

~2351 Durham Road, Guilford, CT • 203.457.0770 • [www.dudleyfarm.com](http://www.dudleyfarm.com)~

## **Mission Statement**

*"To preserve, restore, and operate the farm as a historical, educational, and recreational resource for the public."*

## **President's Corner**

A Message from Bill Black

I truly hope this message finds you and your family safe and healthy. Who could have imagined the world would be in such a crisis. But we didn't sit around and wait for the virus to go away on its own, but rather took action and, although we weren't prepared for such a disaster, we recognized what it was and what it could do. Social distancing and wearing masks when in public turns out to be a major element in helping to slow down the spreading of this virus. With the world's brilliant scientific minds at work to find a treatment and a vaccine, we can start to see the "light at the end of the tunnel,"

a tunnel that started totally black with seemingly a bleak unknown. Hopefully by the time you read this additional progress will have been made and the opportunity of returning to some form of normalcy will be on the horizon.

When we do start interacting the word 'normal' will have taken on a new meaning. Even here at The Farm things will be different. Visitors to the Museum will be limited to five per group and masks will be required. The Farmers' Market will take on a new look while we institute the requirements set down by the State of Connecticut. Yes, life will never be the same as it was, but by adhering to the new rules, going forward we'll have a better chance of staying ahead of this virus.

And so as we go forward The Dudley Farm will continue to improve its grounds and buildings to offer you, your family, and your heirs one of the true treasures of

Guilford, a place where all can learn and be part of the agriculture past of North Guilford.

Your support has always been appreciated, but now we're entering a new era. With this virus economic constraints for both businesses and individuals have come to the forefront. Those who have contributed to The Farm in the past and hopefully in the future have been the reason why, when you drive north on RT 77 and cross over RT 80, as you glance to the right you will be greeted to a glimpse of the past, a past we hope to maintain for a very long time.

And as we all go forward please stay safe and healthy.

## Volunteer Spotlight

Buster Scranton



It's time to recognize The Dudley Foundation president, Bill Black, for all that he does for our organization. Bill's background as the chief accountant for the Knights of Columbus world headquarters for more than 25 years serves us well at The Dudley Farm, especially as we finish up our biggest project to date, the Big Barn. We always have good insight into what we can or cannot afford to do, and his expertise is an especially good asset to have with the advent of COVID-19.

Bill has, with the help of others, put together the brunches (excellent catering, a slew of quality auction items) for fundraising and awareness of the Big Barn Project. There's attention to detail, with checking over contracts and making sure everyone involved has proper insurance. The big barn is truly a centerpiece of The Dudley Farm, a great renovation of a favorite for many artists over the years. The momentum has carried over to the construction of an ice house/restroom building, as well as a post and beam milk house, a gem taking the place of a former, centrally located eyesore. With the help of a sugaring crew, Bill has brought a maple sugaring program back to the farm, with very good attendance. It appears that production is not a goal- they burned last year's crop, and they did not exactly flood the market



### Officers and Directors

**President** - Bill Black

**Vice-President** - Janet Dudley

**Treasurer** - Tom Cost

**Assistant Treasurer** - Bill Black

**Recording Secretary** - Jerri Guadagno

**Corresponding Secretary** - Dorothy Crampton

**Board Members** - Ray Guimont, Don Homer, Kendrick Norris, Tom Leddy, Jim Powers, Doug Williamson, Buster Scranton, Laurie Caraway

**Museum Director** - Beth Payne  
(director@dudleyfarm.com)

**Newsletter Staff** - Bill Black, Ray Dudley, Beth Payne

**Website** - [www.dudleyfarm.com](http://www.dudleyfarm.com)

**Facebook** - [www.facebook.com/dudleyfarmmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/dudleyfarmmuseum)

**Email** - [info@dudleyfarm.com](mailto:info@dudleyfarm.com)

**Dudley Farm Office** - 203-457-0770

The Dudley Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization and contributions are tax-deductible.

this year. However, the aims of education and a good, family-oriented event are met, with all involved having a good time. These additions and upgrades add to the experience of visiting the farm and museum.

Less visible, but equally important are the things that quietly get done. Insurance matters are time-consuming, but with his oversight (and a good agent) we now have proper coverage, with an eye to keeping our premiums low. Insurance is a little known aspect of The Foundation operations that will make most people's eyes glaze over. Our Board meetings are now focused, no-nonsense sessions, and they get over on time. His bean counting skills ensure that the board is always given an accurate view of our finances.

Bill originally comes from Queens, NY but has transplanted well to a more rural environment. He now has tractor and haymaking skills and maintains a small flock of sheep. An avid Oldsmobile owner, he was the co-chair of the 2010 Oldsmobile National which was held in Sturbridge, MA. (And, for the Oldsmobile gathering, he was in on bottling over 500, 50 ml. bottles of maple syrup, in glass with extremely small neck openings. I think he had enough of that.) Occasionally, he leaves a little rubber when he leaves the farm with his vintage Cutlass. He also headed up the Southington Apple Harvest Festival for seven years.

