

# The Buckland Times #12 304

Editor: Sue Way 74 Hudson St., Manchester, Ct. 06040

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Marthine and John P. Jackson about 1906 mother and father of John Olaf, Alice, Grace, Raymond, Thelma, and Burton Jackson.

Because more research is needed, "The Turn Hall Mystery" will be told in the next issue. If you are a subscriber and would like an enlarged (8x10) copy of the picture of the Buckland School student body dressed for their performance of "The Magic Piper" that appeared in the last issue, I can send you a copy at a cost of \$5.00. If you are not a subscriber and would like to be, please send \$4.00 for four issues. I can send a full set #1 - #12 for \$5.00. See all requests to me at the address above.



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## More Meekville Families from the 1920's

### The Jackson Family

John Peter Jackson was born in Ternapol, Austria in 1876. His native language was German. He left the Austrian Army and sailed for America in 1900. He had a letter from a family friend with him offering him a job as coachman in Greenwich Ct. Marthine Larsen was born in Chistiana in 1878, Norway and spoke Norwegian of course and was working as a bookkeeper on the docks there where she was told by sailors that there were similar jobs available in N.Y. City. She was one of a remarkable number of women who set off for America on their own. However, you probably won't be surprised to learn that she soon decided the N.Y. City docks were a rough place for a woman to work in 1900, and so she took a job as a housekeeper for a doctor in Brooklyn, and then got a job at a Greenwich, Ct. estate where she met John Jackson who worked next door. They were married Apr 16, 1904 and then moved to Glastonbury before their first child John Olaf Jackson was born. His middle name came from the name of the ship that brought his mother to America, the Helli Olav. John Olaf was later called Oallie by his neighbors in Buckland, but he was always called John by his family. Their next child Alice was to be named Elizabeth, but the town Clerk in Glastonbury misunderstood John Jackson's German pronunciation of the name and wrote Alice Betta on her birth certificate, and she's been Alice ever since! It was Alice Jackson Cusson whom I had a very nice conversation with, so it is she who is telling this story. John and Alice were followed by Grace (who died in 1924 as a result of polio) Raymond, Thelma, and Burton. Census records tell us that her father became a naturalized citizen sometime between 1910 and 1920. We have asked the naturalization service to search for those records, but have not heard from them yet.

### More perspective on the Connecticut Valley Tobacco Growers Association and farming in Buckland

They were renting their farm land in Glastonbury and growing tobacco. Alice believes she was about 6 years old when she began to help, setting out tobacco plants. Like many people who came to this country from Europe John Jackson wanted to own his land. This led him eventually to Meekville where he bought 20 acres from Michael J. Burns in 1923. As his sons came of age he rented 60 more acres. As with many other families in Buckland the whole family helped with the farm work. Alice was 12 years old when they moved to the house on Tolland Tpk. just east of Meekville Rd.. She was old enough to have a very

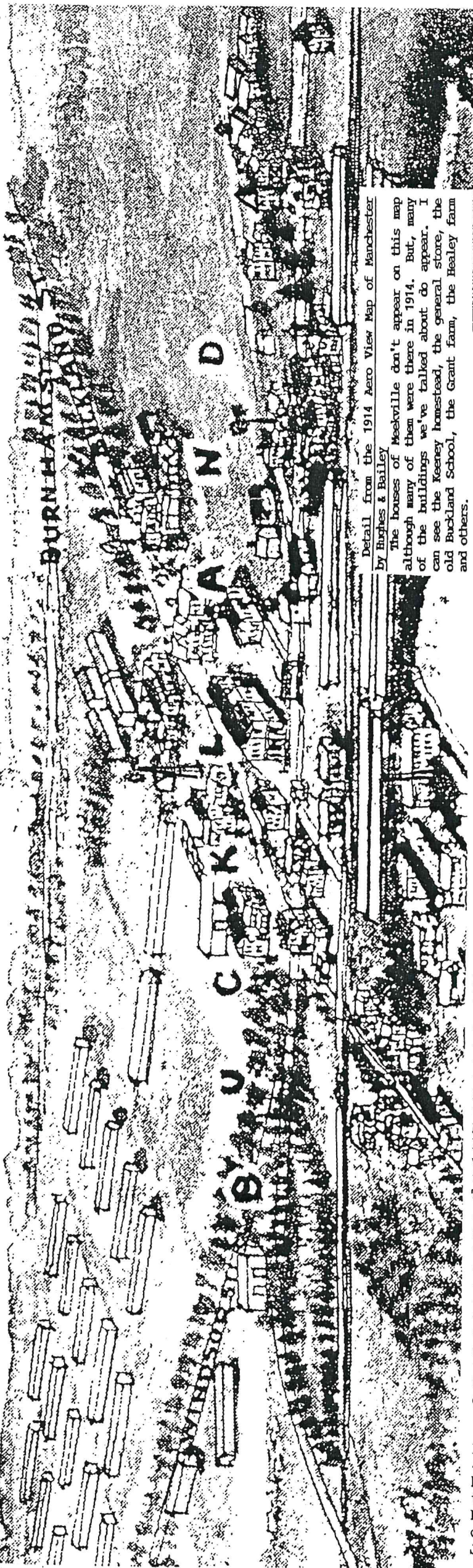
# Happy New Year



## WOODLAND GARDENS

The area's largest professional growers.

