

THE DUKES COUNTY INTELLIGENCER

Vol. 47, No. 2

NOVEMBER 2005

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Dr. Butler spent a lot of time and effort recording cases in his early years. Later, he was more casual (see inside back cover).

There were many stillborn births.

Obstetrics in the Late 1800s, As Recorded by Dr. Winthrop Butler

by ARTHUR R. RAILTON

A Native Returns to the Island in 1855 to Find . . .

Cousins by the Dozens, But Not Enough Praying

by SERENA (PEASE DUNHAM) HALL

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Editor: Arthur R. Railton Founding Editor: Gale Huntington (1959-1977)

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A Native Returns to the Island in 1855 to Find. . .

Cousins by the Dozens, But Not Enough Praying

by Serena (Pease Dunham) Hall

SERENA HALL, a widow 46 years old, was living in Ohio in 1855. Born in Edgartown on July 21, 1809, as Serena Pease Donham to Seth and Mahala (Pease) Donham (the spelling soon changed to Dunham), she and her family in about 1820 moved to Ohio, then the "West," where she grew up and married. In the fall of 1855, she returned to the Vineyard to visit her birthplace.

During her visit, while staying at Samuel Huxford's house on Chappaquiddick island, she wrote of looking at the school house she had attended, so she probably grew up on Chappaquiddick, although she seems to have been born on the larger island in Edgartown. At least, that is how it reads to the editor, who admits to uncertaint?

She kept a diary while on the Island and after returning home to Ohio, she sent a copy of it to Sheriff Isaiah Pease, her cousin, with whom she had stayed most of the time. The Society has the copy she sent him. It is filled with the names of her cousins, most of whom she seemed to have met while on her visit. Many of them were Peases and Dunhams. There were 128 Peases and 22 Dunhams living in Edgartown at the time. Genealogists will find a wealth of information here.

Her diary is a revealing description of Island life in 1855. Dropping in for a visit was frequent, as often as three or four times a day, it seems, not to mention prayer meetings.

Excerpts from the journal follow. It begins while she was still in Ohio, at the home of her son Cyrus in Mt. Washington, a town near Cincinnati where she would to go to take the train to Boston.

June 16, 1855. Mt. Washington, Ohio. This has been a very trying day to me, this morning I bade adieu to my fatherless loved ones to visit my dear friends on Martha's Vineyard, the Sweet land of my birth. . . [Her "fatherless loved"]

ones" were adult children, all married. She was understandably worried about the hazards of the trip, calling on God to protect her. A deeply religious person, she filled her diary with pleas for God's help.] I have tried to examine my heart whether I have Religion enough to bear me up in all the trials I may have to encounter is traveling alone among Strangers. . .

[Three days later, she left Mt. Washington, Ohio, having been delayed by the weather.

June 19. This morning I left Mt. Washington for Cincinnati, the great city of the West. Brothers Wm. and Cyrus accompanied me, with Br. Cyrus' wife. . . Brother Cyrus returned home to Mt. Washington. His wife [Jane] and Brother William staid with me all night in Cincinnati at her Brother's, Mr. Samuel Birdsall.

June 20. Parted this morning. With Sister Jane Dunham, I took the Omnibus for the Depot at 5 o'clock. Brother William walked down. . . We arrived at the Depot sometime before the train started. . . I took my seat in the Car and there being such a crowd around I felt quite Sick But we were Soon to Start. Here Brother William and myself parted. I find it hard to part with those I love. . . I felt the Lord was mindful of me. . . I know he will take care of me. . .

June 21. Boston. Arrived Safely in Boston in about 35 hours from Cincinnati. . . found my relatives without any trouble and was treated very kindly by them But the one thing needful I fear is forgotten by them. May heaven save [them], and Save to the uttermost.

June 22. Boston. I have been very much fatigued with my Journey but appear Somewhat refreshed today. I think I Slept More Sweetly last night than I ever did before in my life. . . Mrs. Darrow and her little grandson and myself walked out to the [Boston] Common this forenoon. [Serena does not identify Mrs. Darrow, but she must be one of her relatives, no doubt an inlaw. It is a beautiful Place.

I saw and stood under the Shadow of the old Elm tree where the Rev. Jesse Lee Preached in days of other years. I felt almost it was a consecrated spot. [Rev. Jesse Lee was known as "The Abostle of Methodism" after the Revolutionary War.]

Mrs. Darrow begged a Small limb from the Police Officer

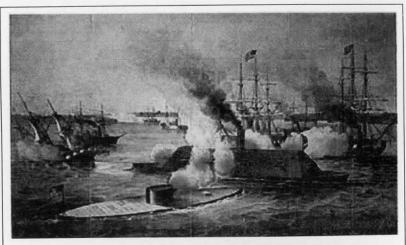
of the Venerable old tree for me. . . Great care is taken of it and everything looks beautiful around the tree. We then went to the fountain and I drank from it. A most refreshing draught of pure Cold Water. We then visited the Pond which was beautiful. From there we went to the flower garden [was this the Boston Public Garden?]. Some beautiful flowers were growing there but the most of those with few exceptions I had seen in Ohio.

June 23. Boston. . . Mrs. Darrow and myself took a walk some distance, then we took Passage in an Omnibus and rode part of the way to Bunkers [sic] Hill Monument. We walked the remainder of the way. I did not go up inside, being wearied with my walk. There is a most delightful view from the outside. From there we Proceeded to the Navy Yard, Called at Mr. Charles (Jun.) Darrow's Office [in the Navy Yard] and rested a few Moments. Mrs. Darrow invited her Son to accompany us which he did very Cheerfully. We saw what he said then was the largest Ship in the world. She was in the dry dock, had been launched the week Previous. She is a noble Ship. She will carry 4000 tons burden and is called the Merrimack. (See box on page 42.) We went also to the place where she was built and from there to the Yard where the Cannons were and also the Cannon Hall, a great many Cannons were there and piles of cannon balls.

As we passed on we saw the Sentinels at their Post which all looked to me very much like war. May heaven Save our land and nation from the ravages of war and bloodshed.

We next visited the rope walk. Saw the Machinery at work. It was beautiful. It was so clean and bright. We walked upstairs where the ropes were made. Saw the rope there that was for the great Ship [Merrimack]. . . returned home to our place of abode well gratified with what our eyes had seen and what we had enjoyed of the Great City of Boston . . .

Mrs. Stormy [also not identified] returned home this afternoon, called to see me with her husband and invited me to go the Church with them the next day in the forenoon which I considered a Great treat. My daily prayer is I may not Backslide while travelling. How my Soul longs for some Religious Company. Not that my dear friends here are not



Monitor and Merrimac

The warship Merrimack, so admired by Serena at Boston Navy Yard, was built in 1855 as a propeller-driven steam frigate. When the Civil War began, she was in the Norfolk Navy Yard, Virginia. As Confederates neared, her captain set his ship afire to prevent her capture. After burning to the waterline, she sank.

Southerners raised the hulk and rebuilt it as an ironclad ram, C.S.S. Virginia. In 1862, she fought the Union's Monitor to a draw in the historic "First Battle of Ironclads." Although the fighting was between the smaller Monitor and the larger Virginia, it will be forever known as the battle of the Monitor and Merrimac, The victorious north restored her original name, Merrimac (dropping the "k").

kind to me, no indeed, far Contrary from this. I am treated very kindly by all around me . . . May heaven reward them and bring them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. O, I would love to See them Religious, loving My blessed Savior with a pure heart fervently. . .

June 24. Boston, Sabbath. . . Mr. and Mrs. Stormy called this morning for me to go to Church with them. We went to the Broomfield Street Church and heard a Sermon by Brother Rice. . . through the past week while travelling alone among Strangers, when one friend Seemed to be at the journey's end another took their place. How thankful I feel to the good Lord who has taken such good care of me in my travels. . .

Sometimes I have almost been Shouting happy but I had none but my Savior to tell it to. . . I feel now as though I had a Spiritual ticket for the Remainder of my journey. . . still I feel I am weaker than the bruised reed. Without the aid of his holy Spirit I feel now I am cut off from every earthly Prop and [have] none but my Blessed Savior to lean upon.

June 26. I left Boston this morning for Edgartown. Took the cars [railroad] for Fairhaven and from there the Steamer Metacomet for Edgartown and between 1 and 2 o'clock was at my journey's end. Cousin Isaiah D. Pease met me on the Boat. Almost as soon as it landed, he was on board looking for me. [Isaiah was County Sheriff and would have had no problem getting aboard early.] Soon as he caught Sight of me he came and Spoke to me calling me by name which quite astonished me as a little upward of 36 years had rolled their ample rounds Since last we met. I knew him because I had a Miniature in my Possession that was Sent to my dear departed Mother. It was a happy Meeting.

His Brother's wife and daughter got on the cars at North Bridgewater, but she did not find out who I was until Cousin Isaiah took me to their Carriage and gave me an introduction to her and Cousin Jeremiah and their daughter, Mrs. Eliza Stewart. [Cousin Jeremiah Pease, an early Methodist and founder of the campground.]

We hastened up Main street and in a few moments were at my beloved Cousin's. Had an introduction to his dear Wife and family. My dear Cousin and myself Sat down and wept tears of joy. It was a happy meeting to meet once more on earth with my loved friends of Martha's Vineyard.

