

## THE LIFE OF SAMUEL GOODWIN

In 1953 my father donated numerous materials pertaining to Samuel Goodwin to the Mercer County Historical Society.<sup>0</sup> The bulk of them concerned Goodwin's business ventures, ventures that helped shape the early days of Greenville, Pennsylvania. Also included was a portrait of Samuel himself. All these years later, I find myself left with an odd assortment of memorabilia from which to try to piece together Goodwin's story. While it's a relief to have escaped an additional pile of documents demanding disposition, some of the gaps left behind by Dad's donation are frustrating. It has annoyed me for years that the only photo we have that could be Samuel is labeled most unhelpfully on the back "Father." But, having recently seen a photo of the ceded portrait courtesy of MCHS, I'm convinced that the image at right is indeed that of Samuel Goodwin, albeit 25 or so years younger and in the sterner fashion of those times.

What follows is my attempt to turn piles of papers into a coherent narrative of a life lived long ago. The static papers without context hardly seem worth preserving.

—R. C. Evans



c. 1850

### THE EARLY YEARS

**S**amuel Goodwin was born in North Berwick, Maine, in the county of York on the 13th of January, 1799. His forebears had begun arriving from England in the very earliest days of the seventeenth century, and by the end of the 1630s, dozens of his ancestors had made the long voyage over and settled in New England. Their surnames included Spencer, Chadbourne, Plaistead, Coleman, Scammon (Scamman), Tailor, Lowell, Gerrish, Waldron, Eliot, Hadden, Scarlet, Grafton, Thomas, Shepard, Hucker, Harvey, Jordan, Tristam, Hill, Cross, Frost, Bolles (Bowles), Pickering, Wheelwright, Alcock, Snell, Shatswell, Webster, Batt, Mighill, and Hutchinson. Many of those names fill the history books that tell the story of the English in southern Maine. Gerrish Island off Kittery Point in Maine is named after Samuel's great-grandfather. Samuel Goodwin's ancestors fought and died in various long-ago wars, and his great-great-grandmother's story of being captured during the French and Indian Wars and then held in Montreal for five years before being ransomed back is legendary, first appearing in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* in 1702.

The first of the Goodwins themselves to settle in Maine was Daniel Goodwin around 1650. The exact date of his arrival in Kittery is uncertain, but in 1652 he signed the newly required Act of Submission accepting the jurisdiction of Massachusetts over southern Maine: "We, whose names are underwritten, do hereby acknowledge ourselves subject to the government of Massachusetts Bay in New England." Daniel married Margaret Spencer in 1654. He kept a public house for some years, with and without license, which seems to have been a rowdy enough place to bring him into court on occasion.