When you visit The Dudley Farm, remember that it is volunteers such

as Bill who make the whole thing work.

## **Buster's Musings**

Buster Scranton

*Full Circle*



In recent months, our world has been turned upside down by an enemy that we can't even see. At The Dudley Farm, most organized activity has been curtailed, and we are coping as best we can. In a sense, the present COVID-19 situation has numerous parallels to life at The Dudley Farm in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The effects of the scourge are generally terrible, but a comparison of the two eras shows how things can come full circle.

The "Spanish flu" pandemic at the end of World War I caught the world by surprise, much as COVID-19 has done... (The Spanish flu epidemic was not Spanish, by the way.) Although we have a much better understanding of the means of virus transmission, we are still unable to take quick control of the situation. Similarly, we have no idea what the progression of this pandemic will be like. In both instances, effective and ineffective means of control abound, and there is no clear-cut way of telling if an individual will be spared the worst of a viral attack.

Life has changed greatly in the last century, but we now see similarities to the past. In 1920, traffic past the farm was minimal, and now, with social isolation, working from home, canceled events, and job losses,

there is again less activity on the roads. (No horses, though). A look at the sky at night (on those rare occasions when it isn't raining) reveals a more brilliant display of stars, due to less traveling, less air pollution, and fewer planes. A trip to the supermarket, nonexistent back then, shows that eating habits now have more in common with earlier days at The Dudley Farm. Baking needs, such as flour and sugar, are hard to come by, as more people are baking at home. Supply chains have been interrupted as meals away from home become less frequent. At my farm stand, a neighbor sells local eggs, and we can not keep them in stock. Maple syrup is selling well. Must be due to eating more breakfast at home.

Events of late have made life more difficult for a lot of folks, with social distancing, job losses, and financial uncertainty. This harkens back to life in earlier times at the farm, when day to day living was a lot of work, not necessarily with a lot of financial reward. But, life was different back then, and it wasn't all bad. Take time to look for the silver lining in this violent storm cloud. Go outside (by the looks of the parking lots at Bluff Head and Chatfield Hollow, a lot of people have.) Bake a cake. Or a pie. Or something you haven't had in a long time. Get out those board games and have fun with the family.

And, on a sunny spring day, visit The Dudley Farm, where social distancing is easy, and see how the

present has come to have a lot in common with the past.

## The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Wordsmith

Beth Payne



*Be careful of the  
words you say,  
Keep them short and sweet.  
You never know, from day to day,  
Which ones you'll have to eat.*  
—Anonymous

*A great many people think that  
polysyllables are a sign of  
intelligence.*

—Barbara Walters

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century saw the creation of many “highfalutin” words that seemed to be created to go with the frills and “froufrou” of the Sunday-go-to-meetin’ clothes of the period. In his 1859 *Dictionary of Modern Slang*, John Camden Hotten notes that many of these words drew, loosely and creatively, on the prefixes and suffixes of educated big words to get their point across. “Nothing pleases an ignorant person,” he writes, “more than a high-sounding term ‘full of fury.’ How melodious and drum-like are those vulgar coruscations ... what a ‘pull’ the sharp-nosed lodging-house keeper thinks she has over her victims if she can but hurl such testimonies of a liberal education at them when they are disputing her charges, and threatening to ABSQUATULATE!”



While most of the terms came and went in the way that slang does, a few were so melodious and apt that they have become a part of our permanent vocabulary, while others deserve a come-back. Here's a dozen of the most ripsniptious faux-educated words of the period

1. *ABSQUATULATE* This word, popular in the 1830s, meant to make off with something. It vaguely calls up *abscond*, but in a longer and more complicated way. *Absquatualize* is an alternative word, with the noun *abscotchalater*, meaning thief.

2. *BLOVIATE*, a combination of *blow* and *orate*, goes back to the 1850s. It was widely popularized in the early 1900s by President Warren G. Harding, who was known for his long, windy speeches. Will this word make a comeback in November?

3. *EXPLATERATE* The *-ate* suffix was a particular favorite in these words. *Explaterate*, a bit like *explain* and a bit like *prattle*, meant talk on and on in the 1830s.

4. *DISCUMGALLIGUMFRICATED* Louise Pound, founder of the journal *American Speech*, recorded this glorious creation, meaning "greatly astonished but pleased," in her notes on the terms used by her students at the University of Nebraska in the early 1900s. This word of twenty-two letters leaves one exflunctified!

5. *TEETOTACIOUSLY* A much more forceful and enjoyable way to say "totally."

6. *EXFLUNCTIFY* "To drain" or "wear out." An activity

could *exfluncticate* you and leave you worn out or *exflunctified*—or even worse, *teetotaciously exflunctified*.

7. *OBFLISTICATE* *Obliterate* is a perfectly fine word of proper standing, but its substitute *obflisticate* somehow makes the obliteration seem more complete.

