

Eliphalet Snedecor

Greetings and welcome.

I am Eliphalet Snedecor. My friends call me 'Liff'. I'm told Eliphalet means "God delivers me". It's not a misspelling of elephant although playmates would tell you so. Beside me lie several family members, my wife Sarah, sons Obediah, _____, Lewis and grandsons: John and Chapman. Before me are the graves of Sarah's family. God did NOT deliver me from my in-laws. I kid you. My in-laws were generous in permitting Sarah to marry me and have my children, 3 girls and 3 boys. The girls did not survive.

I was born in Huntington but settled in Islip 12 years after marrying Sarah. The tavern was ideally situated on the main road along the south shore near a mill. The tavern had a farm adjoining which was helped by the mill.

All sorts of travelers stopped by on their way east. Mr. Audubon was fascinated by the wildlife and painted pictures of birds. Others may have seen them and thought they'd be great to hunt. The word got out and more people stopped and stayed to hunt. Being a wonderful hostess, Sarah served up delicious meals to our guests. That word got out and landed on the ears of Mr. DelMonico. He and Sarah spent days in the kitchen sharing stories. Other guests encouraged him to join them hunting. He downed a buck with his first shot! He was so excited he ran to inspect the kill. The excitement was too much and his heart failed him.

Other stories are not tragic. The abundance of game, fish and fowl drew too many interested parties. Rooms filled and the boys didn't enjoy giving up their beds for the hay loft in the barn. One fishing trip yielded 41 trout! That's when I put a quota of 10 per fisherman. Fish make for good fertilizer, but there can be overkill.

As we found we had to turn away guests, we realized we could charge more and demand advanced reservations. This caused a wealthier clientel. They called for additional services. They would pay extra for trained guides and even more if those guides were Indians! The extra money gave us the ability to purchase finer appointments. Sarah was able to purchase store bought clothing!

Not everything was pleasant. We needed cuspidors and chamber pots for the rooms. Outhouses were a dark walk at night and you could trip over all sorts of wildlife. The boys took no joy in that chore.

After several successful seasons, many of the regulars insisted I sell them my tavern. I respectfully rejected their generous offer. I suspect the boys will bend to their wishes. With the south upsetting the status quo, I hesitate to make that decision.

It's difficult losing children. Sarah was devastated when our daughters did not survive. She couldn't dress them boys the same way. Lewis left a wife and children too soon. We enjoyed taking in the boys.

My perspective of our country may be different from yours. When I was born, Islip had around 500 residents. By the time Mr. Lincoln was elected, it approached 4,000. The original states adopted the Constitution around my 1st birthday. When my grandson was born, there were twice that amount. We went from coastal states to the Pacific Ocean in my lifetime. Before I was born we fought the British for independence. Again in 1812 we fought again. Our Texan brothers did the same. Now we stand to fight our southern brothers. Will this ever end??