clear memory of what was happening in the farming community at that time. She remembers that her father was not at first in favor of joining the Conn. Valley Tobacco Grower's Assoc. which was being proposed in 1922-3, but after conferring with his neighbors he decided it would be best if they all joined together. There followed 5 very difficult years while these farmers were under contract to sell their tobacco to the Assoc.. During that time Harper Case lost his land to the bank as did other farmers. The Assoc. was not very successful at selling their tobacco. The Board of Directors of the Assoc. was made up of one elected Director from each of 16 Districts. Naturally the local farmers were inclined to elect their most successful and respected farmers as their representatives. As Alice remembers it this may have had an effect on just how things worked out. The farmers thought that if they stuck together they could get a better price for their tobacco. They formed the Assoc. and management set their prices. The buyers came back with a lower offer and expected the Assoc. to negotiate - or deal, but the Assoc. refused. They thought they were in a position to get their asking



Detail from the 1914 Aero View Map of Manchester  
 by Hughes & Bailey  
 The houses of Meekville don't appear on this map although many of them were there in 1914. But, many of the buildings we've talked about do appear. I can see the Keeney homestead, the general store, the old Buckland School, the Grant farm, the Bealey farm and others.

price, but they were wrong. The Directors who made these decisions were the more successful, (comparatively larger) small farmers. They were in a better position to hold out for their price than were many of the smaller farmers they represented in their districts. Looking back at this story in this light it's not surprising that these smaller farmers eventually felt they had to organize and protest, and that some of them began to contrive to break their contracts and sell their crops at the lower price, outside the Assoc.. They did not have the resources to hold out. This eventually brought about the failure of the Assoc. many farms and at least one of the banks that had backed the Assoc. It seems poor information about available tobacco and the size of the surplus already owned by the tobacco companies led to poor decisions. It was the surplus of tobacco itself that was truly the cause of the problem. In some towns however the farmers blamed each other creating hard feelings that in some cases still exist in our neighboring towns to this day. Stories of acts of vandalism, unexplained fires and so on are recalled by many. If Alice Jackson and the Jackson family can be taken to represent the Buckland farming community then respect among neighbors and farmers and goodwill towards men prevailed here, perhaps based on the assumption that everyone involved was doing what they believed was right and best. I have heard no such stories of vandalism during these years in Buckland. Good relation among neighbors seems to have endured in general even through those difficult times. Alice Cusson tells her view of the story from a unique point of view. She went to work as a secretary in 1944 for the Hartford County Fire Insurance Co.. The man she worked for and the President of the company was Joseph W. Alsop who had been the President of the Conn. Valley Tobacco Growers Assoc. During the height of the controversy in the Assoc. Mr. Alsop was removed from his post as President by the membership, but he was later reinstated and saw the Assoc. through to it's dissolution, a very difficult job. Alice says without a moments hesitation that he was a wonderful man. He was from Middletown and was educated at Oxford and a wonderful man to work for.

She remembers too Alfred Mendelsohn who with B.G. Meyer bought the Associations Buckland warehouse (now Cadwell & Jones) when the Assoc. failed. He would have been among the buyers who were on the opposite side of this economic wrestling match. If my facts are correct Meyer & Mendelsohn bought the tobacco that became the subject of the lawsuit that decided that this particular farmer was within his rights when he transferred his property into his wife's name so that she could sell the tobacco without breaking his contract with the Assoc. This opened the door for other farmers who wanted to get out of their contracts, and effectively broke the Assoc. But Alfred Mendelsohn is remembered by people in Buckland as an honorable man and a good man to work for who successfully managed the Meyer & Mendelsohn Tobacco Warehouse for many years. I have no doubt that the farmer mentioned above needed to sell his tobacco. In the 1930's the Jackson's were selling their tobacco to Meyer & Mendelsohn, Mr. & Mrs. Mendelsohn had dinner at the Jackson's house several times, but Alice remembers best the day that Mr. & Mrs. Mendelsohn came by just after the 1938 hurricane had struck. John P. Jackson died in 1936 and the farm was now being managed by his sons. How had they come through the storm Mr. Mendelsohn wanted to know. The family was safe but all of the tobacco sheds but one were down and their crop in ruins. How would they manage to get started in the spring was the next question. It did not look very good, was her brother John's reply. At hearing this Mr. Mendelsohn asked if \$5,000 would see them through. It would. He instructed his wife to make out the check. No formal arrangements were made for paying this back, interest etc. It was just understood that it would be. The sheds were rebuilt and the family continued to grow tobacco for a number of years, and then sold the land to the Hartman Tobacco Co. and the Jacksons pursued other opportunities.

Alice Jackson married Francis Cusson. She has lived in several places but in Bolton for the last 45 yrs. and has been a widow now for 25 years. I believe she said that she still uses her riding mower to cut her grass. Her brother Burton also lives in Bolton and now has 2 great grandchildren, the beginning of the 5th generation of the Jackson family in America, John and Marthine's e great great grandchildren.

