



the Southbury Historical Society

WINTER 2017

A NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD TOWN HALL MUSEUM
624 SOUTH BRITAIN ROAD | SOUTHBURY, CONNECTICUT 06488

Old Town Hall Museum
Wednesdays 10—2 PM
Other hours by appt:
(203) 405-3124

Museum Administrator:
Leigh Graham

Archivist:
Kimberly Neuenschwander

South Britain Library
Tuesdays 6—8 PM
(203) 232-9874

Librarian: Robin Stiles

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2016—2017

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S O U T H B U R Y N O T A B L E S : G L A D Y S T A B E R , 1 8 9 9 — 1 9 8 0



Gladys Taber, circa 1955

Gladys Taber, nee Bagg, was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado on April 12, 1899 to Rufus Mather Bagg (a distant relative of Cotton Mather) and Grace Sibyl Raybold. She was a middle child, however both her older sister and younger brother died before the age of two. As an engineering professor, Taber's father was continually relocating his family throughout the United States for various teaching assignments. During her early youth Taber lived in New Mexico, California and

Illinois before the family finally settled in Appleton, Wisconsin. She also spent a great deal of time with her grandfather on his farm in Massachusetts.

Taber received a B.A. from Wellesley in 1920 and an M.A. from Lawrence College, where her father was on the faculty at the time, in 1921. The following year she married Frank Albion Taber, Jr. Their daughter, Constance, was born on July 7, 1923.

Taber taught English at various schools including Lawrence College and Randolph Macon Women's College (Lynchburg, VA). She taught a creative writing course at Columbia University from 1921 – 1926. Her literary career began with her 1928 play, *Lady of the Moon*, and her 1929 book of verse, *Lyonesse*. Her 1934 novel, *Late Climbs the*

Sun, garnered her much praise and recognition. She continued her success with several more short stories and novels and began writing for the *Ladies' Home Journal* column, "Diary of Domesticity," in November 1937.

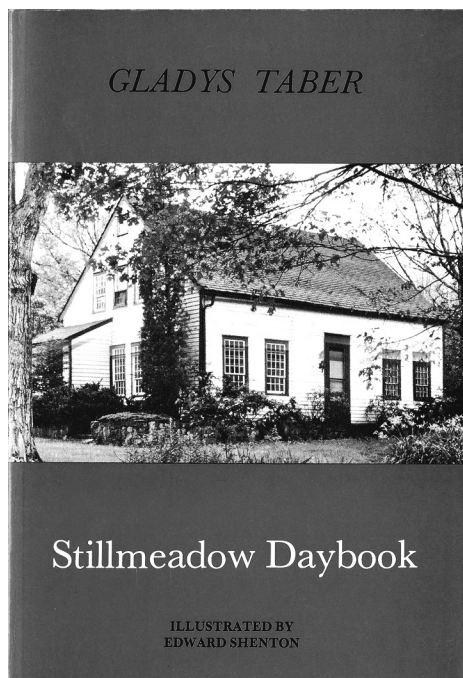
During this time Frank and Gladys Taber moved to Stillmeadow, a circa 1690 farmhouse located off Jeremy Swamp Road in Southbury, Connecticut, that they co-owned with their friends, Max and Eleanor Mayer. Taber continued living there after she and Frank divorced in 1946. Her first Stillmeadow related book was Harvest at Stillmeadow in 1940. She would continue to publish more than 20 Stillmeadow themed books and cookbooks throughout her life.



Taber with her cocker spaniel, Honey

Taber started her "Butternut Wisdom" column with *Family Circle* in 1959 and continued until her 1967 retirement. Taber left Stillmeadow, after the death of her friend, Eleanor Mayer, in 1960, and moved to the town of Orleans located on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. She wrote the column "Still Cove Sketches" for the *Cape Cod Oracle*. Her book Still Cove Journal was published posthumously in 1981.

During her lifetime, Gladys Taber authored over 50 books and contributed to numerous journals. She died on March 11, 1980 in Orleans, Massachusetts at the age of 80. She is buried in Pine Hill Cemetery in Southbury, Connecticut.



In November 2016, the SHS received a generous donation of Taber related items from Mr. & Mrs. Dachtera of Poughkeepsie, NY. This collection adds eleven Taber books, plus newsletters from the *Friends of Gladys Taber* fan club, to our current Taber holdings.

A sampling of these items are on display in the SHS's temporary exhibit on Gladys Taber in the Brinker Fireplace reading room at the Southbury Library. The exhibit will run through May 2017.

VISIT THE SHS ARCHIVES ONLINE



There are quite a few research related additions to the SHS website. Under *Archives and Research* you will find the last two years of newsletters available as archived PDFs, Finding Aids for SHS processed collections and a link to over 150 digitized photographs hosted by Western Connecticut State University (WCSU). Whether doing local or state research you will find links to a plethora of online resources that include maps and Southbury related collections held at Yale University, Connecticut Archives Online and the Connecticut Digital Archives.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE 2016

Thank you to everyone that helped make our Holiday Open House and Food Drive on November 27 a success! Because of your generosity we donated two large boxes of non-perishable items to the Southbury Food Bank. State Representative Arthur O'Neill even stopped by to donate goods and present the SHS with a legislative citation in honor of our 40th Anniversary.



Rep. O'Neill with SHS President, Jim Flaherty, and Vice President, Jennifer Carey

THE SOUTHBURY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO Box 124
Southbury, CT 06488

Phone: 203-405-3124
Website: southburyhistory.org
Email: info@southburyhistory.org
archives@southburyhistory.org

A Newsletter of the Old Town Hall Museum

SAVE THE DATE

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO.

Thursday, March 9, *Evening Lecture Series:* Historian Ed Hynes will discuss the 1777 Danbury Raid and Battle of Ridgefield at the Southbury Library. Event begins at 7 PM. Light refreshments will be served. Cost is \$5 per person paid at the door. RSVP by Tuesday, March 7.

Tuesday, March 14, *Bullet Hill School Days - A Living Museum Docent Training:* Bullet Hill School will conduct a free docent workshop starting at 9:30 AM. The program includes basic docent training and guidebooks, a tour of the facility, and refreshments. Snow date is March 16 at 9:30 AM. Contact Melinda Elliott at (203) 264-2095 or museum@southburyhistory.org for more information.

Saturday, April 22, *Annual Meeting:* TBA

Thursday, May 4, *History Bites:* A lunchtime presentation by urban archaeologist, Greg Van Antwerp, at the Southbury Library. This free one-hour program begins at 12 PM. Attendees are encouraged to bring a bagged lunch. Drinks and dessert provided for a suggested donation. *No RSVP required.*

Saturday, June 10, *Anniversary of Bullet Hill School Days - A Living Museum Program & OTHM Open House:* To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Bullet Hill School's Living History Program, BHS will host an Open House from 10 AM—4PM. The Old Town Hall Museum in South Britain will be open from 12—3 PM.