

# The Crackerbarrel



## Elgin History Museum News November 2018

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### President's Report

*Bill Briska, President*



"Have you been by the Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House lately? The Museum's efforts to save this historic and architecturally significant building, at 302 West Chicago Street, are visible from the street. Work for the 2018 construction season is wrapping up and another milestone reached: the building will be weather tight with a new roof, new siding on the

wooden addition, and new windows. A significant portion of the stone walls have been tuckpointed.

Inside, the interior was completely gutted and the floor systems reframed using as much original materials as practical. The interior walls for the building's new floor plan have been framed and the plumbing roughed in.

In 2016 and 2017, the north wall and portions of the east wall were dismantled in order to install a proper foundation where none previously existed. The walls were rebuilt using the cobblestone technique to mimic the original construction. Many other smaller but essential tasks were also completed.

What's next? Insulation, electric, heating and air conditioning, drywall, floors and trim, followed by rebuilding the parking lot, adding the porches, handicap accessibility, and landscaping. In other words, there is still a way to go and it may take a few more years to get there.

When the Museum began this project, it was planned as a multi-year effort, with work proceeding only as funds were raised. This approach was chosen to avoid taking on debt or diverting resources from normal operations at the Museum. It is fiscally sound strategy.

Fundraising for the next phase of construction begins now. #ILGive, part of the nationwide Day of Giving, is set for Tuesday, November 27. The Museum will again participate, and the first \$4000 in donations will be

matched by the Grand Victoria Foundation. This year, all gifts to the Museum during ILGive will go toward the Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House, unless otherwise designated. Please help the Museum take the next step forward on this project. Help us realize the larger vision to "Save the Cobblestone—Build the Neighborhood." Thank you to all who donate in support of this major project.

We will be having a Year of Progress celebration at the Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House on Nov. 3 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. to share our progress with the community. Please join us this Saturday to see the progress we've made on this ambitious project that will benefit the Southwest neighborhood as well as the Museum.

Lastly, the Museum wishes to extend sincere thanks to Laura and Steve Stroud, who performed countless hours of work co-chairing the Cemetery Walk planning efforts for the past 11 years. Through their tireless efforts, the Walk has provided a reliable source of Museum funding. More importantly, the Cemetery Walk provides a valuable educational and entertainment resource for Elgin and the surrounding communities.

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### Thank You Donors

#### Board Fundraiser

- Dana Vierck
- Edith Scarbrough

#### Speaker Honoraria

- Linda Rock
- Christen Sundquist
- Jerry Turnquist

## The Crackerbarrel

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360 Park Street, Elgin, IL 60120  
Phone 847-742-4248  
e-mail: [museum@elginhistory.org](mailto:museum@elginhistory.org)




**President: William Briska**  
**Vice President: Al Walters**  
**Secretary: Laura Stroud**  
**Corr. Secretary: Ricky Harris**  
**Treasurer: George Rowe**



Editor: Rebecca Marco

The Crackerbarrel welcomes reader contributions.  
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 Visit our website [Elginhistory.org](http://Elginhistory.org)

Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the  
Society's Board of Directors.

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## 2018 Benefit Tickets

*Rebecca Marco, Editor*

It is time once again to get your tickets for the annual Benefit and Silent Auction, to be held at the Grand Victoria Casino on November 17th. Tickets are available from the Museum website or by purchasing at the Museum. Tickets are \$55.00 for non-members and \$45.00 for members. The entertainment will be provided by folksinger Bucky Halker, who performed the songs of Woody Guthrie at a previous benefit. Bucky Halker began to examine the folk music history of Illinois and soon discovered that the Land of Lincoln may well have the most diverse and vibrant musical traditions of any state in the nation. He will present his brand of Folksongs of Illinois, a CD series that includes five volumes. Bucky's music is available from his website [www.buckyhalker.com](http://www.buckyhalker.com).

The silent auction gift baskets promise to be better than ever, so purchase your tickets soon, We know you will have a good time.



*Bucky Halker, Folksinger*

## 2018 Program Schedule

*David Nelson, Program Chair*

Events are held at the Museum unless otherwise noted.  
Check website for the latest details. and tickets.

[elginhistory.org/events.html](http://elginhistory.org/events.html)

**Saturday, November 3, 3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.**

### **Cobblestone Year of Progress**

Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House, corner of Chicago St. and Crystal St, Elgin. Join us to see the progress made in 2018 to rehabilitate the house.

See article on Page 1.

**Saturday, November 17, 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.**

### **Museum Benefit and Silent Auction**

Grand Victoria Casino, Elgin

See article on Page 1.