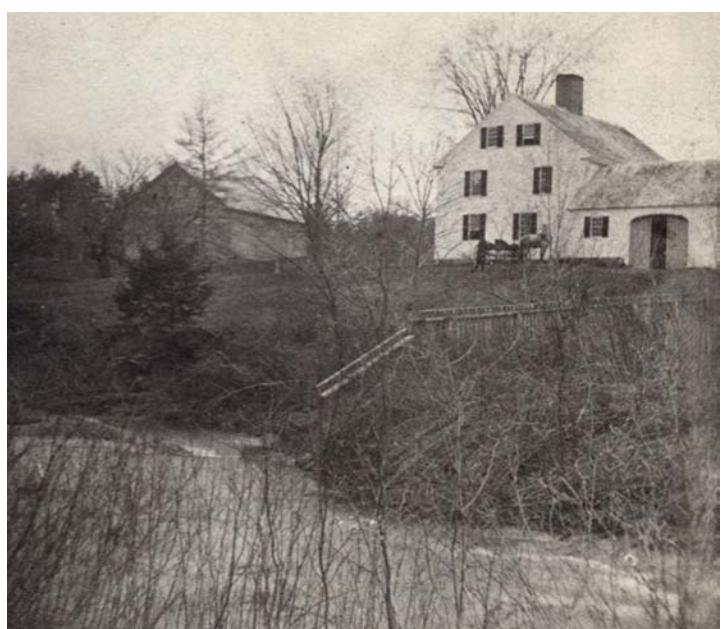
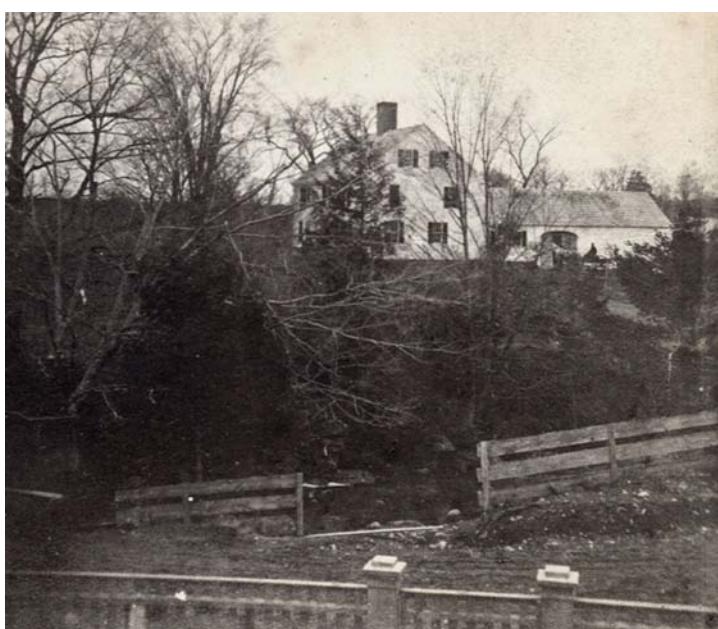
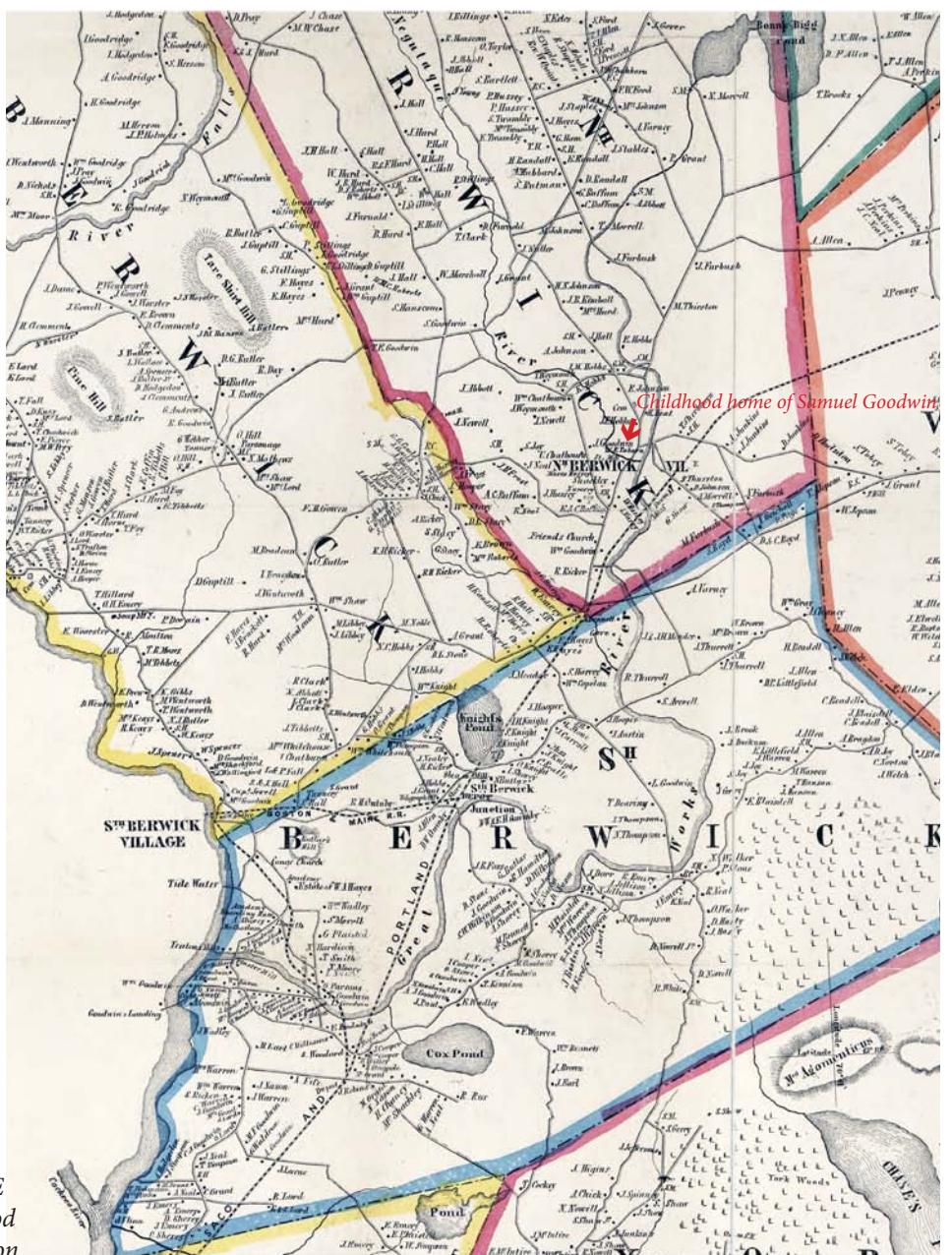
*Gerrish Island, Kittery Point, Maine, by Alfred Thompson*



By 1673 the area where he resided was known as the parish of Unity, in the precinct of Berwick, in the town of Kittery. Berwick was incorporated as a town in 1713 and eventually split into three towns: Berwick, South Berwick, and North Berwick. Daniel's original homestead was in South Berwick.

In the early 1770s, when Daniel's great-grandson, Dominicus Goodwin, lost his first wife and remarried, he took his new bride and his five children and left the central Berwick area known as "Old Fields" to settle on land in what would become North Berwick. There the family continued to grow and to farm the land. Among Dominicus's children by his first wife was Samuel Twycross Goodwin, who grew up to also farm his father's property. The property lay on a hill overlooking the Neotaquet River, and at some point came to be known as "the old Goodwin place at Goodwin's Bridge."<sup>1</sup> One history says of the site: "The old house which overlooked it once had been a fine one, deep dentils across an upper floor and a handsome entrance, built by a prospering Samuel on his father's land...Samuel worked two mills, one at Negutquis Falls, along with his land."<sup>2</sup>

*Right: Detail from 1856 map, York County, ME @ LOC.gov. Below: Samuel Goodwin's childhood home, from stereoscope cards in family collection.*



The Samuel Goodwin born at Berwick that winter day so late in the eighteenth century was Samuel Twycross Goodwin's fourth child and third son. He was Daniel Goodwin's great-great-great-grandson, and I am that younger Samuel's great-great-granddaughter.

Samuel Twycross Goodwin and his wife, Anna Thompson Gerrish, would eventually have four sons and five daughters. Anna Gerrish's father, Joseph, is found at the top of the list of Harvard College graduates for 1752, a list ranked by social status. He would have shared the Harvard campus with about 100 other students, including the country's future second president, John Adams (class of 1755), and a number of Quincys. Just as an aside given recent events, his graduation was canceled when Harvard shut down for five months due to a smallpox epidemic.<sup>3</sup>

In any case, Joseph Gerrish's daughter may have settled down as a farmer's wife, but she still respected education too much to be satisfied with the ten week session offered annually by the North Berwick village school. She tutored her children at home and then sent the boys to nearby Berwick Academy when they were ready.<sup>4</sup> The Goodwin ties to Berwick Academy were strong ones; Samuel Twycross Goodwin's uncle had been among the founders in 1791.<sup>5</sup>

In his mid-twenties, the younger Samuel Goodwin moved to nearby Dover, New Hampshire where he engaged in the mercantile business. Dover was, at that time, in the midst of a building boom. Factories had begun to sprout up along the Cochecho River to take advantage of its water power, and with the rise of manufacturing came a rise in population and an increased demand for the type of goods supplied by merchants such as himself.