8. *RIPSNIPTIOUS* Snappy, smart, heart-filling, and grand. "Why, don't you look right ripsniptious today!"

9. *RAMSASSPATORIOUS* This word for "excited, anxious, impatient" makes you feel all three at the same time.

10. *SLANTINGDICULAR* If something can be perpendicular, why not *slantingdicular* (also written as *slantindicular*)? This one, first seen in the 1840s, deserves a comeback.

11. *DEDODGEMENT* Old dialect descriptions note this as a Kentucky term for "exit."

12. *EXPLICITRIZE* H.L. Menken's *The American Language* records *explicitrize* as a word for "censure." Another mid-19<sup>th</sup> century word has received a lot of ink lately – "redacted" – which is a bit easier to say!

Adapted from 15 Ripsniptious Faux-Educated Words of the 19th Century, by Arika Okrent, American Linguist and Author of *In the Land of Invented Language*

## The Dudley Farm Farmers' Market News



*We WILL Re-Open!*

Steve Rowe, Market Manager.

There is a song by Lukas Nelson, *Turn Off the News and Build a Garden* that sums up where Katrina and I are. We have turned off the news; it causes too much anxiety. And we built a big garden. Potatoes, some onions corn, beans, with a lot more to go in.

### **When will we open? And How?**

Our Summer Market is scheduled to open weekly beginning May 30th, consistent with State guidelines. As the new Market Managers, Katrina and I are not willing to unnecessarily risk anyone's well-being, physical or financial. Some of the issues of our vendors have included maintaining a supply of gloves and sanitizing methods. And this is a big issue, as The Department of Agriculture (DOA) has very specific guidelines to protect everyone. With the support of The Dudley Foundation Board of Directors, the vendors are preparing to have another successful season.

### **What will the New Dudley Farm Farmers' Market look like?**

I personally like the idea of slowly moving back into full swing. This is no time to get overconfident.

Keeping the market outside and spreading the vendors out by 10 feet makes good sense, and we are fortunate to have the room on The Farm to do this. We will be following the new best practices outlined by the DOA. We will insist that shoppers wear masks and follow the physical distancing guidelines of staying 6 feet away from other shoppers. It may be prudent to leave the whole family out of the shopping trip for a while longer. The Markets will initially consist primarily of food vendors in an effort to keep safe physical distancing and crowd size manageable. This may mean that you won't see your favorite crafters every week. As the summer progresses, these details may change.

Some of our farmers and crafters have, or will have, farm stands set up with staggered pick-up times. Some may be willing to deliver. Either way, please support our farmers and reach out to them to get your goodies and gifts. If you are looking for something from your favorite crafter to brighten up the days and weeks ahead, E-mail,

Market@DudleyFarm.com, we will put you in touch with that vendor.

And keep washing your hands!



## The Dudley Farm Museum Wish List

Calling all Volunteers!

**Archives:** We have items to accession and farm tools and equipment to add to our collection database. Would you like to help to evaluate, describe, and enter information into our museum software? Call us!

**Buildings and Grounds:** Volunteers are needed to help with the upkeep and improvement of our buildings and their landscapes. Lend us your green thumb and get involved! Perhaps you would like to help with the gardens which surround the house. They need some tender loving care!

**Education:** Do you enjoy history and want to know more about North Guilford during the 19<sup>th</sup>-century? Maybe you like conveying your knowledge to young and old. We have a spot for you. We can always use docents, who get to learn so much about the life of the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, but we also need someone interested in reaching out to our younger folk. Interested? Please let us know. We have detailed interpretive plans in place to get you started.

**Event Planning:** Our celebrations and programs require the help of many people. Do you have event planning experience? Are you good at managing special projects?

**Gift Shop and Quilting:** As you may know, The Dudley Farm Quilters work year-round to keep

our Gift Shop stocked with handcrafted quilted and needle worked products. But they could use some help. Would you be interested in helping with our Gift Shop?

**Newsletter:** Maybe you'd rather write than speak before our visitors. The Dudley Farm Museum has so many topics which you can explore and write about for our newsletter. Or maybe you're more into the mechanics of producing our newsletter. We have an editorial guide as well as a template. Intrigued? Let us know.

**Publicity:** The Dudley Farm Museum needs volunteers with writing and graphic design experience to create flyers, ads, and press releases. Other volunteers may help us prepare mailings or distribute publicity materials as needed to promote upcoming events. Help us get the word out!

**Items:** As you may know, we have over 300 19<sup>th</sup>-century newspapers, and these need a place to be stored. Do you have a flat file, also called a map or blueprint file, that you'd like to give to a new home? This doesn't need to be a 19<sup>th</sup>-century piece, but rather a metal case to help us store our newspapers.

And we hope to see YOU down on the farm!

## The Dudley Farm Recipe Box

Beth Payne

While

Catharine's

younger sister,



Harriet (the 6<sup>th</sup> of 11 children) may be more famous, it was Catharine who devoted her life to enabling women to be more competent and contented in their roles as caretakers and homemakers.