Tickets available from [elginhistory.org](http://elginhistory.org)

Bucky Halker: Folksongs of Illinois

**Saturday, December 8, 1:00 P.M.**

### **Annual Holiday Tea at the Museum**

The story of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. Nancy Koutis will tell us how the story developed along with the song.

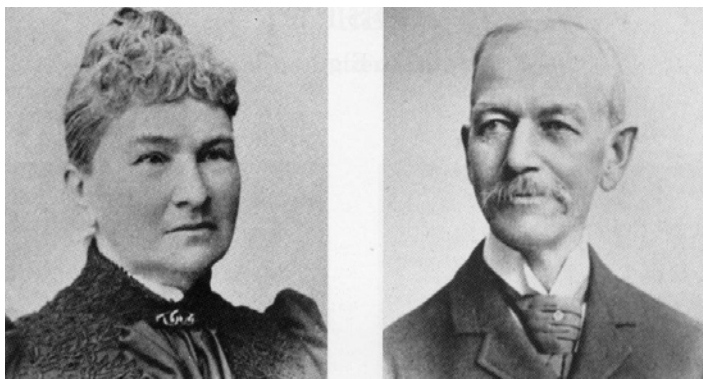
## Welcome New Members

- Larry Brown
- Jeff Childs
- Charles Crouse
- Andy and Julie Hall
- Jerrie and Karry Johnson
- Carlie Koonce
- Paul and Susan Kuester
- Cherie and Glen Murphy
- Jean and Matt O'Connor
- Teri and Bill Rosenberg
- Samantha Segura
- Valerie Swan
- Teryl Teeter
- Larry Walsh

# Mary Edwards Carpenter Lord – Part 2

by Marge Rowe

Mary's obituary calls her a "woman of culture...led a life full of charitable and philanthropic purposes and ever ready [to] offer assistance in time of need, not a few will remember this good woman with love." Mary's funeral was held on May 1 from her home and the First Congregational church. The large attendance included family, friends, the members of the Women's Club, directors of the Old People's Home and the student body of the Elgin Academy. The YMCA closed for the day. Flags in Lords Park were flown at half-staff.



*Mary and George Lord, who donated the land for Lords Park to the city of Elgin in 1892*

Dr. Charles L. Morgan, Dr. J.T. Ladd of Elgin, President Eaton of Beloit College and Rev. Brandt, of Carpentersville, conducted the services. Active pallbearers were J.M. Blackburn, L.N. Seaman, Dr. E.A. McCornack, Prof. G. N. Sleight, F. B. Perkins and A.C. Hawkins. The honorary pallbearers were D. C. Cook, Col J. S. Wilcox, John McNeil, William Grote, H. G. Sawyer and George M. Peck. Mary was laid to rest in Bluff City Cemetery alongside Angelo, her three children and George's first wife Marcy.

Mary's last will and testament extended her charitable pursuits. George Lord, E.C. Cleveland, H.P. Zimmerman and L.N. Seaman were named as administrators of the estate. The firm of Botsford, Wayne & Botsford provide legal assistance. Her will is dated December 10, 1904, is 14 pages in length, has 42 directive points of bequests and is officially recorded in probate on June 19, 1905.

Mary's estate owned 2 residences, 3 income-producing properties in the Elgin business district, and a large amount of land in Elgin. In Carpentersville she owned approximately 1000 acres of land, including the Meadow Dale farm and Hazel Dell farm. Her stock portfolio included: Illinois Iron and Bolt Works, Elgin National Watch Company, Diamond Match Company of Wilmington, Delaware, First National Bank of

Elgin, City Banking of Elgin, Borden Condensed Milk Company, Chicago's Pullman Palace Car Company, Resthaven Sanitarium, and bonds in the Lakeside Park Club and the Chicago, Elgin & Aurora railroad.



*A fanciful view of one of Mary's houses*

To provide perspective, one news article from 1905 quotes the stock's per share values as follows: I.I. &B.: \$275, Pullman \$235, Borden's preferred \$113, Borden's common \$154, Diamond Match \$140, First National \$200 and Elgin City Banking \$200. Mary's estate was valued at \$500,000 in 1905 and would be valued at approximately 13,450,000 in 2018.

George inherited \$50,000 and use of the contents, outbuildings and surrounding property at 7 Villa Court and Mary's summer cottage located in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin until his death or until he might chose to reside elsewhere. Upon his death both residences transferred to Mary's sister Ella L. Cleveland.