June 28. Was at General Class. If I mistake not on this night, religion appears to be low here in this Place. Lord revive

July 1. Sunday. Brother Benton Preached a most excellent Sermon. . . I attended Preaching in the PM [afternoon]. . . at night was at the Prayer Meeting in the Vestry. Praise the good Lord. I find the same Religion here I did in Ohio.

July 3. Evening I attended the Seamen's Prayer Meeting with Brother Pease. . . Solemn time. God will certainly hear and answer the many fervent Petitions put up in behalf of the Sailor.

July 6. Visited Cousin Jeremiah Pease and his wife. Had a very good visit. Brother Jeremiah is an exhorter, holds meetings at Holmes Hole. May the Lord bless his labours abundantly. His wife does not enjoy very good health at this time but is an excellent woman.

July 12. . . received a letter from William G. Hall. How it cheers my heart to get a letter from any of my dear Children.

July 13 Cousin Jerusha and Myself called on Mrs. Sophia Smith, a Sister to Cousin Jerusha. She is a widow but is very Pleasantly Situated. [She lives on South Summer Street] This is a beautiful Place or town. I am more and more delighted with it. I can't tell how any that lives here would Seek a new Country.

July 14. Cousin I. D. Pease Jun's wife accompanied me to prayer meeting. The brethren did not come until very late and I was very much pleased indeed to See Quite a Youth Arise and Commence Meeting. May heaven bless him . . .

July 18. . . Last night I was at the Prayer Meeting. . . O that the Lord would revive his work among this People. . .

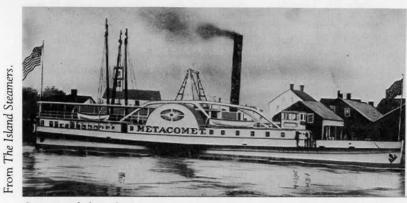
July 19. Nineteen years ago today I joined the Methodist E. Church with my dear departed companion . . .

[Nineteen years ago was 1836, a time when many were leaving the Congregational church to become Methodists. It was at this time that the Wesleyan Grove camp meeting began on the Vineyard. Of course, Serena was in Ohio then.]

July 20. Today I visited Sister Susan Pease. She is the wife of Mr. Henry Pease, who is the Son of Capt. Valentine Pease and She is the daughter of Mr. Samuel Huxford. Many days we spent together in the School room when we were Children. Her husband has gone on a long Voyage to Sea. O may he be returned in Safety and Prosperity. They have lost a little Son about 6 months ago. I think the Lord is trying her to wean her affections from Earth . . .

July 21. This is my birthday. I am 46 years old today.

July 22. . . . at the prayer meeting tonight Brother Benton earnestly requested the members of the Church should this week pray twice more each day for a revival. My Whole Soul Said Amen. O how I long to See a glorious revival. How much



Serena sailed on the Metacomet from Fair Haven to Edgartown because the railroad line from Boston had not yet been extended to New Bedford.

we need it. I feel I need it in my own heart.

July 25. . . last night I attended Prayer meeting. My heart is Pained to See So Much Backwardness in the cause of Christ.

July 27. Spent the day at Mr. Littleton Wimpenny's, his wife is the daughter of Cousin J. [Jeremiah] Pease and is very Good Company. After tea I went to Cousin Jeremiah's and staid all night. This afternoon the Wind blew quite fresh and it was a delightful Sight to me to See the Vessels Coming in to the harbour, somewhere About 30 Sails in Sight.

It was a difficult time for Cousin Jeremiah. He had recently received a letter removing him as Deputy Collector of Customs. It was a great blow. None of this comes out in Serena's account. In Jeremiah's diary (owned by the Society), the pages for these days have been torn out, probably by his son, Joseph Thaxter Pease, who soon took over as Deputy Collector.]

July 28. Called this morning to Mrs. Wimpenney's in the old Mansion house [the Wimpenneys lived next to Jeremiah Pease]. She had 3 old fashioned Coat of Arms, the Wimpenny's, the Swazey's and the Pease's. . . We had a most excellent visit and some Splendid Singing, the best perhaps I ever heard. Cousin Jeremiah and Wife and their two daughters, Velina and Eliza. How I enjoyed it. I could truly say with the Poet, "If fellowship with Saints below, Be to our Souls So Sweet, What heights of rapture Shall we know, When round the throne we meet."

A NATIVE RETURNS 47

July 29. Tuesday. . . Attended the Prayer Meeting. It was good to be there. Praise the Good Lord for the Tuesday night Prayer meeting. How hard it was for me to part with the Tuesday night Prayer Meeting in Amelia [Ohio], little thinking I should find one here.

August 1. . . Cousin Jedidah and I called on her sister, Mrs. Vinson. While we were there news came that a Boy was drowned, 5 or 6 years old, by the name of Fisher, son of John B. Fisher, grandson of Mr. Abram Fisher. . .

August 2. This morning the boy that was drowned was found under the Wharf. . . Cousin Jedidah P. was at Sister Susan Pease's and went with me to Cousin Jeremiah Jr.'s. We found several dear friends there but I could not prevail with any of them to go to General Class. May the great Head of the Church wake us up.

August 3. . . have just returned from the funeral of the little boy that was drowned, the first Child that has been drowned for about 60 years.

August 4. Spent the day with Sister Margaret Vinson, had an excellent visit. How sweet it is to meet now and then with one that can talk about Jesus. After tea we took a walk to the grave yard. I gathered some Moss from her Mother's Grave, Mrs. Lois Pease. Here lie beneath the clods of earth many of my dear Precious friends. . .

I called at cousin Chase P.'s, Lord bless my dear Cousin in his advanced years [he is 74], Convert all of his dear children and grant that they may make an unbroken family in the Kingdom of heaven.

August 7. I received a letter from Hannah M. Butler and William G. Hall. How it cheered my Poor heart to hear from my dear Children.

August 8. . . called at Sister Susan Pease's [Mrs. Henry] and her son Charles took us over to Chappaquidic to Mr. Samuel Huxford's. Susan and I in the afternoon took a walk to see the dear old school house where we had Spent many of our Childhood days. Never shall I forget that Blessed afternoon. After gazing at the house outside and trying to See in at the Window as we could not get in, we wandered about the woods. Here seemed to be exactly the Same Paths we had trod in by-

gone days and the same bushes we had Played under when we were Children. After wandering around. . . we knelt in the Sacred Spot to return thanks that our unprofitable lives had been Spared and we had been permitted to See each other again on earth.

August 9. Chappaquidic. . . Visited Mr. Wm. Huxford. . . went back to Mr. S. Huxford's and Staid all night.

August 10. Today Sister Susan and I called at Mr. Tisdel [Tisdale] Smith's, the Place where My Parents moved from to Ohio. . . Many Childhood Scenes here were brought fresh to Memory. Many things looked familiar but My dear Parents were not there, it looked so lonesome. . . I walked out to the old Willow Tree that used to look so green and gay. Lo! it too had been strongly touched by the hand of time. I took three very small twigs from it to carry home to Ohio, one for each of my Brothers for we had often talked about the old Willow Tree.

Called at Ferelia's [?]. Saw the old Pond. When we parted, she wept. Took dinner at Mr. Samuel Huxford's. After dinner, Sister Susan had to return home. Her brother, Wm. Huxford, took her down to the Point and I went with them to Mr. John Huxford's. Saw Nancy, Polly and Sally. Polly is a Cripple. A distressed family.

From there Nancy and I went to Gamaliel Fisher's. He was Sick and I did not see him. His wife is my Second Cousin on my Father's Side, the first of his relations I have seen. . . went to the Shore and picked up some Shells. . . took tea with Mrs. Fisher. After tea called a few minutes more with Nancy, talked and Prayed. . . left to Stay all Night to Mr. William Huxford's. He is one of my old School Mates.

August 11. Chappaquidic. This has been a day long to be remembered. Mr. William Huxford and his wife and Son Samuel and Myself went to the dyke. Saw the Herring Creek, saw the house where they Stay when they Catch herring. Was at Cape Poge Beach. Saw the old briny Ocean, it looked Splendid. Saw the Life Boat, a beautiful Boat. . . O how I have enjoyed this day's ramble upon this Beloved Isle.

August 12. Chappaquidic, Sunday. This is a beautiful day

... My health has much improved Since I came to Edgartown. The Sea breeze seems to benefit and Strengthen this feeble body.

This afternoon I had the unspeakable Pleasure of worshipping in the Sanctuary on Sampson's Hill. Heard Cousin Jeremiah Pease preach. . . [later] was at a Class Meeting on Sampson's Hill. Brother A. Marchant Spoke. . . the Lord Powerfully blest my Soul. . . a few faint wishes nor a few cold icy Prayers will never Save a Soul from death. . . Lord wake us up. Too many of us are idlers in the Vineyard of the Lord. . . I expected to go home tonight [to Edgarrown] after meeting. . . but we called at Mr. Thomas Huxford's and they wanted I Should Stay there all night, which I did. They have only one daughter living. His wife is Mrs. Gamaliel Fisher's daughter. . .

August 13. This morning went to Mr. Wm. Brown's. He married Mary Huxford. His father lives with him. His father Married my father's Sister for his Second Wife and She died April 23. 1837. Her name was Persis Dunham. . . Mr. Elijah P. Smith and Sister Margaret Ripley called this evening to See me. How rejoiced we were to Meet on earth again. Mr. Smith was one of my School Mates and Mrs. Ripley used to be at my father's a great deal.