Through her published writing – cookbooks, textbooks, advice books, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and essays – and through her unflagging advocacy, she sought to provide women with guidance for running their households and raising their children. Written collaboratively with younger sister Harriet, her most widely-read work was *The American Woman's Home* (1869), a “how-to” for young women with advice on childcare, healthcare, management of household finances, and other domestic duties

An earlier publication, the 356-page *Miss Beecher's Domestic Receipt Book*, (1846) was designed as a supplement to her *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, first written in 1841. Recipe writers in the mid-19th century struggled to express ingredient quantity, pointing to familiar objects to estimate how

much of a certain item a dish needed. One common approximation, for instance, was “the weight of six eggs in sugar.” And in an era without oven thermometers, how to determine the proper temperature? Advising cooks to gauge an oven's heat by putting a hand inside and counting the seconds they could stand to hold it there was fairly common. Sometimes they hardly gave instructions at all. A typically vague recipe from 1864 for “Rusks,” a dried bread, read in its entirety: “One pound of flour, small piece of butter big as an egg, one egg, quarter pound white sugar, gill of milk, two great spoonfuls of yeast.”

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VEGETABLES.

### *Beans.*

Throw them into salted boiling water, and cook them from an hour to an hour and a half, according to the age. A little saleratus improves them when old; a piece as big as a pea will do. If you put in too much, the skins will slip off.

### *Egg Plant.*

Boil them in a good deal of water a few minutes, to get out the bitter taste, then cut them in slices, and sprinkle a little salt on them. Then fry them brown in lard or butter. If they are fried on a griddle, with only butter enough to keep them from sticking, they are better than when more butter is used.

### *Baked Beans.*

Pick over the beans the night before, and put them in warm water to soak, where they will be kept warm all night. Next morning pour off the water, and pour on boiling water, and let them stand and simmer till the beans are soft, and putting in with them a nice piece of pork, the skin gashed. Put them into the deep dish in which they are to bake, having water just enough to cover them. Bury the pork in the middle, so that the top will be even with the surface. All the garden beans are better for baking than the common field bean. They must bake in a moderately hot oven from two to three hours.



## The Quilters' Corner

Jerri Guadagno

Just about every year for the past nineteen years The Dudley Farm Quilting



Group has created a beautiful queen size quilt which was then raffled off. Unfortunately this year due to numerous reasons the group has decided not to create one of their award-winning quilts.

However, they are looking forward to creating a quilt for 2021, and they will continue to stock the gift shop with their one of a kind items. So, during the Farmers' Market come to the gift shop and check out their beautiful creations.

## The Dudley Farm Gift Shop

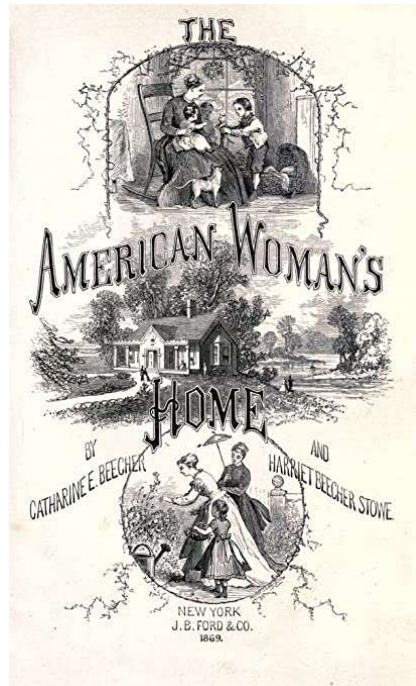
Jerri Guadagno

When The Dudley Farm Gift Shop opens at the end of May along with the Farmers' Market you should come and check out our new Gift Shop which is located in the Big Barn---same location just totally redone.

Mary Norris is our new volunteer who will be running the gift shop along with help from the women of The Dudley Farm Quilting group, which has been busy sewing so many beautiful new items for sale.

## Miss Manners for the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Beth Payne



Together Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) and her older sister, Catharine Beecher (1800-1878) were the Emily Posts of their time. They collaborated on **The American Woman's Home** (1869), an American best

seller of domestic advice, while continuing to be vocal supporters for the education of women at a time when women were relegated to the “domestic sphere” and were the property of their husbands.

*The American Woman's Home* has a rather intimidating and comprehensive subtitle: *Being a Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, Healthful, Beautiful and Christian Homes and dedicated to the women of America in who [sic] hands rest the real destinies of the Republic.*

Loaded with intricate details to help inexperienced wives or housekeepers with few servants (if any), this is a pretty comprehensive handbook. So –you can imagine that the 11-page chapter on *Domestic Manners* would leave little

out. But –we'll spare you. Instead, here are a few excerpts:

Good manners are the expressions of benevolence in personal intercourse, by which we endeavor to promote the comfort and enjoyment of others, and to avoid all that gives needless uneasiness. It is the exterior exhibition of the divine precept, which requires us to do to others as we would that they should do to us. It is saying, by our deportment, to all around, that we consider their feelings, tastes, and conveniences, as equal in value to our own...