No record remains of what brought Samuel to the mercantile trade, but one of his elder brothers, Ichabod, had gone to work some years earlier for a merchant and ship-owner in Portsmouth, New Hampshire—one Samuel Lord, a second cousin by marriage—and had done well for himself. Around the time Samuel relocated to Dover, Ichabod had already worked his way up to master of one of his employer's ships and would eventually become a merchant himself before expanding into various other endeavors, including politics. Samuel's other older brother, Joseph, would stay put at home and take over the family farm, so it would have made sense for Samuel to seek his fortunes elsewhere. The youngest brother, Daniel Raynes Goodwin, went on to have an illustrious career as a clergyman and educator, serving as president of Trinity College in Connecticut before becoming provost of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

From Dover, Samuel relocated to Syracuse, New York in 1827 or 1828 where he seems to have flourished in the mercantile trade. The newly opened Erie Canal cutting through downtown undoubtedly made the importation of goods that much easier. Eye-catching advertisements for his wares appeared regularly in the Onondaga Standard, a Syracuse newspaper. He offered



Detail from 1817 map of New Hampshire @ LOC.gov showing relative locations of Dover, Portsmouth, and Berwick.

a large assortment of fabrics as well as crockery, china, and glassware. Under the heading of “Fresh Groceries” he lists assorted liquors, teas, spices, tobacco, dyes, fish, and “powder and shot.” Fresh groceries seems to have encompassed all the foodstuffs a person wasn’t likely to grow or hunt themselves, along with the ammunition needed to shoot one’s own dinner.

Advertisement from the Onondaga Standard, Jan. 27, 1830. Map of Syracuse from LOC.gov.  
Bottom of page: Bible given to Samuel during his stay in Syracuse, dated Nov. 24th, 1828.

**Map of the Village of SYRACUSE and the Village of Lodi 1834.**

**Legend:**

- Sea-Water on our Coast will make 75 lbs. Salt. 55 Gallons of water from the Onondaga Salt Springs will make 75 lbs. Salt. The Vats for solar evaporation cover a surface of 10 acres, and produce annually 150,000 bushels Coarse Salt. A Boiler 16 Kettles will manufacture on an average, daily through the Season, 150 Bushels Fine Salt and consume 4 cords best wood pr day i.e. 100 bushels wood will boil 375 bushels Salt.

**NEW GOODS.**  
**SAMUEL GOODWIN** has just received, and offers for sale, a general assortment of Fancy & Staple Goods, among them are Broad-Cloths, Cambric, Sattinets and Bangup Cords, Stripe and Plain Drillings, Jeans, Hamilton Cord and Nankins, Gro de Naples and Tussitu Silks, Black silk Velvet, Vesting, Calicoes, Ginghams and Cambricks, Muslins, Silk and gauze H'kts, gar gauze Ribbons, Tassita and Cuss Ribbons, Brown and Green Parasols, Valentia Shawls, bl'k Crapes, Irish Linen, Russian Diaper, Couou Hosery, Dunity, Bed-ticking, Brown and Bleached Sheetings & Shirtings, Foundation Muslins, Millente, Bolivar Hats, &c. An extensive assortment of

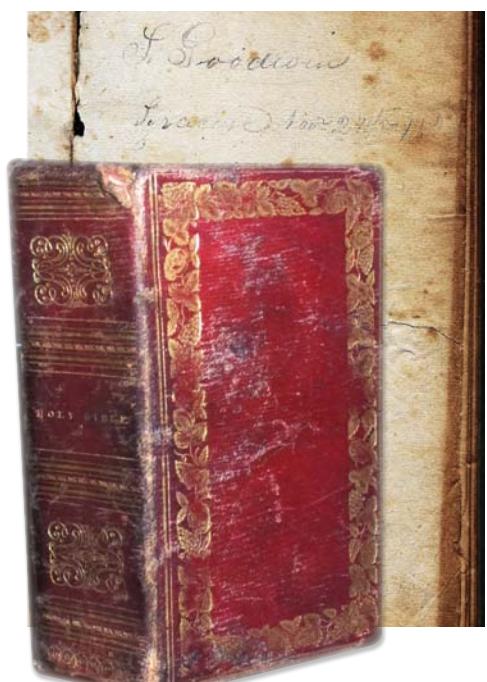
**CROCKERY,**  
**CHINA**  
**AND GLASS-WARE,**  
**ALSO**  
**Fresh Groceries,**  
consisting of Rum, Brandy, Gin, Whiskey, Molasses, Port, Madeira, Sicily and Malaga Wines, Ilyson and Ilyson Skin Teas, Loaf and Brown Sugars, Muscatel, Bloom & Cask Raisins, Cloves, Nutmegs, Punenta, Cassin & Ginger, Tobacco Indigo, Powder, and Shot, Cod-Fish and Mackerel.

The above articles will be sold as low as at any store in this village  
Syracuse, May 19, 1829.

