

Town of Ossian Historical Society Newsletter

25th Edition

September 2017

PIONEER PAGE:

ZAIDA WITHERALL PRICE

By Cathy Moulton Saunders

(See map at end of this newsletter)

Zaida was born in Vermont in 1810 and moved here with her family, the Witheralls, in 1825. Ossian was still in its infancy then, a hard place to carve out a living, still a remote area, but with a lot of potential. She had four brothers Seymour, Allen, Dennis and Charles. Her parents were Joseph and Mary Fuller Witherall. She married James Thorne Price on July 16, 1828 and throughout the next 19 years, they had eight (8) children, Lemual (1829-1897), Joseph (1831-1861), James Jr., Samuel, Melissa (1837-1866), William (1840-1913), David (1844-1864), and Hugh (1874-1924).

According to the 1856 map, James and Zaida owned and operated a 75 acre farm on the old Phillips Rd., now abandoned, but the roadway ran from the top part of Shay Rd., down to the end of Linzy Rd., (some foundations are still there). Their neighbors then were the Hamptons and the Blanchards.

The hardships were many for Zaida, her three sons James Jr., David and William were drafted in the Civil War. In 1864 David died of his wounds and was buried in Ossian. Her only daughter Melissa married John Wilkins and died in childbirth in 1866, her infant son, Thayer, lived with the Prices until Zaida's death. Her husband died in 1875 and her two brothers Allen and Dennis moved in with her to help run the farm, she also had James Jr. and Samuel home, both sons now men were not in good health.

James Price's will was a typical will of those times. Everything was left to Zaida to run, however, upon her death, he instructed that the 75-acre farm and their personal property be sold and distributed "into seven shares of like amounts, though for my son Samuel, I give and bequeath two shares, to my grandson Thayer, son of my deceased daughter, one share. To each of my children being Lemual, James, William and Hugh Price one share each."

An explanation of her life can be realized by reading her obituary, from the Canaseraga Times:

"On Wednesday at the Ossian Presbyterian Church funeral services of Mrs. Zaida Price were held; Rev. G.W. Gibson reading the lesson and hymns, and Rev. J.C. Rooney preaching the sermon. Singing by Lewis Lemen and the Hamptons. Mrs. Price may also be called one of the pioneers of Ossian and was a woman who endured many hardships, as her husband was insane for some time before his death in 1875, and one son has been a care to her from his youth, as his mind and health were destroyed by fits and a second son has for the past two years been at times out of his mind and is now in very poor health. One week before her death she returned from Rochester from a visit and was immediately taken ill. One of her grandchildren of Mr. Hugh Price is not expected to live." (On a personal note, I thought this obituary was very strange.)

After Zaida's death Samuel and James Price Jr. were on the Poorhouse list. First listed in Sparta, then onto Geneseo and Mt. Morris. It was noted on both inmate summaries, that they were "weak minded,

unable to read or write”. Prognosis did not look good for their future. It was also noted that they had no family history and no family help. James died in 1900 and I do not know Samuel’s date of death. This did not end the Prices in Ossian, the later maps showed many Price families in the same area, as owning sawmills and logging operations.

Source: Ancestry.com
Find a Grave

Canaseraga Times

August 1, 1879

The Belle of Poag’s Hole

Plenty of Material for a Modern Society
Drama

(The following in regard to the wedding at the Bennett House in this village on the 16th of July last, we clip from the Hornell Times of last week. – Ep.)

Poag’s Hole is in the town of Ossian, and the town of Ossian is in Livingston County. The neighboring town of Sparta is also in Livingston County. One of the belles in the upper circles of society in Poag’s Hole is or was, Miss Mary Parsons. Now, Mary was an ambitious lass, and loved alas! above her station. Rejecting the tender and delicate advances of the bucolic youths who knew the forests and peel bark for a livelihood in and around Poag’s Hole, she allowed the tendrils of her heart to run over town line and to entwine themselves about the heart of Chauncey Patterson, a Spartan youth – the son of a farmer residing in the town of Sparta. The Spartan youth rather enjoyed the fact of those encircling tendrils. In short he returned the love of the belle of Poag’s Hole.