Good manners lead us to avoid all practices which offend the taste of others; all unnecessary violations of the conventional rules of propriety; all rude and disrespectful language and deportment; and all remarks which would tend to wound the feelings of others...

There is a serious defect in the manners of the American people, especially among the descendants of the Puritan settlers of New England, which can never be efficiently remedied, except in the domestic circle, and during early life. It is a deficiency in the free expression of kindly feelings and sympathetic emotions, and a want of courtesy in deportment...

Now, the principles of democracy require that the same courtesy which we accord to our own circle shall be extended to every class and condition; and that distinctions of superiority and subordination shall depend, not on accidents of birth, fortune, or occupation, but solely on those mutual relations which the good of all classes equally require. The distinctions demanded in a democratic state are simply those

which result from relations that are common to every class, and are for the benefit of all...

It is for the benefit of every class that children be subordinate to parents, pupils to teachers, the employed to their employers, and subjects to magistrates. In addition to this, it is for the general well-being that the comfort or convenience of the delicate and feeble should be preferred to that of the strong and healthy, who would suffer less by any deprivation; that precedence should be given to their elders by the young; and that reverence should be given to the hoary head...

It is only the training of the family state according to its true end and aim that is to secure to woman her true position and rights. When the family is instituted by marriage, it is man who is the head and chief magistrate by the force of his physical power and requirement of the chief responsibility; not less is he so according to the Christian law, by which, when differences arise, the husband has the deciding control, and the wife is to obey.

"Where love is, there is no law;" but where love is not, the only dignified and peaceful course is for the wife, however much his superior, to "submit, as to God and not to man..."

These general principles being stated, some details in regard to domestic manners will be enumerated. In the first place, there should be required in the family a strict attention to the rules of precedence, and those modes of address appropriate to the various relations to be sustained. Children should always be required to offer

their superiors, in age or station, the precedence in all comforts and conveniences, and always address them in a respectful tone and manner. The custom of adding, "Sir," or "Ma'am," to "Yes," or "No," is valuable, as a perpetual indication of a respectful recognition of superiority. It is now going out of fashion, even among the most well bred people; probably from a want of consideration of its importance. Every remnant of courtesy of address, in our customs, should be carefully cherished, by all who feel a value for the proprieties of good breeding...

Another point of good breeding refers to the conventional rules of propriety and good taste. Of these, the first class relates to the avoidance of all disgusting or offensive personal habits: such as fingering the hair; obtrusively using a toothpick, or carrying one in the mouth after the needful use of it; cleaning the nails in presence of others; picking the nose; spitting on carpets; snuffing instead of using a handkerchief, or using the article in an offensive manner; lifting up the boots or shoes, as some men do, to tend them on the knee, or to finger them: all these tricks, either at home or in society, children should be taught to avoid...

Another topic, under this head, may be called *table manners*. To persons of good-breeding, nothing is more annoying than violations of the conventional proprieties of the table. Reaching over another person's plate; standing up, to reach distant articles, instead of

asking to have them passed; using one's own knife and spoon for butter, salt, or sugar, when it is the custom of the family to provide separate utensils for the purpose; setting cups with the tea dripping from them, on the table-cloth, instead of the mats or small plates furnished; using the table-cloth instead of the napkins; eating fast, and in a noisy manner; putting large pieces in the mouth; looking and eating as if very hungry, or as if anxious to get at certain dishes; sitting at too great a distance from the table, and dropping food; laying the knife and fork on the table-cloth, instead of on the edge of the plate; picking the teeth at table: all these particulars children should be taught to avoid.

If this country increases in virtue and intelligence, as it may, there is no end to the wealth which will pour in as the result of our resources of climate, soil, and navigation, and the skill, industry, energy, and enterprise of our countrymen. This wealth, if used as intelligence and virtue dictate, will furnish the means for a superior education to all classes, and every facility for the refinement of taste, intellect, and feeling.

*Phew.* And this is just a small sampling of this, the fifteenth chapter, of *The American Woman's Home*. It seems pretty obvious that the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Beecher family was a politically active family, notable for their activism in religion, civil rights, and social reform.

# The Scoop on Poop - - Manure Happens!

Beth Payne

*Manure*  
by Mark Seeley 1995

I hope there's manure in Heaven  
I know that sounds a bit strange  
But some folks might agree with me  
If I'm given the chance to explain.

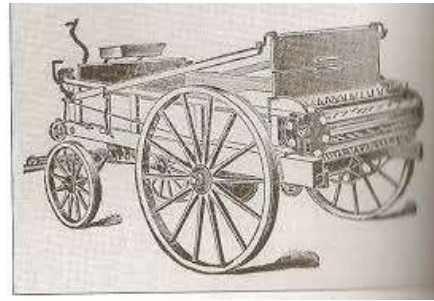
Now by outward appearance, manure  
Is a smelly goo, no doubt.  
But think about what went into that  
cow  
Before that manure came out.