*The Village of Syracuse is situated near the centre of Onondaga County, of which it is the County Seat; at the point where the Great Seneca Turnpike crosses the Erie Canal. The Onondaga Creek affording valuable water power, passes through it; near the centre of the Village, the Oswego Canal intersects the Erie, opening a direct channel of trade with the Canadas. The meeting of the Canals and Turnpikes at this point, renders it the great thoroughfare through which the immense travel from the East and West, and up and down the Canadas, must almost entirely pass. It is surrounded by a fertile and highly cultivated farming country, and since the lowering of the Lake is in all respects healthy. The bill of mortality for the last year was 17 off whom 9 were under 1 year of age.*

During his time in Dover, Samuel had become close friends with a Dover native and fellow merchant, Moses Varney.<sup>6</sup> In 1829 Varney explored the possibility of moving westward himself and took a liking to the Greenville, Pennsylvania area. With Varney’s encouragement, Samuel Goodwin made the move to Greenville in the spring of 1830. Goodwin had made arrangements in advance with one William McCrum, builder and owner of a large brick building (later known as the Mansion House) on the west side of town at the intersection of Main and High Streets for rooms to carry on his business and for living quarters. Goodwin arrived that May bringing with him a portion of his goods from Syracuse and set up shop as soon as the rooms were ready.<sup>7</sup>

The village of West Greenville was barely older than Goodwin himself when he arrived, having been laid out in 1798 or 1799. Originally named for its location on the west side of the Shenango River, and for the green hemlocks covering the river’s west bank, the town eventually expanded to cover land on both sides of the river and went on to drop the “west” from its name. The first post office in Greenville was established in 1825—Goodwin’s friend Varney would become its third postmaster—and by 1833 the town included about 100 structures, some of



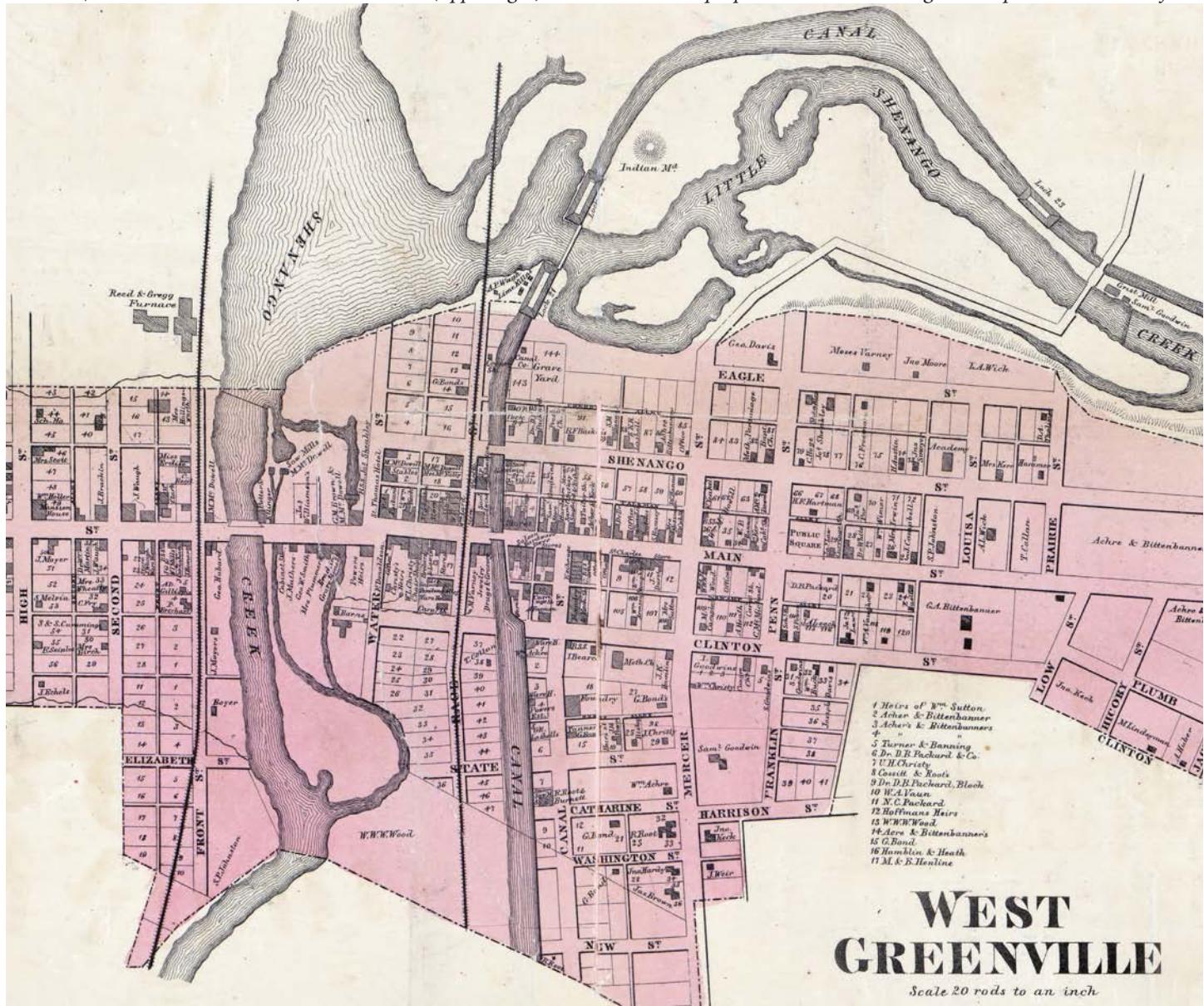
brick, some of logs, but most were presumably wood framed. A list of buildings and their occupants includes an artillery house, surveyors, shoemakers, chair-makers, a potter (with kiln), teachers, a constable, a plasterer, churches, blacksmiths, tailors, cabinet-makers, hotels (some with their own still-house), merchants, farm houses, saddlers, millers, tanners, carpenters, a printing office, butchers, gunsmiths, a slaughter-house, and various mills.<sup>8</sup>

Early in 1832 Goodwin began to buy various properties in Greenville's downtown, including a lot at the corner of Main and Race Streets—Main was at that time known as Mill Street—where he soon built a wood-framed structure out of which to do business. This was Greenville's first store east of the Shenango.

In 1834 Samuel's nephew, Ichabod, son of his elder brother, Joseph, and Joseph's wife, Frances Hobbs, joined Samuel in Greenville at the age of fourteen as bookkeeper and assistant. Ichabod went on to spend the rest of his long life as one of Greenville's businessmen, excepting three years spent as a "forty-niner" during the California Gold Rush. Following his West Coast adventure he returned to Greenville where he married and raised a family.

