

**PALMYRA KING'S DAUGHTERS FREE LIBRARY, INC.
TRANSCRIPTION OF GEORGE GOLDSMITH TAPE #31
OCTOBER 23, 1985**

(at the end of the interview with George is an interview with his sister Mabel)

Mr. George Goldsmith, October 23, 1985, about Goldsmith family, Goldsmith Road and surrounding area. Betty Troskosky and John Troskosky are interviewing Mr. George Goldsmith.

BETTY: Do you want to tell me what year that was that this farm was established? 1797?

GEORGE: 1792

BETTY: 1792

GEORGE: Thomas Goldsmith came up from Sugar Loaf Mountain, originally from Berkshire, Massachusetts. He bought three pieces of property, filed them in Canandaigua - - a farm down the road known as the Dalton farm, another 300 acres, and down at Port Gibson where Pete Goldsmith used to live. And we've got the one of the son Paul, who lived here. Thomas, the one who lived down in Port Gibson, and another 2 sons Isaac and Festus who lived down on the Dalton Farm.

BETTY: How big a farm is it?

GEORGE: This one here? 206 acres now.

BETTY: Did he have a bigger acreage?

GEORGE: Actually 300 acres. Thomas fell off a load of hay and died. When they settled the estate, he owed some money and they had to sell off part of the land here. When Paul died, this farm here was cut up in 3 different sections. His son David got this section then he left the other section to his grandson Elijah Goldsmith, and another son Thomas lives over on the Goldsmith Road where Seth Peters used to live in this southern section, and then David had two sons. One fell off a barn roof and died, and Grandfather George Goldsmith inherited the farm and he had just one son, William.

JOHN: You are named after your grandfather?

GEORGE: Yes. My grandfather had just one son and that was William Goldsmith who inherited it. He had a lot of trouble.

BETTY: Did you have other brothers and sisters besides Margaret?

GEORGE: I had another sister Mabel.

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BETTY: Is she living now?

GEORGE: Yes, she is living at Towpath Manor. Then there is a burial spot on the farm where Paul and Mollie, Mary and David, and Elijah and their son Festus.

BETTY: Where is that?

GEORGE: Right here on our farm.

BETTY: Here on your own land? Your own property?

GEORGE: Yes.

BETTY: Do you remember about the school down the hill, when that was built?

GEORGE: Nope

BETTY: You don't? Did you go to it?

GEORGE: Oh, yes, I did.

JOHN: Was the teacher you had from Palmyra?

GEORGE: Oh, they had several of them. Cora East was one of the supervising teachers. Did you know her?

BETTY: No

JOHN: Mrs. Katherine O'Brien, Patsy Hickey's sister, taught at a school out Maple Ave. She walked all the way out there, she said, all the way from what they called Limerick.

BETTY: On Division Street, there were so many Irish living there, they called it Limirick.

JOHN: She walked out all the way to ____?____.

BETTY: Beyond the Brown Road.

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JOHN: By herself. Then when the weather got bad, her father wouldn't let her do it because it got dark earlier at night. About the Goldsmith farm, you said they got the land originally. Did they get it from the Phelps-Gorham purchase? Who did they buy it from, those early pioneers?

GEORGE: They got it from Phelps.

JOHN: Where did the original family come from?

GEORGE: Down along the Hudson, Sugar Loaf Mountain, originally from Berkshire, Massachusetts.

JOHN: They must have been here early in the 1700's. Do you suppose they go back to England or Ireland?

GEORGE: I don't know. Probably the first Thomas had a daughter named Bridget, so they might have been Irish.

JOHN: There was a famous Irishman named Oliver Goldsmith.

GEORGE: I've heard of him. He was a writer.

BETTY: We went over there, in 1971 I guess it was, and we visited there where he lived. They had a caretaker there, a big burly man and he could recite every word that Oliver Goldsmith wrote.

JOHN: He wrote the "Deserted Village".

BETTY: You probably had that in school.

GEORGE: I imagine.

JOHN: Was there a Goldsmith that signed the Constitution?

GEORGE: I don't think so.

JOHN: I bet that they fought in the Revolutionary War.

GEORGE: They might have. Someone fought in the Civil War.

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BETTY: Some of the people who settled in Palmyra like General Swift and some of the men fought in the War of 1812. That was where he got killed.

JOHN: Why did the name Goldsmith get on the road? Was it because they owned the land?

GEORGE: I guess so.

JOHN: Who do you suppose named it, the surveyor or no?

GEORGE: I don't know.

BETTY: What kind of crops did you raise?

