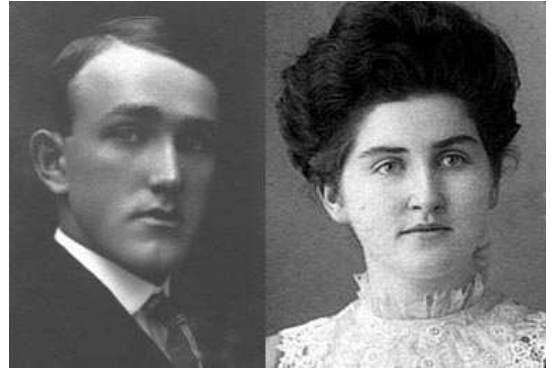


The Homer Bullocks and the Terrible Teens

by Paul D. Bullock

Homer Bullock and Mary Florence Rector were married on September 6, 1911 as per this item in the Penn Yan Democrat: “The marriage of Miss Mary Rector, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Rector, and Homer Bullock, of Crosby, will occur at 4 o'clock this afternoon at the home of the bride's parents in Milo. Rev. Dr. Bethel, pastor of the Second Milo Baptist church, will officiate. The house will be decorated with goldenrod and ferns for the occasion. The bride will wear a gown of ivory colored messaline satin and will carry a bouquet of cream carnations. She will be attended by her sister, Miss Helen Rector, as honor maid, and Joseph Crosby, of Crosby, N. Y., will act as groomsman. The maid of honor will wear a white embroidery gown and will carry white flowers. Miss Helen Bullock will play the wedding march. Following the wedding ceremony a reception will be held to which 150 guests have been bidden. Later Mr. Bullock will leave with his bride for Crosby, where they will reside.”



Homer and Mary in about 1910

They first met, sometime in 1908, when Homer was operating a steam powered portable saw mill on a wood lot at the farm owned by Mary's father S. M. Rector. The Guile and Windnagle basket making company had hired Herman Bullock, Homer's father, to cut and remove the timber. This was about the time Mary graduated from Penn Yan Academy. In the summer of 1908, Mary took a teacher training course and received a Professional Certificate on August 1, 1908. She then got the job of teaching at the Jerusalem #20 one room school in Bluff Point for \$10 per month for the school year 1908 – 1909. She then taught at the Milo #3 school in Milo for the school year 1909 – 1910. We don't know for sure if she taught another year at Milo or some other school.



Mary and her students at the Milo #3 school in 1909 or 1910



Homer on the Isle of Pines in 1908 or 1909

Meanwhile, Herman and Drusilla Bullock, Homer's parents, sold their house and 18 acres of land in Crosby and bought property more than 1500 miles away in the Isle of Pines, Cuba. Homer took at least two trips to the Isle; one from late 1908 through May 1909 and another from late 1909 through May 1910. In the summers back in the

states, he probably worked with his older brother Joseph in keeping the saw mill business going and he was probably doing that when he got married. The news article about the wedding says that Homer and Mary would reside in Crosby. Herman and Drusilla had sold their property to another older son, William; the newlyweds probably lived at the Bullock homestead for a time courtesy of William.

Homer and Mary's firstborn, Herman Stephen Bullock, was born on December 11, 1913.

Just when Homer became a farmer is not known. What we do know is that a newspaper item appeared in the Penn Yan Democrat on April 5, 1914, "On April 1st, Mr. and Mrs. Homer Bullock moved to the Baker farm." And then in March of 1915 another item from the Second Milo correspondent, "Mr. and Mrs. Homer Bullock have moved from the Baker farm to the Purdy farm, formerly owned by Merton Owen." Another in July 1915 from Second Milo, "Miss Elizabeth Bullock, of Crosby was the over Sunday guest of Mr. and Mrs. Homer Bullock."

Also in the 1915 New York State census taken on June 1, 1915 Homer is listed as "farming" in Milo, Yates County, NY. The farm Homer was working was not too far from Mary's father's farm, confirmed by the fact that S. M. Rector was the Census Enumerator for both himself and Homer. The Census lists for the Bullock residence: Homer age 27, farming; Mary F. age 25, housework; Herman S. age 1, no occ. and Christian Peterson age 28, laborer farm.



Herman Stephen Bullock in about 1917

Homer and Mary's second son, Philip Gerald Bullock was born on January 17, 1916. Herman was two at the time. Phil says he was born while the family was living on the Lown farm.



Tom Rector with his nephew Philip Gerald Bullock in about 1919

This news item appeared in Penn Yan Democrat on February 18, 1916, "Homer Bullock and Thomas Rector attended Farmers' Week at Ithaca." Thomas was Mary's brother who was working his father's farm with his brother Arthur not far from the Bullocks. A couple of sentences from an article that appeared in the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle on July 11, 1917 sheds some light on what a farmer in Second Milo was growing in that time. "Thomas Rector an active Milo farmer says that in his section there promises to be a bumper crop of oats; rye is looking fine; wheat 100 per cent or better; potatoes, growing splendidly; barley, not looking well. In his opinion, it is too early to tell about beans; corn is not well advanced: hay, an average

crop; alfalfa, big; pasture good; apples, a fair, ordinary crop, and grapes, two thirds of a crop.”

An item appeared in the Democrat on October 27, 1916, “Mr. and Mrs. Homer Bullock very pleasantly entertained 25 guests at their home last Saturday evening in honor of their sister, Miss Helen Bullock.”

On July 20, 1917, the first 1500 names of young men were drawn from Yates County to serve in the army. “Homer Bullock, Penn Yan, R. F. D.” was drawn in the first 100. He did apply for a farming exemption and received it.

