Octagon House open during the winter for special programs and tours. What day or time is best for you?

Thank you for your membership.

P.O. Box 563

Conneaut, Ohio 44030