GEORGE: I'm retired.

BETTY: You don't raise any now?

GEORGE: I rent it out.

BETTY: What did you have?

GEORGE: Most everything - - muck crops, chickens, dairy, tomatoes, cabbage, the whole works.

JOHN: Did you build the barn or did your father build it?

GEORGE: It is over 100 years old.

JOHN: That is a long barn. Was it hand hewn rafters?

GEORGE: Part of it is. Some of the main beams are hand hewn.

JOHN: Do you see many deer out here?

GEORGE: Very few.

BETTY: (pointing to mounted deer on the wall) Did you get that one?

GEORGE: Oh, yes.

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JOHN: Do you know Ernie Coveney?

GEORGE: Yes

JOHN: We walked out to his pond. All the way from his house.

GEORGE: He wasn't skinny dipping was he?

ALL: No, No.

JOHN: It was under the Hydro line. Betty hadn't been feeling too well the day we went out. She said "I think you ought to go up and ask that farmer to give us a ride back on his tractor". We didn't, it was Ernie. There is a shorter way to get out there. We went out there by the creek, the long way.

BETTY: We followed the creek thinking we'd come upon the pond at any minute.

JOHN: Do you remember when they built the new canal? Where did you go to high school?

GEORGE: Palmyra

JOHN: How did you get back and forth?

GEORGE: Well, I drove a horse for quite a while and then the last couple of years I guess the buses were running. I rode down on the bus, and walked home at noon. I went half days.

BETTY: What year did you graduate?

GEORGE: I didn't graduate, I quit in 1927.

JOHN: I think we're older than you are.

GEORGE: No

BETTY: I graduated in 1933. If you'd finished, you'd have been in 1931.

GEORGE: I was a couple years ahead of you. I'm 77. I didn't see you at the annual reunion at Burgundy Inn.

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BETTY: I never have been able to go to a reunion. We always set up the Art Show pictures on Friday night. I've never been to a reunion. You went this year?

GEORGE: Yes. The first time they asked me. Someone asked me and others that didn't graduate. I saw others I hadn't seen in years.

BETTY: There were a lot who came into the Art Show that I hadn't seen in years too. How about these other roads that are probably named after other people. Do you remember any of them that would be important in politics or did anything special? The Jeffery Road. They started a good family.

GEORGE: No. Not that I can think of.

BETTY: The Brown sisters. They were lovely people. The Harris Road. All that I remember about that was their cider mill. We used to go out there to get cider. It was \$.25. Now it costs \$.99.

GEORGE: Now they're paying only \$.03 a pound for apples.

In the original information there is a hand written note as follows:

For your own information.

George, I saw in Thomas L. Cook's book "Palmyra and Vicinity" (Page 228) that the toll charges were 1 cent per mile on horseback, 1 cent per mile for single horse back and carriage, 2 cents a mile for double team and 4 cents per mile for a four horse team.

BETTY: That is not much.

GEORGE: 75 cents a hundred pounds for potatoes, about 45 cents a bushel.

BETTY: Are you closer here to Marion than you are to Palmyra?

GEORGE: About halfway. There used to be a toll gate here on the farm, on the north end of the farm.

JOHN: Did you have to pay to go on the road?

GEORGE: Yes. It was a plank road and they had a toll gate and you had to pay to get on it.

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JOHN: How much did you have to pay to get on it?

GEORGE: Gee, I don't know.

JOHN: Did they have it during your time?

GEORGE: My grandmother was the burgomaster for a number of years. Her mother and father lived here and ran the toll gate. When the Civil War was over, the soldiers were anxious to get home to Williamson so they wouldn't pay any toll and they smashed the windows, smashed the gate and that was the end of the toll gate.

BETTY: There used to be one on Canandaigua Street by my sister's house on the corner of Charlotte Avenue. Then when Foster Street was put in, people went down Foster Street instead of going through the toll gate. They moved it out farther, near the Miner Road, I think.

JOHN: Did the tollmaster take the money to pay for the road?

GEORGE: I don't know what they did use the money for. There used to be a plank road that went from Canandaigua to Pumpkin Hook.

BETTY: They probably did use the money for maintenance of the road.

JOHN: When they called it a "plank road", did they mill the planks?

GEORGE: Oh yes.

BETTY: Thomas Cook describes it in his book.

JOHN: Do you have to pay your taxes to Palmyra or to Marion.

GEORGE: Palmyra. We're on the dividing line of the districts.