Here we have the locus and all the characters necessary for a thrilling modern domestic drama. If more material be wanting, we have at command an enraged

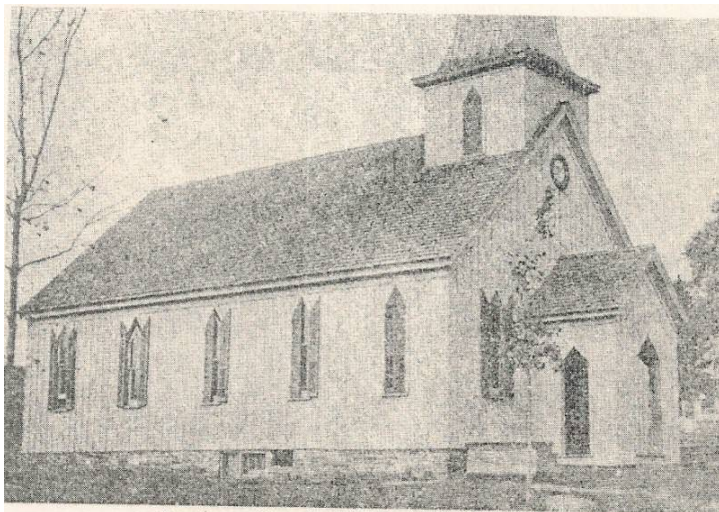
father in the shadowy background and in the foreground as many jealous lovers as may at any time be needed. All the stage effects necessary can easily be produced by an old shot gun, or horse pistol. We also furnished to the amateur dramatist a suggestion for the grand finale, which can also be brought upon the stage with a great deal of effect for a very little expense. The suggestion is embodied in the following marriage notice which we copy verbatim from the Canaseraga Times:

“Patterson-Parsons – In the parlors of the Bennett House, in the village of Canaseraga, town of Burns, county of Allegany, state of New York, and United States of America, on the evening of Wednesday, July 16th 1879, at 9 o’clock, 30 minutes and a few seconds, by Mr. L. H. Bennett, Esq., a justice of the peace, who does such business and resides in the above named place, Mr. Chauncey Patterson, of Sparta and Miss Mary Parsons, of Poag’s Hole, Ossian.”

Who will act upon the suggestion? Is there an ambitious amateur dramatist among us? It is hardly necessary to remark “there’s millions in it.”

Ossian Summer Recreation Program

The last week of July was a lot of fun for our youth at the Ossian Community Center. The Ossian Historical Society created the fun and was sponsored by the Town of Ossian. We started out by learning to knit, painted friendship rocks, ceramics, candle making, hens & chicken planting in a shoe, T-shirt painting, fairy houses made, Bocce ball taught and other outdoor recreation. A lady from Liv. Co. showed us milk painting. We ended the week long event with a pizza party. You will not want to miss it for the youth next year and plans for the last full week of July is underway.



Ossian Presbyterian Church, c. 1900

The Presbyterian Church of Ossian

By Rhea Walker, Historian

While searching for information in The Canaseraga Times I found the following article that was in the August 1, 1879 issue in the column "Ossian News".

"Berries, red raspberries, black raspberries and huckleberries, are on every side, with the blackberries already beginning to ripen. Next Thursday evening, August 7, an ice cream and berry festival will be held at Hon. I. Hampton's, the proceeds to be devoted to the furnishing of the Presbyterian church."

The church had been rebuilt and enlarged around that time and the following is what was found in two newspapers, The Canaseraga Times and The Dansville Express about the church renovation.

On Tuesday evening, 9/3/1878, a meeting was held at the Presbyterian church in Ossian to take measures in regard to either repairing the old church or building a new one. David McCurdy, Matthew Rolison, Corydon Hyde, Thomas Mitchell and Robert Scott were appointed to a committee to estimate the cost of building a new church.

The committee will meet at the church after an adjournment of two weeks on Tuesday evening next to make their report.

The ladies of the Presbyterian society in Ossian will hold a peach festival at the residence of Mr. Corydon Hyde on September 13, 1878. There will probably be ice cream, cake and other delicacies in abundance, and a general good time will be enjoyed. All are cordially invited.

One week later, on September 19, 1878 The Dansville Express reported that the peach festival was held and that was a success socially and financially.

On October 10, 1878 the paper reported that the Presbyterian society of Ossian has raised \$1200 to use to repair their church and on October 24, 1878 it was reported that the church is undergoing extensive repairs.

On Wednesday, January 8, 1879, an oyster supper and social was planned to be held at the residence of Mr. Thomas Mitchell of Ossian by the ladies of the Presbyterian society, for the benefit of the new church edifices. An invitation to attend was extended to Dansville friends and those of other towns.

It was reported in the paper on January 16, 1879 that a new heater has been put in the Presbyterian church at Ossian, and that the repairs have progressed that one coat of plaster has been put on. Hartly and Sauerbier are doing the work.

On January 30, 1879, it was announced that the repairs on the Presbyterian church in Ossian will be completed in about three weeks.

