March 19, 2014

Dear Marie-Claire,

What a nice long letter (email) from you, with that delightful photograph. It came the day I had my first — and quite painful — eye procedure, so I really couldn't follow up for a while. By now you will have turned in the grant application which you and Pierre have worked so hard on. Do let me know the results. I was glad to help in a small way. Another family connection is that Mary Miller Bullock (Carl's mother), and her sister Sarah Miller, both taught at the Center School.

I had never seen a picture of children by the schoolhouse before. Sometime it would be wonderful to look at some of the albums Peter Kraniak showed you! The "nice young man in the back row" is definitely NOT Carl Bullock. Hair and brows too dark, shape of face not right. Wish I could see the teachers' clothes more clearly, because that can be a good way to date a picture. My guess is the late 1890's, rather than 1880. Joan Severa's 1995 book, Dressed for the Photographer, was indispensable to me while working on my book. Perhaps there's a copy at the Library?

I spoke with our son Nathaniel, who said it's fine with him to put a copy of his paper on line. He is a fifth generation descendant of Barnet Bullock as well as a fifth generation descendant of George Miller. This research project (not a thesis) was done to complete the Masters of Architecture program and certificate in Historic Preservation at the University of Virginia.

Now to your final question, about the Carbone house. I don't have much information, and perhaps none of it is relevant, but I will include it as a series of notes on a separate sheet of paper. Something clicked when you mentioned the "cottage built by Barnet Bullock on NE Fitzwilliam Rd", so (when my eye permitted) I went to the file containing the hundreds of family letters and did a quick look-through. The value of old letters is, in my mind, enormous. If any Royalston residents connected with early families have some letters, they should be persuaded to read them! I have been able to correct Bartlett's Reflexions in many places...

The last time I saw the house you spoke of (# 15NE on Bartlett's little map) was around 2002, and it was in poor shape. I never knew it as the Carbone house; from 1922 it was known as the Lincoln J. Holden place. I recall one summer, probably in the 1940's, Mr. Holden's barn burned down. (The barn may have been across the street from the house ?? Not sure - someone in Town would remember.)

I wonder just when the earliest house was built there? The Jonathan Blake map of 1831 shows a building on that site, owned by Seth Holman. At some point Jonas Pierce purchased it. And then, c. 1857, Barnet Bullock bought the property. Bartlett (on p. 246) says: "he pulled down the somewhat dilapidated old 2-story house and replaced it with the near cottage, which was occupied for several years by Newell Knight, who assisted in the work on the farm (i.e., Barnet's)..."

The following quotations are all taken from letters written by family members to Calvin Bullock in Toledo, between 1857 and 1861.

Feb. 15, 1857 - Lucy to Calvin
"The Pierce house is torn down"

Aug. 16, 1857 - Barnet to Calvin
"I should like to sell all of my real estate except for the Pierce farm that I want to keep... It is now my intention to put up a house on the place and have my hired help live there."

In 1858 - Barnet, as co-executor of Rufus Bullock's estate, was apparently too busy to make progress on the Pierce place.

Aug. ?, 1859 - Lucy to Calvin
"The cottage is to be put on the Pierce Farm very soon - cellar ready."

Sept. 10, 1859 - Newton to Calvin
"Now that Father has commenced on the old (Pierce) Buildings and traps..."

Sept. 19, 1859 - Lucy to Calvin
"The Pierce House is being fixed for you I suppose - Come & take possession!" (Lucy always wanted Calvin to return to Royalston)

Oct. 29, 1859 – Newton to Calvin

"Father had commenced putting up chimneys on Hill Farm House" (i.e., the Pierce house)

Dec. 4, 1859 – Barnet to Calvin

a typical Barnet sentence, in appalling handwriting!

"The taking down & rebuilding of the Farm house was a more perplexing and expensive job than I anticipated and more perplexing than building new for when a man is going to build new he gets a list of what's wanted & necessary made out & then invoices & gets all the materials ready but in taking down a house to put up again it can't be told what part will be imperfect & torn up till taken down – then there will be so much wanted which has not been provided or expected that it causes extra expense & trouble to supply the defective & torn up parts. I have the house up boarded & clapboard shingled & chimneys up & not much done inside..."

July 15, 1861 – Newton to Calvin

"I had rather supposed that fixing up old buildings was got through with last season – but not so quite. The farm barn has been remodeled in part and cellar enlarged..."

Oct. 13, 1861 – Fred to Calvin

"Mr. Knight who lives on our farm is a great sportsman..."
(So Barnet's helper, Newell Knight, did occupy the place for some time)