Some years after Ichabod came to Greenville, another of Samuel Goodwin's nephews came from Maine to clerk for Uncle Samuel, this time his sister Sarah's son, Samuel G. Hobbs (two of Samuel Goodwin's siblings married into the Hobbs family). Much like Ichabod, Hobbs was drawn from Greenville to the west coast by the California Gold Rush sometime around 1850.<sup>9</sup> Unlike his cousin, he would die there in 1852 at the age of 25.

This excerpt from an 1860 map of Mercer County, PA (LOC.gov) shows numerous details pertaining to Samuel Goodwin's life: the Mansion House where he first stayed (far left on Main), his nephew's house (corner Clinton & Mercer), his own home just south, his mercantile business (NE corner Main & Race), his Grist mill (upper right) and various other properties scattered through town, plus the canal itself.



In 1836, the Shenango Division of the Erie Extension Canal was laid out and construction begun—right through Greenville center. The Extension Canal was built in three sections with the intention of connecting the Ohio River to Lake Erie, thus facilitating the movement of goods. This particular section ran between the towns of New Castle and Erie. Real estate values in Greenville soared. The canal went through the east side of the lot that held Samuel Goodwin's store, as well as affecting other lots owned by Goodwin. A 1937 newspaper article says that Goodwin donated land to the canal "for canal purposes" and that when the canal eventually ceased operations he repossessed the land and built a small shack on the site, next to the brick building that by then had replaced his original store. The shack was rented by an Italian immigrant, Albert Christopher, who opened a fruit stand, and who eventually bought Goodwin's fine brick building several years after Samuel's death.

A half dozen letters to Samuel regarding the canal have survived, and they make it clear that Samuel was more than just a bystander in its construction. Not only did the canal pass through his property, but by the time of its opening in the summer of 1840 he was serving in the state legislature. Two letters ask Goodwin to use his influence in the appointment of officers for the running of the Canal.

*"West Greenville 6th February 1840*

*Hon'ble Samuel Goodwin*

*H. R. Harrisburg.*

*Dear Sir,*

*We have learned that Gen'l Curtis has gone to Harrisburg and intends to use his influence there with the Board of Canal Commissioners in favour of appointing William S. Gavin, the Postmaster at Mercer, as Supervisor of this section of the Erie Extension. —We beg leave to call your attention to this, that you may advocate the far superior claim of our worthy townsmen, Isaac Hildebrand, who is an applicant for that office and obtained the signatures of every man in this Borough."*

*We respectfully recommend our friend to your influence with those gentlemen, and we also think that an early appointment to that office, be the incumbent who he may, will protect the Interests of the State, or the whole works may suffer greatly by damages in the opening of the Spring by freshets, with no person particularly charged with their supervision.*

*Your obed. servants,*

*J.R. Bearce, Samuel Wortman, John Christy, Thos. W. Bean, Thomas Callen, W. G. Hull, John Service, William Scott, S. S. McDonald, Robert Bean.*

*P.S. You must be aware that as all the Lock tenders @ that line will be new to the business and wholly inexperienced there is a greater necessity of the Supervisor being a person well acquainted with all their duties as well as his own."*

*"Dear Sir*

*I write to ask that you will use all the influence you can in a matter in which we all feel an interest here, the appointment of Wm P. Mattuck as secretary of the Canal Office. He is fully capable of doing its duties and he is a very worthy fellow. Any thing you can do for him will much oblige your humble servant and well you may be assured be in accordance with the wishes of the best democrats in this district.*

*Yours very truly*

*James Worrall*

*Samuel Goodwin Esq*

*West Greenville*

*Please mention this amongst our friends—Cossett, McDonald &c that the news may spread."*

Two more letters (and apparently others long lost) are from Richard Hill and appeal for aid in getting compensation for property damage caused by the construction of the Canal. The longer of these reads as follows:

*"Samuel Goodwin, Esq.*

*Dear Sir,*

*So the water is let into the Canal, or about to be let in. I presume the Commissioners will soon be along the lines; there is a report here, but I don't know how much truth there is in it, that Governor Porter is expected in Greenville, on Saturday next, 4th July. At any rate, the Commissioners undoubtedly will soon be along, and as I might not see them, I would like very much you would speak to them about my damages, and just do what you can with them as if the land was your own. You can tell them you are empowered to see to it, in the absence of the owner... Nearly all of what I owe is to yourself, and if it comes, well and good, and if not, I will soon be able to pay you at any rate. You know all the particulars as well as I can tell you from the last letter I sent you... In so doing you will much oblige your humble servant, Richard Hill*

*July 1, 1849"*

As mentioned previously, Samuel is said to have willingly donated land for the Canal, but he also received compensation for damages to his property during its construction:

"On motion it was

—Resolved, that the Supt. of the Shenango line Erie Extension make an offer on the part of the Board to Samuel Goodwin of Three hundred dollars as compensation in full for all the injury he has sustained by the constructing of the Penn'a Canal."