August 14. Mrs. Sarah Smith called to see me, the wife of Benjamin C. Smith and Sister to Mrs. Ripley. Beulah Huxford called after tea. Sister Brown and Beulah and myself went down to the Shore. Staid 2 nights at Br. Brown's.

August 15. Today I went to Sister Ripley's. Her husband has gone on a long Voyage to sea.

August 17. This afternoon Sister Mary Brown and myself Spent at Mr. E. P. Smith's. He was not at home. His wife was a Nantucket Lady. She took me after tea to Brother Joseph Huxford's.

August 18. Today Mrs. Norton and I went to see the house where my grandfather Dunham used to live. O, how lonesome it looks. While I call to Memory Scenes of other years But they are gone and I too will Soon follow. No one living in the house. Next we went to the Common to pick Some huckleberries and Blackberries.

August 19. Five years ago today my dear Mother died. O.



Boarded-up sanctuary on Sampson's Hill, long after Serena went there.

how much I still miss her with the rest of my dear loved ones while I am permitted. . . to roam about this Beloved Isle once more, where many things remind me of my dear departed Parents.

August 12: Chappaquidic. Sunday. This afternoon I had the unspeakable pleasure of worshipping in the sanctuary on Sampson's Hill. My cousin, Jeremiah Pease Jun., preached.

August 19: This afternoon was at Sampson's Hill to meeting, Brother A. Marchant preached. . . After tea, Mrs. Norton and I took a walk to Uncle Elijah Pease's old house and barn, looked into the house where I had seen my dear beloved Uncle and Aunt hover around the family altar when I was a child. How vivid the scene of that morning appeared to my mind as though only a few days had elapsed. I stood for some Moments Gazing upon the Sacred Spot, how Many, Oh. how many Sacred Petitions had been Sent to high heaven from that hallowed room by that Sainted Man of God. . . from there we went to the Place where Uncle Francis Pease's house used to Stand, then down to the Shore a few moments and returned to the house and repaired again to the Church for Class Meeting, Brother Jeremiah Pease lead [led] the Class and we had a very profitable Meeting. There is some faithful Souls here. Oh, may the Lord increase their numbers. . . revive his work here.

August 20. This morning I left Mr. Huxford's and sailed down in Safety to Edgartown to Cousin I. D. Pease's and was welcomed home by all the household for which I felt very grateful.

Camp Meeting

August 21. . . . After dinner rode to the Camp meeting with Cousin I. D. Pease. Cousin Sylvanus had his tent fitted up for his Sister Polly, Mary Pent and Myself to lodge in. The most of the time in the daytime and evening that I had to Spare I chiefly Spent in the Edgartown tent. Mary Pent, with two other girls, boarded themselves and they invited Brother Benton to take tea with them. That afternoon after I had my tea I repaired to the tent and Brother Benton had prayers with us and it was a most Precious time. . . [Brother Benton was the Methodist minister in Edgartown. The term "Brother" did not denote family relationship, but religious. Serena and others called Methodist males "Brothers," females "Sisters.]

August 22. Wednesday. Wesleyan Grove Camp Meeting.

Brother P. Townsend Preached at 10 o'clock. . .

August 23. Br. Gould Preached in the Fall River tent. Brother Dunkersley preached. . . Brother Bailies preached. . . Brother Richards preached. . . Brother Sternes preached. . . Brother Chapman from Millville preached. . . [She doesn't date these entries, it seems they all preached on that one day.]

On the 24th I saw the wife of Mr. S. W. Wilson. I knew her the moment I Saw her. She looked so familiar. How it

Reminded me of bygone days and my dear Parents.

August 26. Sunday night. Brother S. Upham preached in the Edgartown tent . . . He is a young Preacher and bids fair for usefulness. Lord bless him.

August 28. This morning I felt very feeble in body and thought I would not go round to the Prayer Meetings until quite late, but we had no chance to have one as so many were Preparing to leave. I finally Concluded to go to the Millville tent where they were having an excellent Speaking Meeting at the time I went. I went in and Sat listening for Some time and heard one after another Arise and tell of the dealings of God to their Souls. I had not thought of taking any active Part with them. I thought I was not able and they were Mostly Strangers

to me with a very few exceptions. But while I was musing, the holy fire began to kindle in my poor heart and I thought I would just arise and tell them how glad I was to find the Same Religion there that we had in the West and how good the Lord had been to unworthy me. I had hardly more than rose to my feet before I received Such a Baptism of holy love that it appeared to me the very tent shined forth with the Glory of God. I felt "the Opening heavens around me Shine with beams of Sacred bliss. . . O, what a precious blessing. Glory be to God alone. I am a Sinner saved by Grace."

But duty called us to part and make the necessary arrangement for our departure. We returned home in a Packet. It was quite Rough coming down [to Edgartown] and Some were quite Sea Sick, but I was not. I felt a little light-headed for a short time. But my Soul was exceedingly happy. Praise the Lord, O my Soul.

We landed about Sunset and after taking some refreshments repaired to the Vestry for Prayer Meeting.

August 30. Edgartown. Nothing worthy of note has transpired during the day.

August 31. Was invited to Cousin Chase Pease's this afternoon. Mrs. Betsey Pease, was wife of Mr. John Pease, also Mrs. Charlotte Pease, wife of Mr. Daniel Pease, spent the afternoon with us.

September 1. Spent the Most of the day to Mr. J. Vinsons. . . The day closed and I Repaired to the Beloved Vestry for Prayer meeting. . .

September 2, Sunday. Sweet day of sacred Rest. Brother Benton [preached] . . . What Soul-Stirring Sermons this dear Minister of Christ Preaches and yet how unmoved many are. Lord Save the church is my prayer. . . After Meeting, Brother and Sister Benton invited me to go and take tea with them. . . After tea we had a Precious Season of Prayer together . . . Brother Benton and myself went to the Prayer Meeting. Sister Benton could not conveniently go. We had a precious Prayer Meeting.

September 3. After dinner called at Mrs. M. Vinson's, from there to Cousin Jedidah Pease's. While there, Mr. Wm.

Brown and wife came from Chappaquidic for me to go home with them. I returned home to my Cousin's, got myself ready and Met them at Sister Susan Pease's, then we took the Rough and Ready Sail Boat and Sailed 3 miles or more against the wind and landed at Brother Brown's [on Chappaquiddick].

September 4, Chappaquidic. This morning Sister Margaret Ripley called to See me and invited me there to Spend the afternoon and Night. We had a Good Profitable time last night at Brother Brown's around the family Altar. Spent the time very profitably with Sister Ripley. Her Sister, Sarah Smith, was sent for and came. Her health is very Poor but she is an excellent woman. Mrs. Sally Norton called to see me and brought me a letter from Mrs. Nancy D. Pratt, Bridgewater, my niece by marriage. Mrs. Norton was the daughter of Mr. Joseph Dunham.

September 5. This day, Sister Mary Brown and I spent to Mr. Tisdel Smith's. We called at Mr. Wm. Huxford's and Mr. S. Huxford's, Sister Margaret Ripley came and spent the afternoon with us here. I can truly say with the Poet, "I still view the chairs of my father and Mother, The seats of their offspring arranged on each hand, While that richest of Books, that excelled every other, the family Bible that lay on the Stand."

O, What a Solemn Gloomy day I spent when I look at the dark Side of the Picture and dwell upon my childhood years when I was rambling about this house and Place free, as it were, from earthly cares and Sorrows. . . O, Saviour, drive this Sadness from my heart. I sorrow not as those who have no hope. No, thank God.

After tea, Sister Sarah Smith and Sister M. Smith called, wife of Mr. Thomas Smith. Mrs. M. Smith invited me there. The next day I went to Mr. Wm. Huxford's and staid all night. Here I slept in the same room my Parents had lived in when I was a small child. . .

September 8. I have staid two nights at Mr. Wm. Huxford's. I have not made near all the visits I wanted to. . . but think I have done the very best I could. I feel very grateful for the kindness and affection shown me upon this Beloved Isle. This is a dear place to me and I should rejoice to hail them all in that better land above. . . I should have been much

pleased could I consistently stay for another Meeting, But farewell ye Old Soldiers of the Cross, ere long "We'll Meet Where Congregations never break up and Sabbaths never Shall end.". . This morning Mr. William Huxford brought me down to the Point and we crossed the harbour and was Safe once more in Edgartown. . . returned home to Cousin I. D. Pease's. I spent the afternoon at Cousin Jedidah Pease's . . . In the evening attended the Prayer Meeting. . . Went to the Lovefeast. Brother Donkersley, Br. Benton were there. Quite a Profitable Meeting. After Lovefeast, a Sermon by Brother Dunkersley. . . I think I never heard a Minister but once before take two texts and I am not Positive I ever did. This afternoon Br. Donkersley Preached. . . Br. Benton exhorted some and we had a few Prayers, but the heat being so great Meeting closed very early. Br. Donkersly spoke also.