Mary's heirs included her siblings: brother, Henry C. Edwards, sister Ella, and the surviving children of her deceased sister Elizabeth. Over 20 individuals, including nieces and nephews of Angelo, respected employees, and friends were provided for in the estate. Ella in addition to the two homes received 200 shares of I.I. & B stock valued at \$55,000. Henry and his children each received one-fifth of 870 acres of land, stock (animals) and chattel property in Carpentersville, each also received \$3,000 cash and shares of Borden, Diamond Match and First National bank of Elgin. The two children of Mary's deceased sister Elizabeth Edwards Wilder each received \$5,000 and stock.

Also included in her will are six educational institutions: The Elgin Academy (\$15,000), Beloit College (Beloit, Wisconsin, \$4,540), Wheaton College



(Wheaton, Illinois, \$4,620) and historically African-American institutions Tuskegee (AL) College (\$4,620), Berea (KY) College \$4,620, and Snow Hill Normal & Industrial College (Alabama) \$4,620.

### Mary's Legacy

Mary's generosity can still be seen today in the local organizations her wealth benefited. In Carpentersville, Mary bequeathed to the Congregational Church; stock in the I. I. & B, First National Bank, Elgin City Banking, Pullman Palace Car, Diamond Match, Borden stock and a commercial property on the west side of Douglas Avenue that included a lot and store. She also left to the church "all her [collected] specimens, Indian relics, curios of all kinds and pictures from the front hall room of the second story" of her Elgin home. To the Literary Society she left stocks in the I. I. and B, Elgin National Watch Co., and Pullman Palace Car. The Village of Carpentersville received stock and land to develop Carpenter Boulevard.

Her generosity to the Elgin community included the Y.M.C.A. that received a store and lot at the corner of Chicago St. and Fountain Square that was referred to as Edwin Hall, and stocks in I.I.& B., First National Bank, Elgin City Banking and Elgin National Watch. The Old People's Home (Oak Crest) received a store and lot on the east side of Douglas Avenue. The Women's Club representing Sherman Hospital received stock in the First National Bank, Elgin City Banking, Diamond Match, Pullman Palace Car and Borden. The First Congregational Church of Elgin received \$5,000 in cash.

The final clause of the will gave the remainder of the estate not used to fulfill the specific gifts to be divided equally to the Old People's Home, the Women's Club, the YWCA, and Northwestern University, who at the time of her will oversaw the Elgin Academy. An actual dollar amount was not stated nor recorded in the details of the estate file.



*Oak Crest, formerly Elgin Old Peoples Home, benefited from Mary's will.*

Years after Mary's death the result of her gifts occasionally became newsworthy. In 1913, the land on the southwest corner of Fountain Square that had been

held in trust for the YMCA was sold for \$42,000. In 1946 her home at 7 Villa Court that had remained in the Edward's family was sold to Illinois Bell Telephone Company. The home had been regarded as a landmark for 75 years and a most desirable non-commercial property. Mary's niece Mary E. (Cleveland) McNeil and her husband Howard were its current residents. They moved to 851 Brook Street.

Most recently, in 1991 when the Carpentersville First Congregational Church applied for financing for building improvements, a title search revealed that the original deed did not include a strip of property 18 feet by 60 feet adjoining the property where they had previously built a parsonage. A lawsuit was necessary to correct the oversight and named those that had benefited from the final residuals of her estate. The YWCA, the Oak Crest Residence, The Women's Club of Elgin and Elgin Academy did not contest the lawsuit.

Mary's individual magnanimous gifts are found in her published obituaries and the pages of her probate file. Her final gifts revealed, in death as in life, she provided for family, employees, friends, aided innumerable charities, had a keen interest in public improvement and extended generous financial assistance to religious and educational institutions. One newspaper article fittingly describes her as "Nobly Philanthropic."

### Acknowledgments:

*The Past & Present of Kane County, IL-1878*

*Elgin Daily News and other news sources*

*Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record Kane County 1888*

*Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Kane County 1904*

*Marge Edwards and the Dundee Township Museum*

*David Siegenthaler*

*Days Gone By (E.C. Alft)*

*Elgin, An All American City (E.C. Alft)*

*Caroline Davidson*



*Mary's last resting place at Bluff City Cemetery*



# Cemetery Walk Recap

*Laura Stroud*

We had a very good turnout for this year's Cemetery Walk, held September 23. The 31st annual cemetery walk was attended by approximately 580 visitors. The weather cooperated and we had many positive comments from our visitors.

A big "thank you" to all our volunteers who worked hard and supported this event. We could not have done it without your wonderful support. We appreciate each and everyone of you. We also wish to thank our generous sponsors from the community.

