

A Glimpse into the Last few Months of Peter Lawrence Odell's Life Gleaned from his Checkbook

I received a wide assortment of documents etc. from Peter Martin, great nephew of Peter Odell, in the fall of 2012. One of the items was a bunch of cancelled checks and a check register for October 1934 through February of 1935. I thought, let me see if I can get a glimpse into his life just from old checks and I do believe I found out quite a bit.

I know from previous research, of the history of Summit, that Peter Odell was the owner/operator of the Lakeview House Hotel from about 1880 until he died in March of 1935 at the age of 90. So, the check stubs I reviewed are the last checks he ever wrote and his hand writing was still solid as a rock.

He wrote two checks to Imogene Bassett Hospital for \$11.25 each and \$51.50. His obituary stated he had been sick for the past five years. Freda Wharton was paid \$8 for a "hospital trip", I believe this was for gas money to Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown. R. (*Richard*) Wandres (owned the Crowes Nest Hotel that was across the street from the Lakeview House) \$3.60 and \$1.65 for medicine and Montgomery Ward \$1.21 for drugs.

Harold Jump \$17.68 for school taxes and Arthur Rowe, tax collector, \$124.44

Four checks written to A.L. Jump & Son (Albert L. and son Harold. This store was the Grange next to the ME Church) at \$10 each for cash, and \$7.96 & \$14.42 for groceries. Byron Fancher received \$1.50 for maple syrup and Clay Bros., (of Richmondville), \$1.82 for sausage.

Mattie Zeh for four telephone bills totaling about \$8 the highest bill being \$2.94.

N.Y. Power & Light Company received one payment for \$4.40 and three payments at \$3 each.

Ray Becker received 17 checks for \$2.10 each for "chores"; each check was for about a week's work, and Julia Richards received \$5 for "work"

For some reason Peter purchased wood from a few different people; Hiram VanBuren \$2.50, J. Ernest Wharton \$10, James Wharton two checks for \$6 each and Charles Wilsey \$5. David Boynton received \$36 for coal.

William Willman \$9.50 and \$16 for "service with car". William had a garage and lived in Richmondville. A check for \$2 was sent to Grit Publishing Co. for a subscription. After some online research I found out that "Grit", subtitled America's Greatest Family Newspaper, was a weekly paper that was geared towards rural America. I believe the newspaper cost a dime in the 1930's. The main office was in Williamsport, PA and today Grit is still published as a magazine out of Topeka.

Total costs for a month were about \$67. That's food, phone, electric, fuel, hospital bill, a newspaper, taxes and servicing car for \$67. These household bills were for the Lakeview House, a big three story building, which is even more amazing. This would be roughly \$1,100 today.

On a final note Peter Lawrence Odell's funeral costs (from the original bill) with E.J. Skinner of Worcester, NY were Casket (metal), funeral coach and all services \$235, cyprus outside box \$45 and one white shirt and collar \$1.44. Burial was in the new Summit Cemetery.