September 10. After dinner Cousin Chase Pease Jun., called to see if I would go to the South Beach with him and his wife and little Frederick Sayer. We called at Cousin Chase Jun.'s farm and looked round some. Cousin Chase was there at work. Mr. Daniel Coffin used to own it, Cousin Chase's fatherin-law. There is a beautiful view of the vessels from there upon the Ocean. Saw the house at a distance belonging to Dr. Fisher. Stopped at the Place Where Uncle Noah Pease was born, a Cellar, mostly filled up and some Small Stones are the only remaining, if I remember rightly. Solemn Place. It looks lonely and Sad and yet beautiful. He no doubt rests from his labours. [Uncle Noah was Jeremiah Pease's father.]

We stopped next to the Herring Creek, passed on to the Beach where we picked Shells and Sea Moss and then Sat down and watched the rolling Waves of old Ocean. We had a most Splendid time. How I enjoyed it. It was beautiful to behold the Proud Waves, one after another rolling up in Grandeur against the Seashore. Who could doubt but there is a God? How "He can Calm the troubled Ocean and Cause all its raging to Cease." How beautiful to look upon nature in all its loveliness and then look up to Nature's God.

We returned home and it was nearly time for tea. The distance is about 3 miles over the Plain, a beautiful level.

result from this meeting.

Sermon. . . Br. Jernigan and Br. Pease Spoke afterward. I Spoke Myself and was Powerfully blest. O, may some good

Sister Ann Smith rode up with Cousin Isaiah and I to the Meeting and as she Stepped from the Carriage she fell and put her Collar bone out of place and hurt her considerable. We did not know she was hurt much until next morning.

September 15. Called to See Sister Ann Smith this morning. Found her sitting up in her Chair. She had had her Shoulder fixed, appeared quite Cheerful. . .

[Cousin Jeremiah Pease's diary: "September 15. Set K. Smith's Wife's shoulder & collar bone."]

Called this afternoon at Cousin Jeremiah Pease's and to his Son Jun. Pease, had an introduction to Mr. Frederick Pease and his wife. Henrietta Harlow called, at Sister Susan Pease's and to Sister Powers a few moments and returned home in time for tea. In the evening went to the Prayer Meeting. We had a very good Meeting.

September 16. This is the holy Sabbath, Sweet day of Sacred rest. Brother Benton Preached. . . O, what earnest Pleading with the members of the Church to better themselves and how unmoved to all outward appearance the Congregation Seemed. I felt like weeping over them. Many of them be very near my heart. I long to See them taking higher ground, advancing, growing in Grace and in the knowledge of the truth, coming out from among the world. We certainly will never get to heaven on flowery beds of ease. We must fight if we expect to reign.

This afternoon Brother Benton [preached]. . . In the evening, Prayer Meeting in the Vestry. A very Profitable meeting to Some of us at least. There are Some faithful souls here, that is certain, but O, Lord, revive thy work in all our hearts and may the whole church be alive to God.

September 17. Called this afternoon to Cousin Chase Pease and Almira and Hannah Pease went with me to the Methodist Church and up in the Tower. There is a beautiful view from there but it became so foggy we could not see so far.

I have been Preparing to leave for New Bedford tomorrow but the weather this afternoon is so unfavorable and Cousin

September 11. Brother Benton and Brother Donkersley called this morning with some Books to Sell. Cousin Jerusha bought a little book called *The Living Streams From the Fountain of Life* and gave it to me. O May its Sacred Pages Prove a great and lasting to my Soul.

Cousin Isaiah invited me this afternoon to go with him to Mrs. Betsey Vinson's. She is a Member of the Baptist Church. A fine old lady. I think 82 years of age. She appears to be quite Smart for a Woman of her Years, but what is still better She enjoys Religion. Her Son and his family live with her. I was much pleased with my visit to this dear family, may heaven's choicest blessing rest upon them.

From there we visited Mr. Henry Ripley. He is a Methodist, another old Soldier of the Cross, happy too. O, how it Cheered my poor heart to hear these aged Veterans talk of the Comforts of Religion. I felt as though we ought not to have left either of these Places without Prayer. My Soul was so full I would have esteemed it a Privilege to Pray. . . We returned home in time for tea. Sister Mary W. Pease took tea with us, Cousin Richard's wife. The bell rang and we repaired to the Vestry for Prayer meeting. Sweet Place of Worship. . .

September 12. Spent the day at Cousin Richard L. Pease's, in Company with Cousin Jerusha Pease. Cousin Isaiah took dinner with us. Miss Elizabeth Pease is sister to Cousin Mary West Pease and Mrs. Mary Pease is wife of Mr. Freeman Pease. He is a Carpenter. They spent the afternoon with us and Cousin Jedidah and Cousin Isaiah came in time for tea. We had a good visit. We also spent the evening there.

September 13. Spent the day to Cousin Chase P. Jun.'s. He has a very interesting wife. How I would love to see her converted. I have felt drawn out after her Soul's eternal Welfare. Lord Save, O, Save now. We must be born again.

In the evening went with Cousin Isaiah to his class at Sister Rebecca Vinson's. Miss Catherine Bassett boards there. I used to go to School to her when quite young. We had a very good Class Meeting.

September 14. Today I have called on Cousin Richard L. Pease and Cousin Chase Jun. Spent the afternoon at Brother Nathaniel Jermigan's. Brother Benton Preached a short

Sylvanus Pease's wife So low we gave up the idea. Called at Sister M. Vinson's and Cousin Chase's.

September 19. This morning 25 mins. before 5 o'clock, Cousin Silvanus L. Pease's wife [Nancy] departed this life in hope of a blissful immortality. She was 34 years old last Feb. [She died after childbirth.] She was a devoted Christian, enjoyed the life and Power of Religion and a very useful Member of the Church of Christ. How often have I been blest While conversing with her upon the Subject of Religion. How I used to love to go there, but She has bid us farewell till we meet above.

This afternoon we attended the funeral of Mr. Oliver Norton. He was aged 79 last Feb. He has [been] for some length of time past considerably deranged in Mind. Brother Benton attended to the funeral Service. After funeral, Sister Mary Pent and I called at Cousin Sylvanus's, found him as much composed as could be expected. . Brother Benton called and Prayed with him. . Called to see Sister Ann Smith, found her quite Comfortable. Lord bless her afflictions to the good of her Soul.

September 20. Called this morning to see Cousin Sylvanus, but did not see him. May the good Lord be a present help in this time of trouble. This morning, his little babe left this world of sin and sorrow. [Cousin Sylvanus had lost both his wife and baby.]

Called to see Sister Susan Pease. We had a good talk about Religion. How I love those that care about My blessed Savior. Her husband [Francis Pease] has gone to sea. May the Lord bless him and bring him home in Safety and Prosperity.

This evening went to Class with Brother Pease to Sister Vinson's. We had a blessed Meeting, a Soul-reviving time. Brother Benton led the Class. What a Precious Minister. How encouraging he talked to the young. Lord keep them by Power Divine. Make them bold Soldiers of the Cross of Christ.

Cousin Sprowell and wife and Mrs. Oliver came today in the Steamboat and Stay until Monday.

September 21. This morning was at Brother Balies [Baylies] Store. His Mother was there. He gave me an introduction to her. She is quite well and Smart for a lady her Age [Sally, 81].

This afternoon we attended funeral Service at Cousin Sylvanus. L. Pease's. Brother Benton Spoke and Prayed with deep feeling. What a Solemn time. Solemn as Eternity.

We waited some time for two Packets that were in Sight to land, thinking Perhaps Cousin Nancy's Parents were on board, but they were not there. They live at Bristol. They had left home on Monday and on Friday are not here.

We then followed our dear beloved Cousin Nancy S. Pease and her Precious little babe to the lonely tomb to deposit there until Sabbath. While were at the house of mourning, the floor gave way so we had to move while Brother Benton was Speaking. Perhaps if we had not changed our Position it would have fallen through but there being no Cellar under it. . . it could not have fallen very far.

[Jeremiah Pease Diary: "Funeral of Sister [Nancy] Pease. Service by Rev'd Sanford Benton. It was a solemn event. The Infant was placed upon her arm in the same coffin. Her Father and Mother did not arrive from Bristol in time for the Funeral. She was deposited in a Tomb to wait their arrival."]

September 22. This has been the most rainy day since I came here. We have had a very dry Summer and Fall so far. Everything a long time ago Seemed Parched with drought. Corn crops especially will be greatly injured.

This afternoon I intended to visit Sister Benton but the rain prevented me.

September 23, Sunday.... We have just returned from the funeral of our dear departed Cousin Nancy S. Pease. Brother Benton Preached it in the Church at 2½ o'clock... After the Sermon we went to the Burying ground and her remains were taken from the lonely tomb and deposited in the grave, until the Resurrection Morn. [She then copied a long poem on the subject of Resurrection.]

What a Solemn day this has been to me. I expect this to be the last Sabbath in all Probability I shall ever have the Privilege to spend on Martha's Vineyard. How hard to part with beloved Cousins and friends of mine. In the evening was at the Prayer meeting. A goodly number Present. But O how few, comparatively Speaking, to labor in the Vineyard of the Lord. O, Wake Up this dying Assembly.

[Jeremiah Pease Diary: Sept. 23, 1855: "The funeral sermon was preached by Br. Benson upon the death of Sister Nancy Pease. There were a great number present. The corps was deposited in a Tomb until the arrival of her parents from Bristol, they came on Saturday. After the funeral service the connections and friends walked in procession to the Church yard, where the corps was removed from the Tomb to the grave and deposited there, it was a solemn season."]