In the Corning Evening Leader on Friday, December 21, 1917 the following appeared, “Creditor's Meeting - Homer Bullock, of Milo, has just been adjudicated a bankrupt, and the first meeting of his creditors will be held on December 29, at the office of Referee Charles A. Hawley, in Seneca Falls at 10 A. M.” It was news to me when I came across this in my research. It had never been talked about in the family – maybe it was an embarrassing event and kept secret or maybe it just wasn't a big deal. My only knowledge of this event is from the newspapers so I'll stick to those.

A notice in The Penn Yan Chronicle dated Friday, January 25, 1918:

“Notice of Sale Under Chattel Mortgage.

By virtue of a chattel mortgage executed by Homer Bullock to James M. Brown, Jr., dated the 6th day of February, 1917, and which was duly filed in office of the Clerk of the County of Yates, New York, I will expose for sale at public auction at McConnell's Hitch Barn, Maiden Lane, in said village of Penn Yan, Yates County, New York, on the 26th day of January, 1918, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of that day, the following goods and chattels, to wit: 1 Bay mare about 8 years old, 1 Bay horse about 7 years old, 1 Brown horse about 16 years old, 1 Bay horse about 16 years old.

Dated the 10th day of January, 1918.

J. W. ALMY, Mortgagee's Agent”

Then in the Penn Yan Democrat dated, Friday, April 12, 1918:

“District Court of the United States,

Western District of New York.

In the matter of Homer Bullock, Bankrupt:

Pursuant to an order of Charles A. Hawley, referee in bankruptcy, the undersigned will, on the 20th day of April, 1918, at 10 a. m., at the Central House barn in the village of Penn Yan, N. Y., sell at public auction the following described property belonging to the estate of said bankrupt, towit: One manure spreader, one binder, one Ontario disk drill, one Pekin lumber wagon, double box and springs, one 2-horse cultivator, one cutter, one mowing machine, one McCormick hayrake, one Syracuse plow, one gangplow, one cultivator, one disk harrow, one new spring-tooth harrow one roller, one hay rigging, one top buggy; one grindstone, one harrow, one feedbox, 12 potato crates, one manure fork, one Scoop, one shovel, 2 hay forks, one scythe and snath, one bag truck, 2 neck yokes, one light single harness, one axe,

one 1-horse cultivator. Also a 1/2 interest in 20 acres of rye put in on shares on the farm of James M. Lown.

Terms cash.

Dated the 10th day of April, 1918.

MICHAEL BUCKLEY,
Trustee in Bankruptcy”

Then in the Penn Yan Democrat, January 10, 1919:

“CREDITOR'S MEETING

A final meeting of the creditors of Homer Bullock, bankrupt, of Milo will be held before Referee Charles A. Hawley, in Seneca Falls, on January 18, 1919, at 10 a. m. The report of the trustee shows \$562.16 on hand for distribution.”

In the midst of the bankruptcy problem, Homer and Mary’s firstborn passed away on March 11, 1918. An item in the Geneva Daily Times on Friday, March 15, 1918 read: “Herman, the four-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Homer Bullock of Milo, died Tuesday, and the funeral was held this afternoon from the home. He leaves, besides his parents, one brother, Philip.” Phil’s memoirs says: “My brother, Herman Stephen Bullock, (Homer's #1) was born 11 DEC 1913. I presume he was born at the Lown place. At the age of four Herman died during a convulsion. He had a thermometer in his mouth which, of course, broke during the seizure. I was never told the actual cause of his death but I suspect it was the broken thermometer. Herman is buried at Second Milo in the S. M. Rector plot under a small marker labeled ‘Stephen’.” Herman wasn’t born on the Lown farm. He was born before the family moved to the Purdy place and even before they moved to the Baker place. He may have been born in Crosby before Homer started farming. Stephen did die at the Lown place.



The Lown house in Second Milo; taken in 1990 by Phil Bullock. Phil was born here in 1916. He says that this house was not as large or impressive at that time.

In less than four months after the announcement of Homer’s bankruptcy, Homer had a new job. An item in the Penn Yan Democrat on Friday, April 5, 1918 reads: “Mrs. Homer Bullock and son have gone to Waterloo where Mr. Bullock has a position on a trolley line.” Homer took a job as conductor on “The Geneva, Seneca Falls, and Auburn Railroad” a trolley that ran between Seneca Falls and Geneva via Waterloo. The line never did get through to Auburn due to the marshy ground at the foot of Cayuga Lake. The Bullocks lived in Waterloo since it was about halfway between the ends of the line. They

lived on the north side of the Geneva road (now Routes 5 & 20) just west of downtown Waterloo. The place was rented from Herman Brehm who lived across the road.

After about a year and a half as conductor Homer received a request from his older brother Edgar to come to the Isle of Pines and help him manage a large pineapple crate factory there. Edgar had gone there because his parents were there and while there he and his father, Herman, got involved in crate and basket making. In October of 1919, Homer, Mary and Philip departed from New York City on the steamship S. S. Esperanza for Havana, Cuba. An item in the Penn Yan Democrat dated Friday, October 17, 1919 from the Second Milo correspondent read: “Mrs. Homer Bullock and son, of Waterloo, and Mrs. Howard Swarhout and two sons, of Buffalo, are visiting their parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. M. Rector. Mr. and Mrs. Bullock expect to spend the winter at the Isle of Pines.” They not only spent the winter but the next four years also.



The photos on the 1919 Bullock passport