

Historian's Report, March 2024

Queries: The sale of Wells College properties has elicited many queries, especially in regard to Wavebank, Richmond House, and the College Farm. Other queries included one on Amos and Tamar Wood, residents of Court St. from the 1840s-1880s; both from England.

Work continues in collaboration with Peter McConnell and including Larry Bell and recently Phyllis Stanton, on the African-American Thomas and Susan Shorter family, freedom seekers from Maryland who came to this area probably through connection with Emily Howland's work with "contrabands" in Washington DC during the Civil War. Thomas Jr., who attended Cornell (one of the first African-Americans to do so), moved to Cleveland OH for work as a court stenographer and was associated with Charles Chesnutt, noted African-American author. (Thomas Shorter Jr was Ray Cromwell's uncle.)

A recent query on men of the 111th Infantry (Civil War), principally composed of men from Ledyard, is assisting a researcher who is studying those who enlisted either underage or overage.

Work for Committees: Providing historic information from text, maps, and census data in response to requests from CPP to assist in its mandated regular survey of Aurora for features worthy of Local Landmark designation. Several studies listed under "Queries" help to illuminate the Cherry Ave. and Court St. neighborhoods.

Grant: I assisted the AHS in writing a Letter of Intent for a Preservation Opportunity Fund Grant from the Preservation League of New York.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Schwab, Ph.D.
Historian, Village of Aurora