BETTY: Down the road a ways when they improved Route 21, they went around in back of a red brick house. The old road is still there. Across the old road is a big old house. Do you know anything about that family.

GEORGE: Their name is Francis.

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OCTOBER 23, 1985**

BETTY: Yes, that's the name. I drove the woman into Rochester for cancer treatments. I wonder if you know how she is doing?

GEORGE: No

JOHN: Can you remember when you first got electricity?

GEORGE: Oh yes. I remember it was awfully late. It must have been along in the 1930's. It had to go crosslots and you had to get signed up from the main road. It went from Harris Road and the Lusk Road and then across the lots.

JOHN: That made a lot of changes, didn't it?

GEORGE: Oh, I just guess so.

JOHN: With everything - - milking, etc.

BETTY: Did you have cows when you were farming?

GEORGE: I never had them.

JOHN: Was this 21 the main road? Always has been the main road?

GEORGE: I imagine so.

JOHN: Was Marion as big a center as Palmyra? Or have they always been the same?

GEORGE: I think Palmyra has always been bigger.

BETTY: 21 went to Williamson. There was a famous man named Williamson.

GEORGE: The teams used to go past here going to Williamson.

BETTY: Williamson was named after a famous early settler. The road probably went from Palmyra to Williamson, or from Geneva to Williamson - - more probably from Canandaigua to Williamson.

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JOHN: I can remember years ago - - I don't know why I knew it, that little schoolhouse of yours had wheat stored in it, the one in front of your place, right here on the corner of the Goldsmith Road.

BETTY: Wheat or straw?

JOHN: Somebody had boarded it up, and put wheat in it. Am I wrong?

GEORGE: Potatoes and apples were stored in there.

JOHN: Oh, that must have been what it was.

GOERGE: The floor went down with it.

BETTY: Did you have any special parties when you were going there? Christmas parties?

GEORGE: Yes, they had parties on Christmas.

BETTY: What did they do?

GEORGE: I forget mostly.

JOHN: Did they dunk for apples on Halloween?

GEORGE: No, I don't think so.

JOHN: Were your sisters going there to school the same time as you were?

GEORGE: Margaret was a couple years ahead of me. Then she started high school before I did. I started in Palmyra in the sixth grade. Mabel taught down there for three years.

BETTY: At this little school? Did she?

JOHN: Did you drive a horse or drive a team to school?

GEORGE: A horse.

JOHN: Did you keep your horse where Ernie Coveney kept his? He kept his back of the Baptist Church.

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GEORGE: I kept mine back of the Methodist church.

BETTY: There was another fellow who kept his horse where Ernest Coveney kept his, but I can't remember his name - - oh, it was Hazen Coulter. It was quite a thing for all us kids to see you fellows riding horses to come to school.

JOHN: Did you have any adventures riding back and forth?

GEORGE: No

JOHN: Never say any bear out here did you?

GOERGE: No

BETTY: What did Margaret do? Did she ever work?

GEORGE: She taught school for thirty years.

BETTY: Where was that?

GEORGE: She started out in Oakfield, and she taught several of our country district schools here and she ended up in East Palmyra.

BETTY: Where did she go to school?

GEORGE: Geneseo.

JOHN: That is where our son went. He is a teacher too.

GEORGE: In Palmyra?

JOHN: No, down in the Catskills - - Stamford, NY. He teaches the mentally retarded. What do you call it?

BETTY: He is Director of Special Education in 20 BOCES schools. Well, we are getting onto our family, but this is supposed to be about George's family. Yet I think we have gone as far as we can. Thank you, George, for telling us about your pioneer family. It has been very interesting.

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LATER: As we left George's home, and weren't recording, we noticed a big square slab of concrete surrounded by flowers. George said that that was their well. It was dug by hand and stoned up. It is 60 feet deep. The one in the barn is 100 feet deep. Setting on the well cover were several rocks, maybe five inches in diameter. They were covered with fossils, and George said they had been found right there on the farm. He also told us he had been experimenting with chestnut trees, a comeback from blight years ago. He also had hazel nuts and English walnuts, all of which he showed us. He said that the squirrels stole the English walnuts and hid them in the wheat. When he gathered the wheat, he also got ½ bushel of walnuts. He said the farm went from the Marion Road to the Schilling Road, and also on the west side of the Marion Road. I asked what his sister Mabel did after she taught at their little country school. He said she went to Darrow School of Business and then worked in the office of the University of Rochester.

So all their family have led good useful lives. We thanked George again and went home by way of the Goldsmith Road over to the Schilling Road as he had described the farm that had been in the family since 1792.