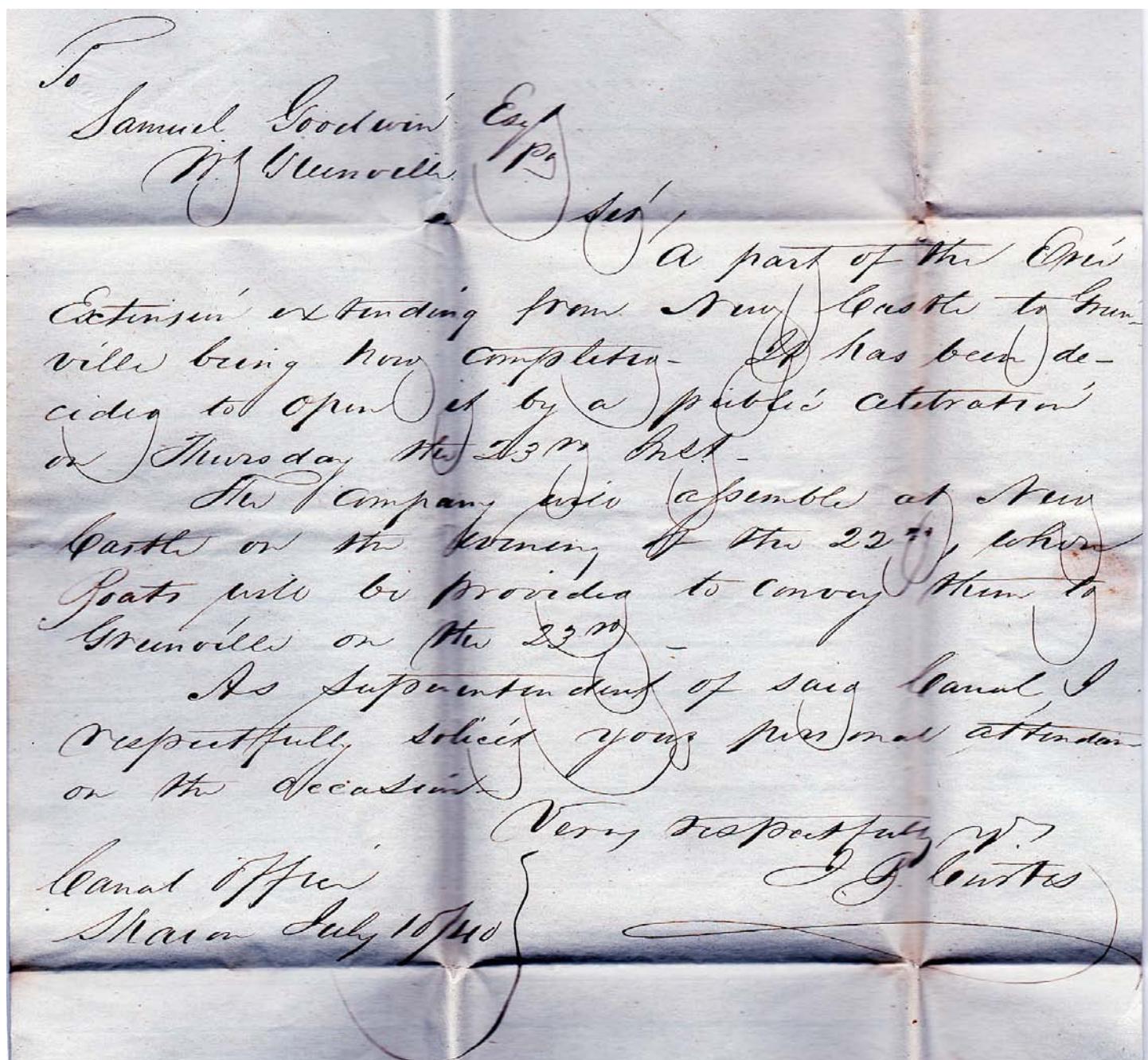
Sir,

Above you have an extract from the minutes of the Board of Canal Commissioners—  
Your acceptance or non-acceptance of the same in writing is requested—

Very respectfully yours.

J.B. Curtis, Supg. Canal Officer  
Sharon, Nov. 18, 1840"

And when the Erie Extension canal opened, Samuel Goodwin was invited to be one of the attending dignitaries at the celebration.



"To Samuel Goodwin Esq.

W. Greenville, PA

Sir,

*A part of the Erie Extension extending from New Castle to Greenville being now completed, it has been decided to open it by a public celebration on Thursday the 23rd inst. [short for "instante mense," or "of the current month."]*

*The company will assemble at New Castle on the evening of the 22nd, where boats will be provided to convey them to Greenville on the 23rd.*

*As superintendent of said Canal, I respectfully solicit your personal attendance on the occasion.*

*Very respectfully yours*

J. G. Curtis

Canal office

Sharon. July 10/40"

The opening of the Canal would have been a boon to Samuel Goodwin's business, with supplies now able to be shipped in via barge virtually to his doorstep. Seeing that it was well run would have been to his own advantage, and when the Erie Canal Company was incorporated in March of 1843 and tasked with finishing and operating the Canal, Samuel Goodwin was appointed one of its commissioners.<sup>10</sup>

The Erie Extension was heavily used during its early years but soon faced competition from the country's growing railway system; it ceased operation some thirty years after completion. Samuel, like his brother, Ichabod, back East, did what so many businessmen of his era did and soon turned his attention from improving transportation by water to expanding it by rail.

Greenville itself was incorporated into a borough May 29, 1837 in response to a petition signed by 68 citizens. Prior to that it was a part of West Salem township. According to the petition, the town at that time had 495 inhabitants. At the town's first election a month later, Samuel Goodwin was

elected treasurer, a job he held for several years. In 1841 and '46 he went on to be elected as town Burgess, a position at the head of the town council similar to mayor. He would serve one more time as Burgess twenty years later in 1862.<sup>11</sup>

During this time Samuel continued to do well for himself in business and gradually purchased more property. All and all, in the course of his life, his name appeared either as grantee or grantor on over sixty land deeds. His store thrived, and numerous bits of flotsam and jetsam have come down through the family. Among these are a number of shippers' bills from the late thirties and early forties for bringing in merchandise. Their letterheads have etchings of common modes of transport at the time: covered wagon, steam boat, canal barge, and train. And the goods they list include hardware, liquors, spices, coffee, tea, window glass, tobacco, chocolate, iron, tools, rope, dry goods, canvas, turpentine, hats, paper, corn, maize, [gun]powder, molasses, hand mirrors, and more.