New features of the 2018 walk included an American Sign Language Tour for the hard of hearing, and a family tour in which the actors interacted with the audience.

This year's characters were:

- Nellie Mann Chappell (1864-1917), prominent in Elgin's social circles and subject of a mysterious disappearance
- Franc B. Wilkie (1832-1892), Civil War correspondent and author
- Maggie Chappell (1841-1888), who suffered tragic losses
- Orlo E. Salisbury (1891-1979), automobile dealer and Elgin mayor
- Walter H. Kimball (1838-1936), Civil War veteran and member of one of Elgin's two founding families.

To entertain the crowds while they awaited their tour departure, vignettes were presented on Victorian funeral customs, spinning wheels, the cemetery's zinc monuments, and the care of Civil War monuments.

Steve and I will be stepping down as co-chairs after eleven years of chairing this wonderful event. The new co-chairs will be Rudy and Lillian Galfi. They will transition into the role in 2019 and will officially take over as co-chairs for the 2020 Cemetery Walk. We wish them many successful years.



*(L to R) Mira Wojciechowska, Ricky Harris, Pam Swan, Lou Stotts volunteered at the Walk*



*Musical entertainment by Jim Turner and Jeff Morelli, always a crowd pleaser.*



*Steve Lewandowski portrayed Franc Wilkie. Holly Wiedmeyer worked as a greeter.*



*Volunteers included Alan, Hannah, Andy and Kathy Walters, and Ken Gough*

## We Are Not Alone

There are other Elgins in the universe!

- Elgin AZ is where the movie Red River was filmed.
- Elgin IA was platted in 1851-1852 by M. V. Burdick, a surveyor from Elgin IL who asked permission to name the town after his former home.
- Historical Society member Jeff White points out that Elgin, MN named their high school's yearbook *The Ticker*. A Google search indicates their town is named for Elgin, Scotland.
- Elgin OK was called CeeGee, but the name was changed in 1902 after a resident visited Elgin IL and proposed to rename the town Elgin.
- Elgin OH is a tiny town platted when the Chicago and Atlantic railroad opened a depot there in 1883.
- Elgin OR was named after the song "Lost on the Lady Elgin," which is about a ship that sank on Lake Michigan in 1860. If you are interested in hearing this song, check out Bucky Halker's album *Folk Songs of Illinois Volume 3*, which features Bucky's interpretation of this song.
- Elgin NE was named after Elgin IL in 1887 by a postmaster who did not like the town's first choice of name, which was Eggleston.
- Elgin SC, formerly known as Blaney, changed its name to Elgin when The Elgin National Watch Company opened an assembly plant there in 1962. Unfortunately the plant closed five years later.
- Elgin TN is an unincorporated town in Scott County. Its population was 282 in the 2010 census.
- Elgin TX (pronounced with a hard G) is named for a railroad executive who agreed to route the railroad through the site of the town.
- Elgin, WA, south of Seattle, is a ghost town today, and was named for Elgin, IL.
- And Elgin IL is named for a Scottish hymn.

*From Elgin: Days Gone By (E.C. Alft)*



Post Office in Elgin TN. Photo by Brian Stansberry - <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=31140936>

## Cobblestone Reflections Art Exhibit

*Rebecca Marco, Editor*

To kick off the next phase of fundraising for the Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House, on October 24 the Museum had a reception to unveil the artwork submitted for the "Cobblestone Reflections" community art project. Anyone who attended was able to bid silent auction style on any of the pieces. To view the art and the current prices, go to [elginhistory.org/auctions/](http://elginhistory.org/auctions/)

To bid on pieces you like, click Bid Now, provide name, email, and bid value, then click Place Bid. (Bids are accepted in increments of \$20.) Your name will then appear at the top of the "Total Bids Placed" tab.

To buy a piece immediately for the "Buy It Now" price shown, follow the link to our webstore. After purchasing, the auction will end and you will be the proud owner of a cool piece of Elgin-inspired art.

However, the art is part of a traveling exhibit. It will be on display at the Museum through November, then travel to the Gail Borden Public Library in December and to Artspace Lofts in January. Even if you purchase art using Buy It Now, it will not be available for pickup until the exhibit ends in mid-January.

The first-place winner was "West Chicago St. Reflections of the Past" a dimensional cut paper shadowbox by Jessica Hamilton that features a real cobblestone border. We wish to thank all artists who submitted their work, the judges who selected the winners, and the Elgin Cultural Commission for their support of the project.