That cow might have grazed in a  
pasture  
Filled with clover and grass green and  
lush  
And that sweet smelling pasture on  
which that cow dined  
Was transformed to this foul smelling  
mush.

Or maybe she dined with a range herd  
On a wide open prairie somewhere  
Making meals of scattered bunchgrass  
And leaving a pile here and there.

That cow might have grazed in the  
mountains  
Beneath pine trees that whisper and  
sigh  
And the grass and wildflowers from  
meadows  
Are contained in that cow's special pie.

So I hope there's manure in Heaven  
Cause that means there'll be cows  
when we die  
And pastures and prairies and  
meadows  
Beneath mountains that reach toward  
the sky.



Horse  
apples, cow  
pies, horse  
doughnuts,  
cow  
flops...no  
matter what  
you call it,

until you know about green, brown  
and fermented manures, you don't  
know s..t.

One of the great discussions you find  
among farmers – maybe always, but  
certainly in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century – is about  
manure. Manure is big stuff in  
farming in the 19<sup>th</sup> century because  
manure is black gold. It was the best  
way to keep land fertile. In the 19<sup>th</sup>-  
century, what you find in agricultural  
manuals is instructions on how to  
shape your cow pens so that they  
slope toward the middle so that the  
manure doesn't drain out, and you get  
the most manure per cow that you can  
put back in your fields. Farm families  
then, as many do now, associated the  
smell of manure with money. Research  
into the chemical properties of soils  
and the benefits of manure had  
proceeded for at least 300 years until  
the 1940's when synthetic fertilizer  
was developed, removing the smell of  
manure from farming. But beyond  
manure's nutrient value, gardeners'  
credit it with improving the soil's  
“tilth,” or loose crumb, allowing water  
to penetrate easily, and improve  
drainage.

To help illustrate just how important it  
was to provide the best manure  
possible – green, brown or fermented –  
George Bommer published his *New  
Method: Which Teaches How to Make  
Vegetable Manure, by a Course of High  
Fermentation, In Fifteen Days, Without  
Cattle, As Good And More Durable than*

*Farm Manure: To Appropriate It to The Nature of Soils and Families of Plants, and With Great Economy..* New York, 1843 (available as a free eBook from Amazon). The length of the title outshines the number of pages (86) in this treatise, but it is still widely available. Erastus Dudley had been given pre-publication information on the use of Bommer's Manure, and wrote the following to *The Farmers' Gazette* upon that publication:

(Reprinted as published)

*Bommer's Manure.*

*I hereby certify that having made repeated trials of Mr. George Bommer's Method of Making Manure by Fermentation, ... I am free to acknowledge that I have never been acquainted with any system of the kind that would compare with this for utility.*

**ERASTUS DUDLEY. North Guilford, Nov. 23, 1842**

And the Editor's Response

*We are well acquainted with Mr. Dudley, the author of the above certificate, and we know him to be a man of sterling integrity. He is an intelligent farmer, and not likely to be imposed upon by every new thing. Inasmuch as he has tried Mr. Bommer's Method, and gives his unqualified testimony in its favor, we have no hesitation in commending his statement to the confidence of the public. Mr. Dudley presented the publisher of the Gazette a sample of Turneps raised with the aid of manure made by Mr. Bommer's Method, and on trial we found them to be of most excellent flavor.*

A Year Later: Dudley's Letter

*Having made use of Mr. George Bommer's method of making manure by fermentation for more than one year, and having tested its results in various*

*respects, I am now fully prepared to give my unequivocal testimony in its favor.*

*Any person entertaining doubts could not fail to obviate them by a faithful adherence to Mr. Bommer's plan.*

**Erastus Dudley. North Guilford, July 14, 1843**

Barnyard animals don't pay for market research, but there are signs that manure use is growing more popular among gardeners. Just as in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century sewage was marketed under falsely attractive names to remove its stigma, so it is being repackaged and marketed in the same way today. The presence of newer products like Moo-Nure, Milorganite, and Nutrifor at the big box stores attest to that. They are often made with biosolids – which are just treated sewage sludge – now big business and becoming bigger all the time. Treated **sewage** sludge can be a valuable **fertilizer**, instead of taking up space in a landfill or other disposal facility. Remember, for thousands of years, before the invention of synthetic fertilizer in 1913 and its wide-spread availability in the '40's, many farmers utilized their decomposed sewage, sometimes called "night soil," to replenish the soil with nutrients lost in farming.

But biosolids may not be without risk. Not because of the obvious things associated with sewage but from the longer-term hidden effects of more recent 'introductions' to human waste such as antibiotics, pathogens, synthetic organic compounds, and contaminant heavy metals, such as arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, and mercury. Ah, the wonders of modern life!