2 or 3 Smacks came in, or vessels, the hands are Sick. Five in number in one vessel and Some of them in the other were sick. They were from South Carolinia [sic].

September 24. This evening Cousin I. D. Pease and I went to Cousin Jeremiah Pease's and from there to Cousin Sylvanus L. Pease's. Found him quite composed. We had a good Religious conversation with his father and Mother Sayer [Sylvanus's in-laws]. How cheering it was to See them So composed in the Midst of trouble. May heaven bless them in their declining years.

September 25. This is the last day I ever expect to Spend on this Beloved Isle. I feel Solemn to part with these dear previous friends, No More to Meet on earth. This Morning Cousin Fanny Pease and I went to the house where I was born in July 21st, 1809. Mr. Nathaniel Vinson lives there. From there we went to the old Burying ground, but I had neither a Pencil nor Paper for which neglect I was very Sorry . . . Saw one Grave stone dated 1702, another 1705, another 1711. Some of them we could not read, time had completely erased them from Memory.

We spent some time wandering among the graves, from there we called at the house where Mr. Joseph Dunham formerly lived. From there we called at Mrs. Lucy Coffin's . . . [came] home and invited to dine at Chase Pease's. After dinner returned home and Cousin Jerusha and I took our last walk together. Dear Sister how I Shall Miss her. She was always so kind to me and I have become greatly attached to her. [Jerusha was the wife of Cousin Isaiah Pease, Sheriff of Dukes Countyl. . . We called to See Sister Ann Smith, from there we called at Mrs. Benton's. They were not at home. From there we called on Sister Rebecca Vinson and returned home very tired. A

great many more I should rejoice to have called on but my feeble body must have some rest.

In the evening Brother Benton called on us and Sister Mary W[ass] Pease [wife of Tristram D. Pease] and Sister Rebecca Worth before the Prayer Meeting. We Soon repaired to the Vestry for the last Prayer meeting with this dear People.

The pale moon was shining forth in all its richest splendor of a September even. Well do I remember how beautiful all Nature seemed as we wended our way to the last Prayer Meeting. . . It truly was a solemn time. Never shall I forget this last Prayer Meeting on Martha's Vineyard. How hard it is to Part with this dear Christian People. The beloved Pastor of this flock and his dear blessed wife and those dear Precious girls that I have been trying to Persuade to give their youthful hearts wholly to the Lord. . . How near to my heart they lie, how they gathered around me after Meeting, how loath we were to leave the Place. Sister Frances M. Jernigan, Sister Mary Pent, and Rebecca Worth all went with me home to the yard. Br. Pease was not with us tonight. He had to attend to the Post Office. How I would like for him to have been there. It was such a good meeting. [Cousin Sylvanus Pease was the Edgartown Postmaster, 1853-71.]

This evening Br. Pease asked me to Pray at the family altar. . . My heart felt almost too Sad to lead in the devotions, But I tried to lift my heart to God. . . What would I do without the comforts of this blessed Religion? . . O, how I have dreaded the parting scene. May Good give me sustaining Grace.

September 26. New Bedford. This morning Several called to See me before I left, Cousin Chase Pease and his daughters, Fanny and Almira. Cousins Richard, Isaiah Jun., and Sylvanus, Cousin Polly L. and little Henrietta Harlow, Cousin Jedidah P., Marion Pease, Ellen Pease, Frances M. Jernigan and perhaps I may not have all their names but it was my intention to have. Several of these Precious loved friends called at my Cousin's in the morning to accompany me to the Boat. While some of these met me at the Boat and tarried as long as possible and then Stood Some time upon the Wharf [in Edgartown] until we were gone. This has been a Severe trial, more so perhaps because I have kept it hidden in my own heart as much as Possible.

[Jeremiah Pease Diary, September 26:.." Our Cousin Serena Hall (Widow), Daughter of Uncle Seth and Aunt Mahal Dunham, having been here several weeks on a visit from Ohio, set out for her residence in Ohio. She is a pious woman."]

How hard the Struggle, how hard to leave the Sweet land of my birth. . . The Place Where My dear Parents had lived. . .

Cousin Isaiah accompanied me to New Bedford to his son's, Sprowell Pease. We had a beautiful time this morning coming over. We could not have asked for a more Pleasant Morn. By keeping in the open Air, I was only sick a few moments and that happened to be just as I had an Introduction to some lady that appeared very Anxious to See me, but had not had the Opportunity. I felt very Sorry I could not converse with her, nor could I offer any Apology at the time and afterward had no Opportunity or did not see her and do not recollect her name.

Cousin Sprowell met us on the Boat and we soon were within his dwelling and treated with great kindness and respect. After noon, Cousin Francis and Mrs. A. Oliver took a walk to reconnoiter the City, it being time of the Cattle Show (we call it a fair in Ohio). The streets were sometimes very much crowded. In the evening, Sprowell invited his father and I to go with him to hear the Singing but we. . . chose to go to Prayer Meeting we had a most Precious Meeting. . .

Afterwords

[She stayed in New Bedford a few days. She had a Daguerreotype taken and was pleased with it. Then she went to North Bridgewater where she stayed some weeks with her brother-in-law, Ebenezer Hall. She was not happy there because the family had no religion, at least not enough to be saved. It isn't clear why she was there so long. She wrote that she had to wait for a letter from a Mrs. Dunn. Nearly a month after leaving the Island, she wrote to Isaiah from North Bridgewater::

How lonely I feel here with no Christian company and no Methodist meeting. . . the last meeting I was at was in New Bedford. I would not live here could I possess the whole world. I am waiting for a letter from Mrs. Dunn for to know when to start for the West. Soon as I get home, if I live, I will write. . .

Your affectionate cousin, Serena P. Hall.

Some weeks after she arrived home in Ohio, she wrote Isaiah: Amelia, Ohio. November 5, 1855.

Dear Beloved Cousin, You must pardon me for not writing by the first mail . . . I have had so much company since I came home that I hardly have time to eat, drink or sleep. . . . I left Bridgewater on the 29th. . .We left Boston Tuesday morning, 30th, ½ past 8 o'clock, and arrived in Cincinnati Thursday morning, I think ¼ after 7 o'clock. Then I took an omnibus, went to Mr. Samuel Birdwell's on Broadway, a Brother of Cyrus Dunham's wife. Staid there until after dinner when our Amelia omnibus called there for me, the Conductor appeared very happy that I had got safe in Ohio once more. His family lives but a few steps from me.

I arrived home between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening. My children were expecting me. . . We met with no accident on our way except our engine gave out once about 7 miles from Albany and we had to back down to Albany and get another. We were detained. . . I was out 2 nights instead of one coming back to Cincinnati. I staid at my brother-in-law's [in Bridgewater] just 3 weeks. . . They were very kind to me and did all they could that I might enjoy my visit, but the one thing needful appeared to be forgotten, no family prayer, no religious Company, could I find anywhere about there . . . how slowly did the hours and days and weeks toll by. My Soul longed for the company of some Christian friend. Some of the family belonged to the Unitarians, but I never should have known it had I not enquired. May heaven wake up such coldhearted professors. . . Oh! I could not live where there was no Methodist Society.

Our Society appears to be prospering. I should think there was a fair prospect for a revival. O, may the good Lord grant to hasten the happy time is my prayer. . .

Ever let me have our interest in your prayers is the request of your unworthy cousin, Serena P. Hall.

As far as we can learn that trip in 1855 was the last time Serena visited the Island. Her favorite cousin, Sheriff Isaiah D. Pease of Edgartown, died in 1862. We have no record of when Serena died, but believe it was in the late 1860s.

There were many stillborn births.

Obstetrics in the Late 1800s, As Recorded by Dr. Winthrop Butler

by ARTHUR R. RAILTON

The EXPECTANT MOTHER goes into labor with great joy – the baby she has carried inside her body for months will soon be in her arms. Sadly, occasionally her baby is stillborn and her great joy becomes great sadness.

That sadness happened much more often 100 years ago, according to the records of Dr. Winthrop Butler of Vineyard Haven. Of the 549 births he attended from 1869 to 1903, 36 were stillborn: 6.5% of the total, about 10 times the current rate. Of course, that is not a fair comparison as Dr. Butler's patients were not a scientific sampling of Island pregnancies. He delivered babies only to those who called for him. Many more babies were delivered without his presence and we don't know how many of them were stillborn.

Dr. Butler kept a detailed record of his obstetrics cases, the only such Island record we know of. As such it deserves more careful study than this author is qualified to give it, but certain facts stand out even to a layman.

First, a summary of the life of Dr. Butler.

Winthrop Butler was born in Vineyard Haven (then Holmes Hole) in 1838, the son of Matthew P. and Martha Allen. Their home was about where the fire station is today, across from the Tisbury Inn. He attended the public grammar school. For one year, he went to the Cushing Family School in Middleboro, returning to study for another year at the Dukes County Academy in West Tisbury, which was then very small and had not yet built the three-story structure it is best known for (now the West Tisbury Town Hall).

ARTHUR R.. RAILTON is Editor of this journal. He has empathy for the parents of stillborn babies and for the doctors who deliver them. In 1946, the first child he and his late wife, Marjorie, had was a perfect boy, who died during labor. Their grief was long-lasting, even the later births of four healthy babies could not totally assuage it.