Apparently the work was not finished as soon as expected because on May 8, 1879 the newspaper stated that the new Presbyterian church is nearly completed and its dedication will take place soon. On May 16, 1879 it was said that the grading, moving the sheds and building new ones and the furnishing of the church itself will take some time yet, so the dedication is still in the future. There have already been four funerals held there, the last one being that of Martha Wyman, whose family reside in this town. The sad tragedy played in your village was completed when her remains were laid in the grave in the little cemetery by the church. Her motherless little boy was there, and looking at his innocent face it was wondered if his whole life would be as shaded as had been his early days. The young woman was shot by Alonzo Luce and she died two weeks later. The funeral was held at Ossian on Wednesday, May 5th and was presided over by Rev. G. W. Gibson.

In the June 13, 1879 edition of the Canaseraga Times it was written that Thursday of this week the men of the Presbyterian church of Ossian were to meet and grade the ground as the dedication of the church was to be soon.

Both papers announced on June 12 and June 13, 1879 that the dedication of the Presbyterian Church will take place at two o'clock pm Thursday, June 26, 1879. Rev. Dr. Parsons of Mt. Morris will preach the dedication sermon. It is expected that Revs. Ward and Gracey of the village will be present. Arrangements have been made to have teams at the noon trains on that day to carry up any who may come in for the purpose of attending, and also any of our citizens who may wish to go. A general

invitation is extended to all who desire to be present.

This was started with the announcement about a lawn party and below is the story about the party and apparently the happy and successful end of the renovation of the church.

On Thursday, August 7, 1879 there was a lawn party at Hon. Isaac Hampton's residence.

The ladies of the Presbyterian church in Ossian gave the lawn party and notwithstanding that the night was dark and unpleasantly cool the attendance was large and the result gratifying. Mr. Hampton very kindly prepared the lawn by lighting it with Chinese lanterns and placing seats and tables in suitable spots for the accommodation of those who wished to remain outside while the house was thrown open to those who preferred the warmth and light it afforded rather than the darkness and dampness. He also generously furnished a large share of the refreshments, which consisted of blackberries, raspberries and huckleberries with the necessary accompaniments to give them relish, biscuits, cake, ice cream and lemonade, a great deal of which was disposed of by the guests and the sale of which amounted to some fifteen dollars. Afterwards-in fact until a late hour-the time was spent in visiting by the older ones, games by the younger ones and listening to some excellent vocal music furnished by Misses Carrie and Matie and Mr. James I. Hampton. This party was given for the purposes of raising funds towards paying for cushions for the new church recently dedicated and the ladies are to be congratulated on the success that attended their first effort. The officers of the ladies

society are Mrs. J. L. Box, President, Mrs. Corydon Hyde, Secretary, Mrs. Freeman Covert, treasurer.

Excerpts from the diary of Ruth Linzy

Ruth was born in 1925 and lived in Ossian on McNinch Road and later married Armonde Walker.

Supplied by Nancy Walker Smith

January 5, 1937

Oscar Shay's came up. Grandma still sick. Warm

February 13, 1937

Warm. Drew hay. Walter Moore's have a son 8 lbs. name Paul Agustus.

February 19, 1937

Margaret got up at 9:15. Frances stopped. Went to church. Kate came up. Going to get finger wave. Went to show at Wayland Shirley Temple in "Stowaway". Very good.

September 1, 1940

Glen and I went to get the deer which he shot. 10:30 Fell off horse.

September 2, 1940

Cleaned school house.

November 5, 1940

Waited on table at chicken pie supper at Grange.

January 10, 1941

There was a dance down here at Grange but didn't go. Went to Byersville on tractor.

January 26, 1941

Marjorie, Warren, Arm and I went riding down hill.

April 1, 1941

Arm left for the army. I went to school.

April 4, 1941

Joined the Grange. Took 1st & 2nd degree. Marjorie Fenton, Hugh Weidman & I.

June 6, 1941

Took 3rd & 4th Degree. Warren brought me home.

Methodist Episcopal Church Ossian

Dansville Express

November 7, 1878

Mrs. Burdict, of Canaseraga gave select readings at the M. E. Church in Ossian last Thursday evening.

Dansville Express

January 30, 1879

A donation given at the residence of Mr. Fremont Hampton last week, for the benefit of Rev. Mr. Gibson, pastor of the M. E. Church of that place, netted \$67.

Canaseraga Times

August 1, 1879

On Friday evening last Rev. I. K. Liber of Perry (an Ossian boy) preached in the M. E. Church. He and his wife are visiting his parents here.

October 3, 1879

The Methodist are building horse shed at their church; Rev. G. W. Gibson being the moving spirit in the enterprise, and working day after day with his own hands. It is a much needed improvement, but would not have been done had it not been for the pastor. He will thus have the people here, something by which to remember him gratefully, year after year, when the wintry winds do blow.



Apple Cider Sale and Bake Sale with lots of cookies will be Saturday, October 28th from 9 to Noon at the Ossian Town Hall. The Variety Booth will also be set up.