But what is a green manure? While it may sound like something from Dr. Seuss it's actually an environmentally friendly and sustainable product that incorporates the benefits of one season's crop into the needs of the next. In short, green manure is a natural fertilizer.

Here's how green manure works: A winter rye cover crop helps protect against erosion, retain nutrients that might otherwise be leached from the soil, suppress the germination and growth of weeds, cycle nutrients from the lower to the upper layers of the soil, and—in the case of legumes—leave to the following crop a considerable quantity of nitrogen. There are still more contributions of green manure: improved soil structure, additional organic matter, enhanced drought tolerance, and increased nutrient availability for plants.

Although there are many cover crops to pick from, winter rye is a good choice because of its resistance to the cold temperatures. It also creates a lot of biomass, which increases the organic matter. Once sown, leave it alone. In the spring, this cover crop will be incorporated into the soil and start to decompose. When the soil warms up enough, millions of micro-organisms will awaken to begin breaking down the cover crop, forming a rich, dark, and spongy soil that your plants will be happy to sink their roots into. Voila!! Green manure.

## The Corn Pecker, Dibble, or Peck

Dennis Picard: Recently retired after 27 years at Storowton Village Museum in West Springfield MA, he now is a professor at Westfield State University in Massachusetts. We were fortunate to have him be our keynote speaker at a recent annual meeting.



Today in New England when we see fields of grain, they are more likely than not, corn. Corn has been the major grain of our area for hundreds of years. But to be clear – there is no such grain as “corn.” It is more correctly referred

to as maize. The term “corn” was brought with the English speaking Euro-immigrants to our area. “Corn” by definition is the major grain of an area. Therefore, in simplest terms, in Scotland, oats could be called corn, and in southern England, wheat would also be referred to as corn. There are then, what are called “corn barns” in England that date well before the colonization of North America and therefore before maize was known.

As we all learned in elementary school the Native Americans taught the first European settlers in New England all about corn. This was a New World crop, not anything that was known back in Old England. The colonists were taught to create mounds or hills. In each hill a hole was created by using a pointed digging stick – or dibble. In each hole was placed a fish, to be used as fertilizer, and four kernels of corn. The extra seeds were always placed in the hole so there

would be some young plants left after the pesky crows pulled up and ate their fill.

The spacing of the corn hills was critical as well. The mounds were “one-half fathom,” about three feet, apart. The spacing allowed cultivation between each hill. This method of planting created a distinct appearance to the cornfield. It was said to be “checkrowed” because it looked like a checkerboard from above. Corn now is grown in long rows with cultivation limited to the space between rows. This is a small detail that often is noticed on television or on the big screen where in a “period piece”, the cornfield has the more modern row type cultivation. This is especially egregious in films like Mel Gibson’s *The Patriot*.

After the kernels germinated and started to grow, more soil would be mounded up around the stocks to create better support for the plants. This method of cultivation was followed for more than two hundred years. A good farmer or hired hand would expect to plant about an acre using this method in a day’s labor – if the field had been well prepared beforehand.

As with all manner of agricultural practices, tradition was one thing, but production was another.

Having extra corn to feed a growing family, or fodder for livestock, or even having more than needed so that excess could be sold to neighbors or merchants to bring in some extra money to pay “the taxes,” was something to be desired. But how could this proven method be bettered?

Long about the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1856 to judge from the patents issued) one aspect of corn culture was knocked on its ear (no pun intended). A clever individual hit on the idea of a corn “planter” or “pecker.” The term “pecker” seems to have been derived from the fact that the delivery end of the new tool resembled bird beaks pecking at the ground for seed. The first of these tools consisted, basically, of a regular handheld garden hoe upon which was mounted a canister holding seed corn. The operator would dig a hole in a hill with the hoe, jerk a line that opened the can, and seed dropped into the hole. It was then covered over with the hoe and stamped down by the advancing farmer.

The next competing innovation came the same year when a tool imitating a dibble was contrived. The farmer would jamb the dibble in a hill, press down with his foot, the jaws would open and seed was dispensed into the hole. The farmer would stamp the hole shut as he walked forward. This basic idea won out over other forms and eventually led to three hundred various patents being issued for this type of hand planter. Using one of these peckers a farmer could double his day’s planting to two acres.

One might wonder why this process was not mechanized further – and it was – but there were problems. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, some farmers and intuitive engineers thought it would be great to have a horse-drawn corn planter as horse-drawn plows and reapers were proving to be successful and popular. The

problem was that with a corn planter the farmer/driver/operator just had too many things to do with only two hands available to do them. The solution took much tinkering and the addition of a helper to ride along, and, yes, a workable horse-drawn corn planter was manufactured. But even with the horse-drawn versions available the hand pecker was just so simple and so efficient that it retained its popularity well past the time when it should have become relegated to the back corner of the tool shed.

## **Guilford Folk Wisdom for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Audience**

Raymond Dudley

During the last several months I spent some time keeping a record of old sayings and expressions which continue to be relevant, instructive and entertaining to a modern audience. Even though many are grounded in an agrarian culture that is no longer familiar to most of us, these adages survive and speak to us today.