It isn't certain what he did next. He was 21 years old. Although he had no formal medical education, it seems that he began practicing medicine. When he was 23, he joined the U. S. Navy in the Civil War. The *Vineyard Gazette* ran this news item, calling him a doctor:

May 2, 1862. Dr. Winthrop Butler of Holmes Hole named assistant surgeon and ordered to report to gunboat W. G. Anderson, Charlestown Navy Yard.

He was soon transferred to the vessel *Pensacola* in the Gulf of Mexico stationed off New Orleans. He went ashore occasionally to treat the wounded. By January 1864, he was aboard the U.S.S. *Saratoga* off Charleston, S. C. The Society has a small and barely legible journal he kept during some of these years. It tells little about the war.

In the midst of his service, he returned to the Vineyard to marry Adelaid Howland. In that journal:

November 8, 1864 Sunday. Addie & I were married at 11/4 p.m., by Mr. M. P. Aldeman. From Mother, Cash \$100.00

Nov. 9. Addie & I started for New Bedford at 9 a.m., arrived at 2½ p.m. Fares \$2.00. From Mother's money deposited \$100.00. Stopped at the Parker House [New Bedford\. Beckie Hyland came to see us. Hack: .50

Nov. 10. Left for Phila. at 3:40 p.m. Gave \$100.00 to Addie.

The brief honeymoon over, he left his bride and went to Philadelphia to board the U.S. Steamer *Powhatan*, which took him to Delaware where he joined the U. S. Sloop of War *Saratoga* as assistant surgeon. While on her, he took part in a land expedition that captured a group of Confederates who were organizing a coast guard against the Union blockade. The Society has a typed copy of a report that mentions him: "Dr. Winthrop Butler accompanied the expedition as surgeon."

After the war, he entered Harvard Medical School, graduating one year later in March 1866 (doctors had less to learn in those days). He then practiced medicine in Groveland, Massachusetts, for a year before returning to Vineyard Haven to spend the rest of his life as one of the town's doctors. Thirty years later, he was one of eight doctors in Vineyard Haven, according to the Directory of 1897. On the entire Island there were 26 doctors, many of them in Cottage City, probably only

in summer. (The Island's year-round population was only 4560 in 1900.)

He and his wife, Addie, as he called her (they seemed to have had no children), lived on the corner of Spring and Franklin Streets, not far from today's Town Hall (then a church). As his practice grew, he opened an office on Main Street, just a block down the hill.

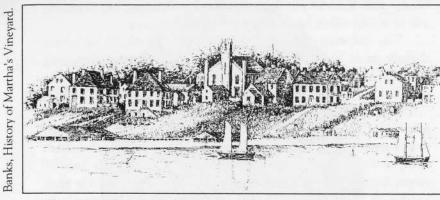
It was not easy to make a living as a doctor. House calls being the norm, you spent much of your time in a carriage going to the patient's home. From Vineyard Haven, Dr. Butler attended patients as far away as Gay Head, a call that took a whole day.

His fee was \$1 for a house call. Of course, \$1 was a day's pay for an ordinary working man so that was a lot more money than it seems now. Normally, babies were born without a physician being present. Midwives, who for years had been the ones to call, had begun to lose their status as more doctors became available. A normal delivery required little outside help and doctors were usually called only when problems developed. If all was normal, the mother's female friends were in attendance to help.

When Dr. Butler began practicing, obstetrics had started to provide an important part of a doctor's income. It was so important to him that he kept a separate account book for "Obstetrics." His records show that from 1869 to 1903, he was called to attend 549 births, an average of 16 a year. His fee for an obstetrics case was \$10, seemingly whether the baby arrived quickly or he was there all day. In addition to the 36 stillborn infants, another nine died within a few days.

The \$10 fee was more than he made in all other cases on an average day. So it is no surprise that he would be willing to go as far as Gay Head by horse and buggy to attend a birth. Not until the late 1880s were a few telephones available on the Island, so there was often a long delay before he got the call and even longer before he got to the bedside. It is no surprise that frequently the baby arrived before he did. It happened in 18 of the 549 cases. It is a wonder that it wasn't more frequent.

There was little, if any, prenatal care. A pregnant woman was expected to live normally right up to the moment labor



Tisbury Main Street in 1838, the year Winthrop Butler was born nearby. In 1883, most of what is shown here was destroyed in Tisbury's great fire.

pains began. Then, if at all, the doctor would be called.

Besides recording the births and their complications, Dr. Butler occasionally noted when the parents had married (if it was their first child). He was rather Puritanical about that. It was none of his business, of course. Sometimes he seemed unduly suspicious as when, after delivering a healthy child in North Tisbury, he wrote:

July 16, 1873. . . These parties were married Nov. 28, 1872. The child was evidently fully developed.

One would think that he would have given them the benefit of the doubt in such a close call (it was only a month early).

In at least ten cases, he delivered babies to unmarried women. In three of them, the child was either stillborn or died soon after birth.

His obstetrics account book is one of four account books he kept and is the only one that gives medical details. The other three are simply records of amounts owed and amounts paid, such as a shop owner would keep.

His patients ranged from the impoverished to the wealthy. The likelihood of being paid did not seem to be a factor in the cases he took. As a result, he had trouble collecting what he was owed. In the front of one of the account books he covered an entire page with arithmetic and columns of outstanding bills. He lists the owed money under three headings: "Doubt,"

"Bad," and "Good." He does not date his figuring, but it clearly was at a time when he was worried about finances.

The columns show that he was owed \$1488.63 of which slightly more than \$600 was in the "Good" column, meaning likely to be paid. There is a disorderliness to numbers on the page so this interpretation may be incorrect.

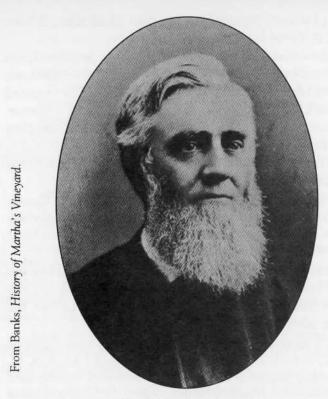
How often he was paid on the spot for his services we have no way of knowing. Such payments don't seem to be entered anywhere in the books. Occasionally, he was paid by other than cash, as for example when Mrs. Mercy Lambert gave him 26 empty bottles he credited her account with 26 cents. (He took bottles at one cent each from several other patients.) In another instance, Charles Gifford was credited with \$1.87½ for a turkey. And Capt. Lot Luce balanced his entire account with "a stove."

Doctors did not make a lot of money during those years. They ranked at the lower end of the middle class until the early 1900s when preventive medicine, surgery, hospitals and other demands for their services brought enough income to move them up financially. This was helped, of course, by the growth of the middle and upper classes, their primary income sources.

Reading his account book provides more than a medical education. In the books he often listed the father's occupation and the mother's first name, both items difficult to find elsewhere. He also lists "color" or race, in the rare cases of non-white patients. At this time there were not many blacks on the Island, but he did have among his patients a few of "mixed" race, most often black and Indian. He delivered a few babies to Portuguese parents, but he did not list them as "colored."

When Dr. Butler suffered a stroke in 1903 at age 65. he retired. He was a friend of Dr. Charles E. Banks, the Navy doctor who served in the Island's navy hospital during Butler's last years. Banks, in his two-volume History of Martha's Vineyard, described him as "the typical physician of the old school of gentlemen, courteous in every relation of life, generous to a fault, charitable in his estimates and splendid in his standards of action."

When Dr. Butler died in 1907 there were two practicing physicians in Vineyard Haven: Dr. Orlando S. Mayhew (his



DR. WINTHROP BUTLER 1838 – 1907

young neighbor) and Dr. Charles F. Lane, more famous today for his telephone company than for his medicine. A third doctor, Frank B. Look, ran a "sanatorium" in the village until his death in 1908, but he seemed not to have other patients.

The excerpts from the "Obstetrics" account book of Dr. Butler published below mostly involve stillborn births or births of infants who died soon after delivery. Also included are accounts of births with other unusual complications. In his later years, he rarely made comments about normal deliveries, but he did record each birth, giving it a number:

No. 5. Miss Ellen Daggett, October 16, 1869. Male. Small and emaciated. Died in a few days.

No. 13. December 29, 1870. Miss Hannah Nevers, Christiantown (Colored). Reputed father, Peter Lynch. Child born

when I arrived. Removed the placenta. Child white. [Underlining in original.]

In both of these early cases the mother was unmarried, but Dr. Butler made no mention of that fact. Later, as we shall see, he began to label such infants as "Illegitimate." The "reputed father, Peter Lynch," above, was an Irish immigrant, a laborer. He later married the mother, Hannah (part Indian), and they had several more children with Dr. Butler.

One of the most unusual (and unpleasant) stillborn births occurred early in his practice:

No. 14. Jan. 6, 1871. Mrs. Renear, wife of H. Renear. Stillborn foetus of about 4th mo. Since 4th mo. felt no motions. Seven months after this, the foetus was delivered, completely mummyfied. Carried the foetus 11 months!!

