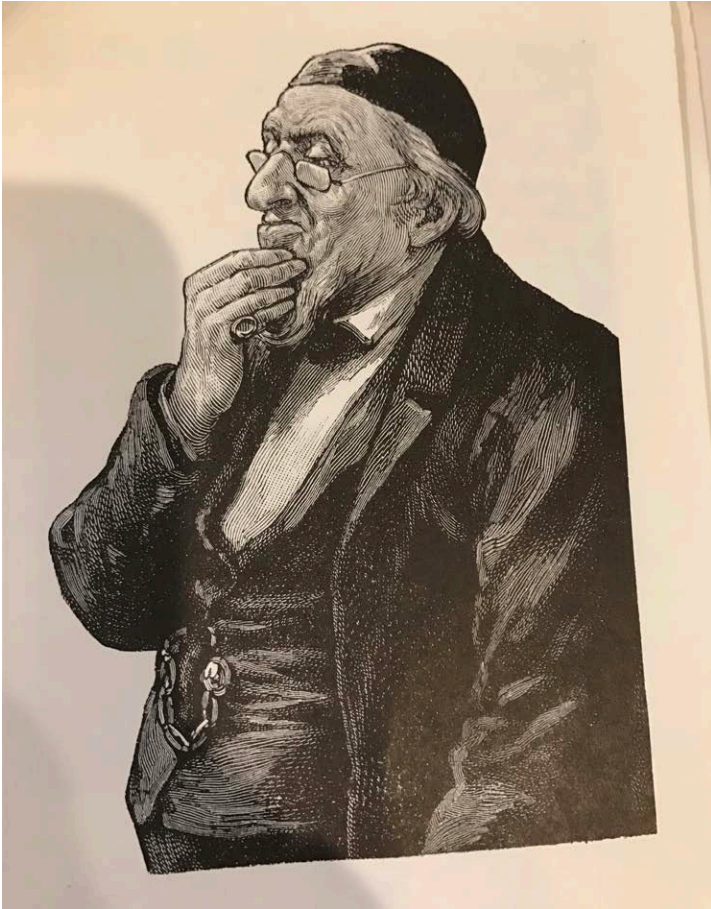


# I Don't Know



admit, "I don't know. I can't find anything." We have file drawers filled with information and hundreds of books, and shelves with boxes of archival material, and you'd think that somewhere there would be a clue to a question. But sometimes you come up empty handed. People are looking for information about their ancestors, or their grandparents. They want to know when their house was built or what it looked like when the porch was on it. Others want to know if their house is haunted. "I don't know." Sometimes people want to know how much something is worth – an old Jell-O book – a family heirloom. Even if I have an idea of how much it might be worth, it is not ethical for me to say. I am not a qualified appraiser so "I don't know" is the right answer.

It's important to understand that it's better to say "I don't know" than to make up an answer. I tell that to all the people who work at the museum - either in the LeRoy House or the Jell-O Gallery. I worked at another museum where there was a fellow, who took "educated guesses" to explain things he didn't know about. But he didn't say that he didn't know the answer, or that he was mak-

ing an educated guess. He just made up answers as he went along. So I've always given people permission to say "I don't know." You don't need to know all the answers.

So the question is - ---- "Why aren't you a member of the Historical Society?" You like to read all the articles in the Pennsaver. You are glad the Historical Society offers programs for students at the Wolcott Street School. Although it's been a while since you've stepped foot inside LeRoy House, you're glad the Historical Society is taking care of it. You even enjoy stopping by the Historical Society tent at the Oatka Festival to play some games or to buy a Jell-O t-shirt. So, "I don't know" isn't the right answer to that question. This week, you have a chance to change all of that. Become a member. It's not expensive. It's easy. You receive four newsletters each year, with interesting history articles. We even give you a couple of free passes to give to your friends or family. And at no additional cost – a discount coupon for purchases in the gift shop. What a deal!! In the meantime, I'll keep looking for the answers to all the other questions.

It's hard to admit that you don't know. Especially if it's your job to know. I've been doing this history business for quite a long time, and I've learned a lot. I'm always fascinated with all the LeRoy history. Jell-O, Ingham University, stringless beans, Lapp insulators, salt, - - the list is pretty long. LeRoy has some interesting people – Captain Ganson, Charles Wilbor; Jacob and Charlotte LeRoy, Emily and Marietta Ingham, Calvin Keeney, Pearle Wait, Orator Woodward. I have written about all this fascinating stuff each week in the Pennsaver. But for all the stuff I have learned, there's a lot I still don't know. How come I have never found a bottle of Zowie - - the beverage made by Jell-O? How did Pearle Wait pronounce his first name? Why did Jacob LeRoy move back to New York City and what happened to him? What really happened to the airplane, the Friendship, after Donald Woodward sold it?

Why can't we find any art done by Phineas Staunton's sister, who was the first art teacher at Ingham University? Where is the key to the Lampson vault? Why does the west wall of LeRoy House go up and down? What happened to Daniel McDonald, the conductor on the Underground Railroad? Why is the front door of LeRoy House centered on the outside, but not on the inside? Why don't we know what Charlotte LeRoy looked like? What did Jacob LeRoy and his brother-in-law, Daniel Webster talk about? Was Caroline LeRoy really as unattractive as people thought? Why don't they make Jell-O 1-2-3 anymore? Is the millstone in the back yard really from the old LeRoy mill? When did people start calling LeRoy LeeRoy? Am I the only one who really cares?

It is frustrating when someone comes in to do research, and after looking through the files, you have to

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