My method for collecting them was quite haphazard. When I heard or read one that seemed to fit my broad definition, I wrote it down on a scrap of paper. I was surprised at how many there were and how often I encountered them. What makes them timeless, I think, is that they convey fundamental truths, and often use figures of speech to convey meaning. They are rooted in universal human experiences. For example, Ben Franklin, using the colonial voice of Poor Richard Saunders, wants us to believe that "prosperity pursues virtue" and that

"early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wide." Many years later, Robert Frost's stubborn neighbor repeats his father's notion that "Good Fences make Good Neighbors."

Here are 3 fine examples of what I am talking about. They have been part of our culture seemingly forever, and although the subject is chickens, human beings exhibit similar characteristics: the desire to "rule the roost"; "the need to determine a pecking order", and many things in life can become "as scarce as hen's teeth." "Don't count your chickens before they hatch" is a warning to the world that "The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry." Remember also that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." And don't forget to "let sleeping dogs lie. Notice too how cleverly many of these pronouncements use common animals and birds whose behavior would be well known.

Consider the experiences which led to these observations: "Don't beat around the bush; "It's too late after the horse has left the barn." "He doesn't have a dog in the fight." "Now the tables have turned." "Don't let the cat out of the bag." Or, the title of a short story and also a favorite saying of New York Yankee announcer Red Barber" to be "sitting in the cat bird's seat". The voice we hear in these and many others is authentic. It is the voice of wisdom gained from experience.

## **The Dudley Foundation Announces:**

The Dudley Foundation is pleased to announce that we have received financial support from the following sources in 2020:

The Guilford Savings Bank granted \$500 to help us purchase and install roller shades in the Farmhouse. These will help protect the furnishings from damaging UV lighting.

The Guilford Foundation granted The Dudley Foundation \$3100 to be used to help support the operations of The Dudley Farm during this period of lost income due to the Covid-19 pandemic. And members and friends of The Dudley Foundation generously supported The Dudley Farm Museum by responding to The Great Give in May. More than \$4200 was received which will be used to maintain operations. We are very grateful for all this support.

## **We Remember With Thanks**

The Dudley Foundation remembers with thanks the following members who included The Dudley Farm in their wills or with gifts given in their memory. These gifts were received after January 1, 2020 for the following: Caryl Anderson; Mary McSweet Frohlich; Libby Bartlett, Robert (Bob) Guadagno, and Beverly Keener. They are all missed.

## **The Dudley Foundation Mourns the Loss of Bob Guadagno**

It is with sadness that the Board of Directors notes the loss of Bob Guadagno on May 4, 2020. Until the progression of his illness prevented it, he was always at the farm with his red pickup, helping with yard work and building maintenance.

Bob and his wife Jerri Guadagno not only lived in one of the original "Dudleyville" houses (on the SW corner of Rte. 77 and 80) but were committed to The Dudley Foundation from the very beginning. Together they spent countless hours caring for Amy's gardens, keeping the Munger Barn clean, and organizing the annual tag sale. Working as a couple, Bob and Jerri have been on the Board of Directors for more than 20 years, competently providing the grease that has kept The Dudley Farm Museum wheels turning.

In addition to his contributions to The Dudley Farm, Bob was a 50-year life member of Local 777, Plumbers and Pipefitters, and was involved in the North Branford Town Council and Guilford Town Politics for many years. Bob and Jerri also volunteered at the Branford Compassion Club, where he enjoyed working with the kitties. His quick wit and flirtatious manner will be missed by all who knew him.

# Farm Word Search



The change from hunter-gathering to settled agricultural societies happened around 12,000 years ago. Now much of our land is farmed whether it is for growing crops or raising animals for meat, eggs, and products such as milk.



## Word List

See if you can find the farm-related words in our word search?

Bison  
Calf  
Cattle  
Dairy  
Duck  
Egg  
Fallow  
Fence  
Field  
Meadow

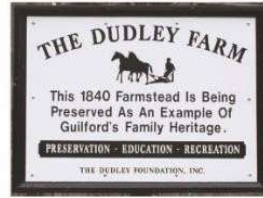
Oats  
Pig  
Rabbit  
Rice  
Scarecrow  
Seeds  
Sheep  
Sickle  
Tractor



**The Dudley Farm Museum**  
2351 Durham Road, Guilford, CT 06437  
[www.dudleyfarm.com](http://www.dudleyfarm.com) 203-457-0770



Return Receipt Requested



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PERMIT NO. 137



**Tag Sale:** TO BE RESCHEDULED

**Summer Market Opens:** May 30, 9 AM

For more information: [www.dudleyfarm.com](http://www.dudleyfarm.com)

Ph. 203-457-0770 or email:

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See our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/dudleyfarmmuseum>

Or subscribe to Dudley Farm Doings from our website for up-to-the-minute news