The first time Dr. Butler used anesthesia during labor was that same year, 1871. Such usage was just starting on the Vineyard. Chloroform and later ether were given to ease the most severe labor pains:

No. 23. Sarah O. Luce, wife of Capt. Barnard Luce. Called at 8 p.m., Oct. 11. Pains gradually increased until 1 a.m. Oct. 12, when they became quite severe. Still increased in force until 8:15 a.m., Oct. 12, when "waters broke." At 11:30 a.m., gave Chloroform. At 12:45 p.m., the child was born. Placenta delivered in a few minutes.

The child was a "Healthy Male, 9 lbs., 1 ounce," but died March 1 of the following year. No cause of death was given.

His first delivery in 1872 was a stillborn:

No. 25. January 3. Julia A. Davis, wife of Henry H. Davis. Child stillborn, apparently dead, say 10 days. Bones of cranium loose and epidermis pulling off at the slightest friction. Labor easy and normal in other respects.

Dr. Butler covered the western half of the Island from his office in Vineyard Haven. The day after Mrs. Davis delivered her stillborn infant, he was called to Gay Head by a Mrs. Vanderhoop, no first name given. Dr. Luce was already there. Dr. Butler listed her as "Mixed. African & Indian" and the father as "Lighthouse Keeper" so she was probably Ethel Manning Vanderhoop, wife of Charles Vanderhoop:

No. 26. Jan 4, 1872. Taken in labor Monday p.m. Tuesday a.m. they called Dr. W.H. Luce of W. Tisbury. Pains insufficient and irregular. I was sent for Thursday p.m. I arrived at 8:40 p.m. Administered 11:15 p.m., Gossypium [?]. . repeated dose in about 40 minutes. Child born before 12 midnight. Dead. Placenta separated at about 3 p.m., so the Dr. thought (Dr. Wm H. Luce in charge.)

Two months later, he was called to Menemsha during a blizzard. Snow drifts forced him to abandon his carriage:

No. 27. March 24, 1872. At Menampshee [sic]. Reached there with great difficulty owing to drifting snow. Broke whiffletree & thill in the attempt. Left the carriage in the snow and walked two miles.

After all that walking through the snow, he delivered a healthy male infant of 10 pounds to Mary C. (Athearn) Flanders, 25, wife of Edy Flanders. Previously, she had had a miscarriage at seven months so the doctor was concerned, but all went well.

Such was not the case with Mrs. Katie Greene, wife of Hamilton Greene, a leading businessman in Cottage City, whose baby was premature and stillborn:

No. 29. April 21, 1872. . . About ½ past 5 a.m. of April 21*, [she] had a severe convulsion. I was immediately called, arrived at ½ past 6, found her in a state of considerable excitement and strongly inclined to convulsions, vomiting everything, etc. At 7:15 a.m. while I was making arrangements to send for Dr. Luce of W. Tisbury, she had another attack which lasted, including the period of insensibility, something like an hour. Gave chloroform. No more convulsions. Slight labor pains came on, gradually increasing in force until 3 p.m. when a foetus of 6½ mo. was expelled. The membrane and placenta soon came after. Dr. Luce arrived at about 11 a.m.

Soon after that he started being curious about when parents of first-borns had married and recording the date in his record book. Sometimes, it was not hard to make a judgment:

No. 32. June 17, 1872. Annie, wife of Presbury L. Cromwell. Child born at 12:15 a.m. Female. Parties married, say 4 or 5 months before.

His Puritanic mind must have been overjoyed a month later when he went to Christiantown to deliver a healthy baby girl to the former Miss Hannah Nevers. She now was Mrs. Peter Lynch; the Indian maiden had married the Irishman:

No. 35. July 15, 1872. Hannah wife of Peter Lynch. Christiantown. Mother mixed, white & Indian. father Irish. American born. Female [infant].

Giving birth was less happy for Mrs. Crocker, wife of R. W. Crocker Jr., owner of the harness works, the town's largest employer. After a labor of more than 38 hours, she delivered a dead infant:

No. 38. Clara, wife of R. W. Crocker Jr. Tuesday 20th August. Called at 10 p.m. Sunday 18th. Water broke early. Pains quite regular but not strong until 3:30 a.m. of Tuesday when a still born male child was born. Gave Chloroform. Drew off 3 pts. urine the next morning after birth of child.

The Crockers were unlucky with their pregnancies. On November 5 of the next year, Clara Crocker delivered another stillborn baby, this time after a much shorter labor, 10 hours:

No. 60. November 5, 1873. Called at 12:30 a.m. Pains regular and increasing steadily, not strong until 1:10 a.m. when the contractions became suddenly energetic. Examined and found bones of head loose and easily compressed, diagnosed a stillborn child. In a few moments the child was delivered dead and apparently had been so for some time. Epidermis peeling off easily. Gave ether during the severe pain.

Dr. Butler was always ready to hitch up his horse and carriage to attend a patient, even on Christmas eve. On that festive night in 1873, a black woman whose full name he didn't seem to know, called for his help. He didn't bother to record where the Tuckers lived, but he made their Christmas happy:

No. 42. Tucker (Colored). Wife born in Africa, Island of Johanus. Female [baby]. Called at about 7 p.m. Found that the patient had been having labor pains since the night before. Not severe until I was called. At 9:30 p.m., increased in severity . . . at 10:30 p.m. child delivered. December 24, 1872. [Double underlining by doctor.]

When Charlotte, wife of A. Herbert Look of North

Tisbury, gave birth to a healthy male child on July 16, 1873, the doctor again worried about possible misbehavior, excessively so, it would seem:

These parties were married Nov. 23, 1872. The child was evidently fully developed. Weight: 7 ½ lbs.

As with the Crockers, bad luck seemed to be the fate of Mr. and Mrs. Henry H. Davis of Oak Bluffs. In January 1872, their first child was stillborn. Then nearly two years later:

No. 63. December 8, 1873. Julia A., wife of Henry H. Davis. . Membrane tense and ruptured at the slightest touch. . . Pains immediately commenced to be severe. Child born at 5:30 p.m., dead apparently but a few hours at most. Effort at resuscitation ineffectual. No known cause for death.

Early in January 1874, Dr. Butler sailed to Woods Hole to attend a patient, a former Island resident. Dr. Luce of Vineyard Haven was also in attendance:

No. 64. Rebecca Cahoun, née Hinckley. Resident of Woods Hole, Falmouth. Called to consult with Dr. Lyman H. Luce. Left Vd. Haven at about 7:30 p.m., Jan. 5, on the schooner Oliver Cromwell, Capt. Benj. Dexter, Master. Arrived at Woods Hole after 10 p.m., same day. Found Mrs. Cahoun had been in labor since Sunday previous at 5 a.m. The patient was, say, 34 years old. First pregnancy. No complications except rigid os [opening to vagina]. Advised, as the strength was good, pains regular, to wait a while. In the meantime, advised emetic, warm douche to the os. . . seemed to do no good. Gave Morphine Sulphate, after which the os dilated slowly and at 6 a.m., Jan'y. 6th, the [female] child was born. 9½ lbs.

Blacks were living in the campground at that time as this record by Dr. Butler verifies:

No. 67. April 24, 1874. Rucker (Colored) Camp Ground. Born before my arrival.

Although the doctor does not give the mother's first name (not unusual with his "colored" patients), she was no doubt Eunice Rocker (he had spelled it "Rucker"), whose father, William Madison, had built the house on the campground in the 1840s where she was living with her mother. She married Anton Rocker in 1866 and with him had eight children, the

last being delivered by Dr. Butler on July 30, 1881, a few months after her husband died.

Eur.ice Rocker became a town pauper and was the subject of much legal controversy later over which town, Edgartown or Cottage City, was responsible for her upkeep in her old age. She had lived on the campground when it was part of Edgartown, hence the dispute. Neither town was responsible, it was ruled; she was declared the responsibility of the state.

She and her eight children in 1883 were taken from their campground home by force and moved into the Alms House in Tewksbury. A sorrowful ending to the story of a family, a mixture of white, black and Indian, whose members had worked hard, built houses in which they lived, but somehow were evicted and forcibly taken off-Island to a poor house. Grandmother Madison and two other women, who had physically resisted the forcible removal of the family, were placed in Edgartown jail after the eviction.

Dr. Butler no doubt was greatly relieved when he delivered a normal baby boy in the campground on June 23, 1874, to Mrs. Joseph Tripp. She had had many serious problems in twelve previous pregnancies, from which only three children had survived:

[She] had miscarried six times, had six births at full term, once had twins, both died at several months. Has now three living children.

His next delivery was another morality play that troubled him. He wrote: "Child born less than 4 months after marriage." Not long after that he arrived too late to deliver a baby for Lizzie Dickson. The baby got there 15 minutes before he did. His only remark was: "she is not living with her husband at the present time."

He was a very conventional person and seemed to get upset when faced with circumstances that were not.

In March 1875, he was called to the campground to deliver a normal male baby to "the wife of Lang." (He often failed to record the full name of parents in his campground deliveries. Perhaps they were transients.) The Lang baby died the next morning. The cause of death was given, but the word is illegible.

On November 9, 1875, he went to the North Tisbury home of Henry Martyn, the father of the pregnant 15-year-old girl, Mrs. Henry Stetson Pease, whose husband had drowned five months earlier. He delivered a healthy baby girl, born at 8:30 p.m., after 14 hours of labor.