*Canal scene in Pennsylvania from postcard.*



*Next page: Shipping bills to Samuel Goodwin for an assortment of products for his mercantile business. The dates from top to bottom are January 1840, March 1842, September 1835, and June 1841. Shipping methods often varied according to time of year and weather considerations; shipping by water was unwise come winter.*



Forrester &amp; Campbell, Prs.

CHURCH, M'VAY &amp; GORDON,

GROCERS,

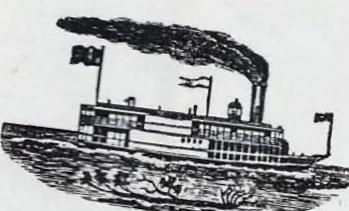
Forwarding &amp; Commission Merchants,

Nos. 31, WATER STREET,

" 62, FRONT "

PITTSBURGH.

McVay Hanna &amp; Co



A. Jaynes, Printer.

CHAS. HUMPHREYS & CO. Walnut Street Wharf, Schuylkill,  
 Agents for the WESTERN TRANSPORTATION COMPANY.  
 Between Philadelphia and Pittsburg.



MARKS AND NUMBERS.

Samuel Goodwin  
West Greenwich  
Mercer Co  
Pa

1 Bl. loaf sugar  
1 Ch. Tea

1 Raat sugar

Coffee.....	1 1/8	Carriages and Pianos.....
Hardware, Groceries & Drugs	3/8	Furniture in Boxes.....
Dry Goods, and Queensware....	1 3/8	Looking Glasses.....
Oil of Vitriol and Aqua-Fortis...		Willow Baskets.....
Gunpowder, Hats & Bonnets...		Fish, per barrel.....
		Articles not enumerated, as per agreement.
		15/-
		2/-
		1 1/2/-
		1 1/2/-
		40/-
		33/-
		430.37
		1 Bx glass 7/-

1 Rose tobacco — 15/-  
Regnolds — 2/-  
1 Ch. Tea 1 1/2/-

8/- 2 Bxs Slopds 408.333.430.37  
1 Bx glass 7/-  
1 Bx Wine 149. 1 Bx glass 7/-  
1 Bx 21 +



WESTERN TRANSPORTATION COMPANY.

D. LEECH &amp; CO'S LINE.



Warehouses in Philadelphia, Nos. 13 & 15 South Third St. & at the City Tobacco Stores, Dock St.—HARRIS & LINFORD, Agents.  
 Warehouse in Pittsburg, N. W. Corner of the Canal and Penn Street,—R. S. HAYS & GEO. BLACK, Agents.

Under the Firm of D. LEECH &amp; CO.

Philadelphia, June 2nd 1841, RECEIVED of *Sunday House* the following Packages, in good order, marked as per margin, which we promise to deliver, in like order, the dangers of the Rail Road, Navigation, Fire, Leakage (of Merchandise), and all and every unavoidable accidents or delays excepted, to *D. LEECH & CO*, PITTSBURG, in *Eight* days (Sundays excepted,) at the following rates per 100 pounds, subject to wagon dockage for Captains or Car Masters shall be evidence.

on presenting this receipt and payment of freight, at our Warehouse in over time, unless unavoidably detained, of which the certificates of Supervisors, Collectors, Lock keepers,

There are also letters with requests that Goodwin supply this customer or that with specific goods or services. A man requests a lace shawl in December of 1839, presumably as a Christmas gift: "I wish you to purchase for me a plain Black Merino shawl, say about Eight quarters square with narrow border and no flowers inside of the border; let the cost of it be from ten to twelve dollars. Send it on with your goods and a bill of the same." There being no banks in town prior to 1850, Goodwin would sometimes handle certain financial transactions; an 1836 letter instructs him to purchase \$1100.00 worth of bank drafts on behalf of multiple people. Another letter, this one from a hopeful supplier in 1840, begins: "Dear Sir—having no personal acquaintance with you, and knowing you only as a public man, I would take the liberty of addressing a few lines to you," before inquiring if Goodwin would be interested in 12 barrels flour, either to buy directly or to sell on commission.

An 1848 letter from Samuel's nephew, Ichabod, gives details of a buying trip to NYC on behalf of the business, and offers a brief mention of the recent elections.

"New York. Oct 19, 1848

Dear Uncle,

*I arrived in this City last Saturday morning, and spent the day a looking around, and pricing goods—I find goods low generally speaking—and have bought a pretty large stock. I have disposed of the draft on Mssrs Jay & Webster for \$1130 for my dry goods. The other draft of \$870 I gave to Sacket Belcher & Co. They [have taken] the amt. of their bill out of it and the balance [will go to] Wolff & Bishop—hardware merchants, & Lyman Cotter & Co.—dealer in combs &c.*

*I have made an agreement with the Western Transportation Company to ship to Erie at 61<sup>c</sup>-71<sup>c</sup>-76<sup>c</sup> per 100 lbs. [not absolutely sure I've read this correctly, but I believe the goods were divided into categories with different prices for each] to the care of Kelso & Loomis of Erie. Kelso & Loomis told me when I was in Erie that they would pay the Eastern Charges on our goods and they should pay some money besides. Our goods will be in Erie in about 12 or 14 days from this date. I have them insured on the Lake. They all say in Erie that there is no danger in shipping until the middle of November. They tell me the same here also. They are shipped by steam on the Lake. C. C. Wick was here the first of this week. He shipped his goods by the Lake. Sam'l B. Lowry is in the City now buying goods here. He will ship by the Lakes and there [are] goods here for Chicago & Michigan, and in fact they say now that they shall ship goods to the upper Lakes for a fortnight. I shall send you our bills by Mr. Lowry who will probably leave here for home about the middle of next week. I have been just as busy as a nailor\* since Monday morning, not even taking time to go to my dinner. I expect to get off from here this evening for Old N. Berwick, where I shall expect to receive a letter from you. — They do not know here yet who is elected Governor in Penna, but the chances are in favour of Johnson—it is said he is elected by 180 majority.*

Very affec.

