

Politics In 1888

by Lynne Belluscio

Last Thursday I attended the County Historians meeting and picked up a small booklet written by Pembroke Historian, Lois Brockway in 2007. She and Allan Starkweather and Joann Cummings updated it this year. The story is about the "Tallyho Trip in 1888" in Genesee County during President Grover Cleveland's re-election campaign.

Although Grover Cleveland was born in 1837 in New Jersey, he grew up in New York. His father was a Presbyterian minister and the family moved to Fayetteville, New York, near Syracuse. The family then moved to Clinton, N.Y. in Oneida County and finally to Utica.

After his father's death, Grover headed west and in 1855 he was living in Buffalo. In 1859 he was admitted to the Bar. During the Civil War, he paid to have a Polish immigrant serve his Army conscription. He became politically aligned with the Democrats and opposed the Republicans of Abraham Lincoln. By 1870 he ran for Sheriff of Buffalo and won. In that capacity, he personally hanged two criminals.

In 1882, he became Mayor of Buffalo, and then won the state election as Governor a year later. He ran for President in 1884 and took office in 1885. In 1888 he ran for reelection against the Republican candidate, Benjamin Harrison.

Genesee County was predominately Republican and the Democrats decided on a publicity tour with a "tally ho coach." Willis Z. Stanard, who owned a livery stable, drove the horses. The coach was covered with banners which read "Cleveland and Thurman." The coach left the Continental Hotel in Batavia on Monday morning at 9 in the morning. On board was Edward O'Donnell, from New York, who was the Democratic State Speaker. From

Batavia was O.C. Parker, the hotel landlord; Wilbur Smith, hardware merchant; A.E. Clark lawyer and one of the speakers; and Batavia lawyers, David Lent and R.L. Kinsey. There were musicians perched high on the back seats – a fifer, bass drummer and two snare drummers. As they left Batavia, the band played "The Girl I Left Behind Me." Packed inside the coach "was the best of everything: 10 cent cigars, good liquor, and lunch . . ."

"Short stops were made at corners where people were gathered to hear a speech and at one place they raised a pole with a flag with Cleveland and Thurman's names upon it. They reached Oakfield in the evening and stayed over night at the Arnold House. There was a big torchlight parade and a speech. The next morning after partaking of the good things necessary for any such an outfit and stocking with some they resumed their journey, visiting Wheatville, Smithville, finally hitting Indian Falls for dinner. Here O'Donnell delivered another one of his famous speeches ... They were dressed in continental style with showy hats with rosettes. One man told the crowd that he was working for the Democrats for \$2 a day, good wages for those days, board and all and that he thought that Democrats were a pretty good bunch of fellows but they got me into one bad habit and that was smoking 10 cent cigars. He also stated that he did not get thirsty again for a month.

Everything went along nicely in Corfu until evening. There was a big meeting that afternoon but pandemonium reigned supreme in Corfu that night. Tanglefoot ran

freely. It probably was by far the worst jollification meeting that many had the misfor-

Batavian.

We hear that on Monday morning next Messrs. Wilber Smith and Arthur Clark of this village are to start off in a tally-ho coach, with music and free trade—or, as they say, "tariff reform"—speakers, to try and turn the people of Genesee away from protection to the democratic doctrine of free trade.

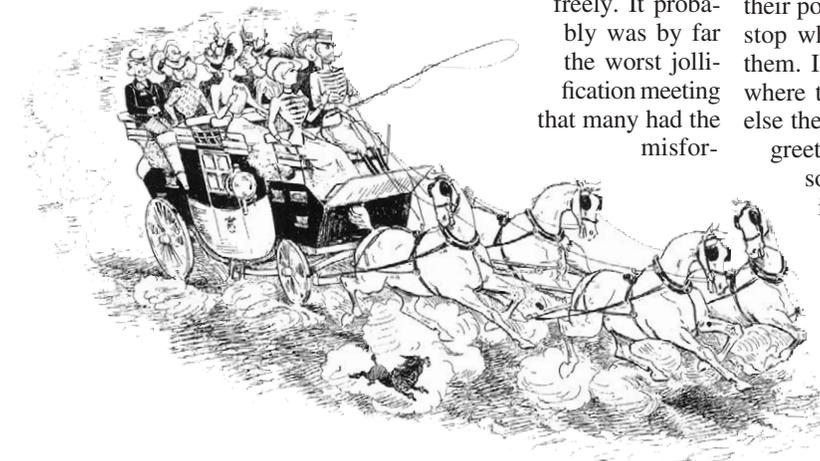
The tally-ho coach is coming,
The British tally-ho coach.
Oh, soon you will hear the drumming,
And see the old thing approaching.

Tally-ho! Tally-ho!
"It's English, you know,"
And preaches free trade where'er it doth go.

Tally-ho will stop at your gate
And scatter its free trade bills:
The Cobden Club pays all the freight
On these "tariff reform" coated pills.
Tally-ho, Tally-ho!
It's free trade, you know,
Tho' they try to deny it, and will swear it ain't so.

So hitch up the horses, Wilber,
And whistle the hounds to come;
Blow on the free trade bugle,
And beat on the free trade drum.
Tally-ho, Tally-ho!
"It's English, you know,"
And that is the reason we all love it so.

Drive on with your coach and your valets,
The sixth of November is near:
Then the people will say, with ballots:
"Go home—you aint wanted here."
Tally-ho, Tally-ho!
"It's English you know."
But English free trade, over here, is no go.



ture to attend. They devoured the 1,000 pound ox which had been prepared and dodged beer bottles and chairs to keep them from getting hurt. The program passed off very satisfactorily, interrupted only by three fights ... They rolled up literature and put rubber bands around them to be thrown out along the way for residents to collect and read. One man jumped on the wagon grabbed the box and threw it in the weeds. That was one man who did not agree with their politics. LeRoy was the next stop where a big crowd greeted them. It was then on to Stafford where things changed. Wherever else they had gone they had been greeted with an ovation but not so in Stafford. One resident invited them for lunch but

the ones who where outside were subjected to a terrific bombardment of water from a hose and 'poor hen fruit.' The group hastily made their way back to the wagon where they rolled and tumbled into the coach for a getaway. The driver showed his dexterity as a horseman and wielder of the whip and with a mighty shout they departed in record time with the patter of rotten eggs following."

I checked the *LeRoy Gazette* for details and it mentioned that the Tally Ho visit required 3,700 bags of sandwiches and 10 barrels of coffee, but since the *Gazette* was Republican, there was not much information. "The *Courier* was Democrat, but we do not have the 1888 issues. The *Gazette* ran a poem:

Grover Cleveland won the popular vote for President in 1888, but lost the election. He ran against Harrison in 1892 and won and is the only American president to serve two non-consecutive terms of office.