Driving home in his carriage, no doubt weary and anxious to rest, he was waved down by John Pray, standing in front of his house. He had just helped his wife, Rosa, deliver a baby girl and he thought she needed help. The doctor went in and found that everything was normal. All he did, he wrote: "Took away the placenta and membranes. The labor was very short." He made no record of what time he finally got home.

He was beginning to economize on his remarks. In a cryptic remark after attending Mercy, the wife of Joseph B. Lang of Vineyard Haven, he wrote nothing except:

No. 113. June 26, 1876. Gasped once or twice and expired. 7th mo. Dropsical.

We assume he was writing about the baby, not the mother. More and more, he was arriving at the home after the baby. Sometimes, the home he went to was not very elegant:

No. 115. September 12, 1876. Healis [no first name given]. Born before my arrival. Mother, White, Father, Black. Parties lived in a small shanty near the "Vineyard Grove" in Edgartown.

In December 1876, he recorded the tenth stillborn in seven years of practice, although he kept no running count of still births, he numbered every birth, live or dead:

No. 119. December 16, 1876. Mrs. Jared Norton, Oak Bluffs, Membranes ruptured at 1 a.m., 16th. No pains until after 12 [noon]. Child born at 8:30 p.m. Stillborn.

The following year, another case of impropriety for him to put on the record:

June 8, 1877. Parties married less than two months.

Vineyard Grove, it seemed, was a place where many blacks or "colored" lived. The doctor delivered a healthy female baby there to Julia, wife of Levi L. Webquish, "Colored," on December 28, 1877. His only comment under Remarks was "Vineyard Grove."

The remarks were increasingly brief and infrequent. For a while, he stopped listing the mother's first name, writing only "Wife of. . . " One such entry was a mother whose first name he certainly knew, but did not record:

No. 190. Widow of Antone Rocker. July 30, 1881. Colored. Pauper of Cottage City.

He did not give any details about the child: no weight, not even whether he/she had been born healthy. And this was Eunice Rocker, a mother whom he had been taking care of for many years. It was her eight child. Her husband had died only a few months before.

He did continue to describe unusual events, especially those involving stillbirths and miscarriages, the latter he sometimes called abortions, although he added nothing to lead us to believe that they might have been induced. He also was careful to record those times when he arrived after the baby was born, as here:

No. 147. September 8, 1878. Mary, wife of Frank Nye. Still born. Placenta & membranes expelled in mass without rupturing before I arrived. Of course dead. But whether alive or not when born, I know not.

That was his 147th delivery. He had been keeping careful records for ten years and perhaps he was beginning to feel that he had seen and described all the possible complications. Whatever his reason, during the rest of the book, which he kept until 1903, his "Remarks" became shorter and shorter.

In those later remarks, he always recorded the race of the parents (if they were not white) and the name of sedatives he had administered, something he was doing with increasing frequency. When a case was complicated, he gave details as he did when he went up-Island, called by Dr. L. H. Luce, to a sad case in which the mother died:

August 3, 1886. Crandal and Nellie [Vincent] Look. Farmer. Chilmark. Called at 2 p.m. of the 2nd to assist Dr. L. H. Luce in this case. Arriving at the house at about 4 p.m., found the patient in convulsions and only partially conscious in intervals of attacks. These periods of consciousness became less and less until a condition of a complete coma was

established which continued until death at 8 a.m., of the 3^{rd} . Dr. Luce delivered by turning [?] during the night, say about 10 p.m., of the 2^{rd} ., a male child of about 8 mons.

This was one of the few cases he recorded of a mother dying in childbirth. One other died of convulsions three years later. Conventional wisdom tells us that many women died in childbirth during these years, but Dr. Butler's records do not support that.

He gave one of the fathers of a "mixed race" child born in Cottage City an unflattering occupation, a competitor:

No. 293. December 5, 1886. Alexander Neares and Theresa Belain. Occupation: Quack. Father born Gay Head. Indian & Negro. Mother born New Bedford. Child named: John Ross Belain.

In June 1887, he attended the birth of another "mixed race" child in Cottage City. The father, Edward Healis, a laborer, was from Barbados, the mother, Eliza Jane, was born on Chappaquiddick. The newborn girl had many problems:

No. 296. Double harelip & cleft palate Imperforate arms. Operated for artificial arms next day after birth. "Successful."

That is the only mention he makes of surgery in his account book. It sounds like a complicated procedure. Did he do it? He mentions no other doctor. It is a sad story. A child born to "mixed" parents with such a handicap. We wonder what happened to the little girl with her artificial arms, if she ever was fitted with them.

Another stillborn child was born to an unmarried Vineyard Haven woman in 1892. The doctor's comment was very clear and brief: "Stillborn. Illegitimate." That was all.

In July 1893, he had happier things to remark on in two successive births, the first of which must have caused much concern to the mother, unnecessary concern, as it turned out:

No. 409. July 13, 1893. Walter I. Belden, Lawyer, and Elizabeth Wilcox Bedgen. Female [baby]. West Chop. Mrs. Bedgen started from her house in Cambridge at 1:50 p.m., July 13. Arrived at West Chop at 5:45 p.m., and was delivered of a female child at 8:10 p.m. Labor rapid and normal. Pains commence on the way from Cambridge to the depot in Boston and gradually increased until delivery.

No. 410. July 28, 1893. Bessie S. Habershan, née Stanton. Female baby. Mrs. Habershan is the daughter of Edwin M. Stanton, Lincoln's Cabinet [his Secretary of War].

He wrote only two other remarks in 1893. One tells us of an occupation, now unknown on the Island. The other tells us the origin of one of the Island's historic first names, Howes:

No. 412. August 16, 1893. Wm. H. Smith. Collar maker. Wm. H. Smith came to V. H. from Hartford.

No. 416. December 10, 1893. Clara, wife of Hartson Bodfish, née Howes. Child named Howes. [Mother] Septic. Long and dangerous illness. Recovered.

The year 1894 went past with only a few remarks, all brief. Typical of them, after the birth of a baby boy in Cottage City, he wrote: "Premature & Illegitimate," in very bold handwriting. He continued to limit his remarks to short items such as ""Forceps," "Ether," "Anesthetic," "Child died in a few days" and "Stillborn."

There were occasional longer entries such as this one in which he described an interesting scene he came upon:

No. 499. February 19, 1899. John Sousa, Laborer, Joanna Sousa, born Azores. Female [baby]. Tisbury. Found child born and mother sitting on the floor bathing it.

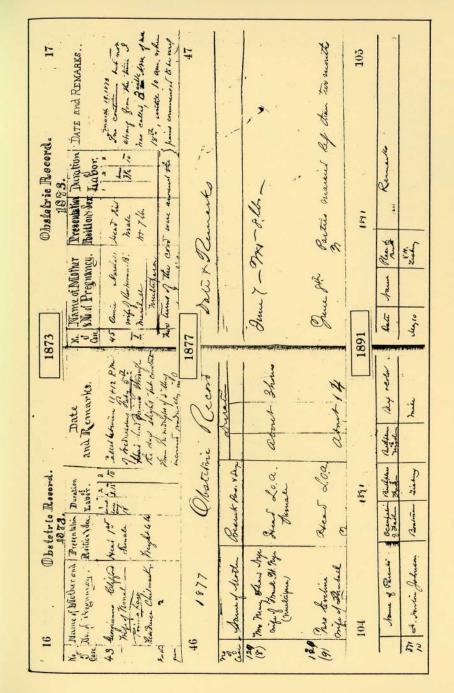
When he went to Chilmark in May 1900, he arrived too late to help with the delivery of twins, one of them stillborn:

Nos. 516 & 516. May 20, 1900. Rev. Ruoff, clergyman, Chilmark. Male twins born before my arrival. One, the last one, dead.

The twin boy born dead was the 34th stillborn he had recorded. Before he retired in August 1903, he added two more stillborn babies bringing the total to 36. In addition, during those last years one child died in the fourth week of life.

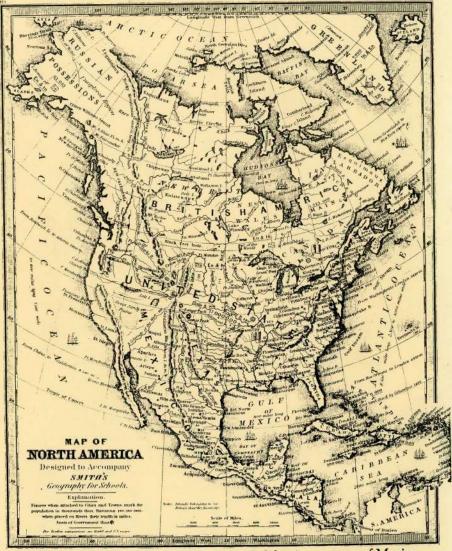
There also was one more illegitimate child. As usual, he wrote the word "Illegitimate" in a very firm hand. Clearly, he felt strongly about "sexual morality."

Dr. Butler, as Banks wrote, had dedicated his life to his profession. We are fortunate to have his records.



Through the years, Dr. Winthrop lost interest in record keeping (See pp. 62ff)

NORTH AMERICA AS SHOWN IN SMITH'S ATLAS, 1839



When Serena and family moved to Ohio, California was part of Mexico and Cincinnati was the largest city in the "West" (population: 46,250).