For more info on the Nancy Kimball Cobblestone House: [elginhistory.org/community/nancy-kimball-cobblestone-house/](http://elginhistory.org/community/nancy-kimball-cobblestone-house/)



First prize winner by Jessica Hamilton



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# Taking Flight: Elgin's Anson L. Clark in the Great War

*Richard Renner*

November 2018 marks the centennial of the end of a war so extensive and terrible its participants could call it only the Great War. Modern concepts of civil liberty and privacy did not exist in 1918, and Americans were under unprecedented government, media and popular pressure to provide their time, money and lives for victory over the “Hun,” “autocracy,” and “militarism.”

In Elgin, local newspapers held out the Clark family for their “100 Per Cent” support of the war. Emma Clark's four children—three boys and a girl—were enlisted in the war effort while she knitted apparel for the troops.

Recently, I obtained a photograph of her eldest son, Lieutenant Anson L. Clark. The photograph shows 24-year-old Anson with his Curtiss “Jenny” biplane at his airbase in Mineola, New York on August 4, 1918, about to set out on a notable war aviation experience.

An Elgin native and graduate of Cornell University, Anson had enlisted in 1917 and by early 1918 was a Second Lieutenant on his way to flight training at Camp Taliaferro near Fort Worth. He proved so adept as a pilot that by summer 1918 he had been selected for America's premier flying corps, the First Provisional Wing. Eleven pilots of the Wing set off in mid-August on a grand 11-city tour to promote military aviation to the general public.

Starting in Dayton, Ohio, the Wing and a small group of veteran British pilots thrilled each city with a “flying circus” of aerial stunts with all the spins, loops, dives and turns of real combat. Each city greeted the aviators as stars, with extensive newspaper coverage and gala banquets. The Wing was a remarkable handful of young men, including a former football star, flight record holders, and a fellow named Earl Carroll who would gain fame as a Broadway and Hollywood showman. Even in this group Anson stood out. He was selected as the aide to the Wing's commander, and his picture was featured in the *Kansas City Star* promoting the show in that city.

But a picture showing a skull and crossbones on another Wing member's plane reminds us that Anson was in a dangerous business. Just before the tour, he participated in a spectacular aerial funeral over Mid-Manhattan for another pilot, and from his plane dropped clusters of roses before St. Patrick's Cathedral. As the tour began, one of the British pilots died in a crash in Cincinnati. One of the first persons to reach

the downed flier was the group's flight surgeon who, days later, was killed and a Wing pilot seriously injured in another crash.

Anson, however, survived as a key figure in a tour that introduced military aviation to millions of Americans and was the forerunner of the modern air shows by the Navy's Blue Angels and the Air Force Thunderbirds. His mother Emma Clark must have been proud but surely had special reasons to join her fellow Elginites celebrating the armistice ending the war on November 11, 1918. For Anson, though, the war had been an exciting introduction to a life of extraordinary success and achievement. He became a doctor, practiced at the Mayo Clinic, retired from medicine to found an oil company, and channeled his wealth into a charitable foundation. More than 50 years after his death his name is remembered through a memorial lecture, a summer research program, a professorship at the Mayo Clinic, a scholars program at Texas Tech, and the Dr. Anson L. Clark Scholarship Fund which provides support for hundreds of Dallas students to attend colleges and universities in Texas.



*Anson Clark with his Biplane*

ELGIN HISTORY MUSEUM  
360 PARK STREET  
ELGIN, IL 60120



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## Giving Tuesday 2018

*Rebecca Marco, Editor*

November 27th is Giving Tuesday, a day focusing on online donations. Started in 2012 by New York's 92nd Street Y in partnership with the United Nations Foundation, #GivingTuesday is a global day of giving celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving and the shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Support Elgin's local charities and non-profit groups by donating online. To focus on Elgin charities, visit the website [elgingives.org](http://elgingives.org).

This year, 49 local nonprofits are participating, including the Elgin History Museum. Please take this opportunity to make an online donation, and be aware that all donations made to Elgin History Museum will be matched by the Grand Victoria Foundation, doubling your generosity.

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## Collections Corner

*Elizabeth Marston, Museum Director*

Fall is a time for school reunions and homecomings. In October, Guy Todnem and Kathleen Wallace, both Larkin High School Class of 1965 graduates, stopped by the Museum with Guy's collection of materials from the Class of 1965. When Larkin opened, only 10th, 11th, and 12th grades attended. The Class of 1965 was the first to attend all three years at Larkin. Items that were donated included buttons, patches, programs from Honors Day, Awards Day, music events, football games, and the 1965 yearbook.



*Larkin High School Memorabilia*