Your Nephew,  
Ichabod Goodwin"

[\*Nail-makers, aka nailers/nailors, had to work very quickly to shape as many nails as possible out of a metal rod pulled from the forge before the rod cooled. Three was the usual goal and required significant skill and speed—and no dawdling.]

Goodwin served as one of Mercer County's two representatives to the Pennsylvania State legislature from January 1840 to January 1841 and again in 1843-44.<sup>12</sup> He was a member of the Democratic Party while in office but subsequently left the party over their support of slavery and became a charter member of the newly formed Republican Party.<sup>13</sup> There are various letters related to his political career in the family papers. A commercially-printed appeal from 1836 stresses the importance of participating in local politics, in particular on behalf of the Democratic party. A letter from 1842 asks for Goodwin's support in appointing Maj. Hugh Evans as Manager of the Butler and Mercer Turnpike Road (I have been unable to determine if Maj. Evans was any relation to the Clark Evans who would eventually marry Samuel's daughter). And a letter from late in 1840 expresses delight at the election of President Harrison, as well as sympathy for Goodwin's loss in the ballot for state reps, a defeat apparent in the gap between Goodwin's two terms. The text of that letter is as follows.

"Waterford. 19th Nov. 1840

Sam'l Goodwin Esqr

Dear Sir

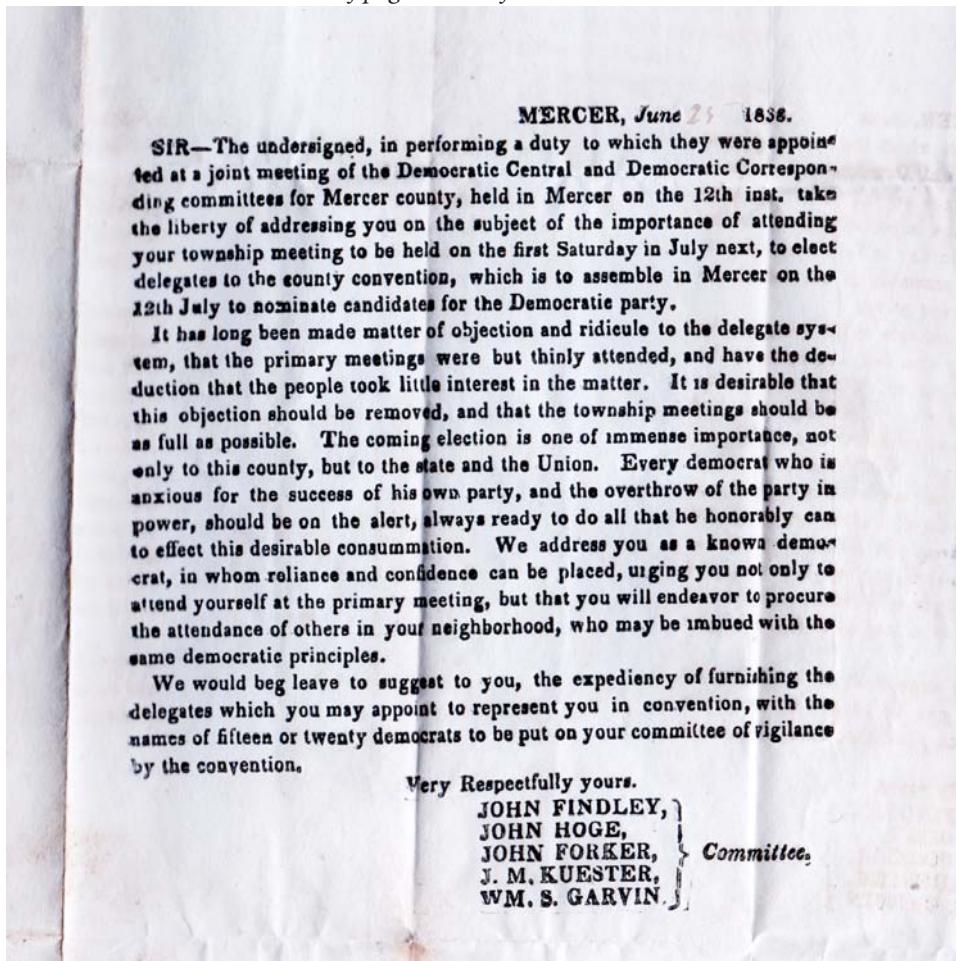
*You will not have forgotten that I predicted last winter that I should about this time in Nov. have the pleasure of congratulating you upon the Election of Gen'l Harrison to the Presidency. Now Sir, I do not profess to be a prophet or the son of a prophet, but it seems that from the returns already known Gen'l Harrison is elected by a large majority; indeed it seems to have been a perfect rout, a Waterloo defeat, and such a rebuke to an administration that has never been administered by the People of this county before. I do most heartily congratulate you Sir. I have no doubt of your honesty in your support of Mr.*

*Van Buren and I have no more doubt that in two years you will be as hearty in your support of Gen'l Garrison's administration and because I believe you are a Patriot and am anxious for the Prosperity of our common country. I regret Sir that you lost your election in the late canvass and yet I cannot but rejoice in the ascendancy of the Whigs in the most legislators for I trust that they will use their power with a view to promote the best interests of the commonwealth.*

*I shall be most pleased to hear from you upon the receipt of this and remain with much respect  
Your most obt. servt. [obedient servant]  
Sam'l. Hutchins"*

Right around the time of Samuel's first term in office, he was also settling into his new mansion house on South Mercer Street in Greenville. Information left by Samuel's grandson on the back of a house photo states that Goodwin's elegant Greek Revival style home was built in 1837. His daughter's 1929 obituary also gives the 1837 date. There are deeds describing the lot and relinquishing it to Samuel in both 1841 and 1845; perhaps they were later mortgages (the 1841 deed is from Goodwin's nephew, Ichabod, so it easily could have been an exchange more of funds than of property). I have yet to find a deed for the lot early enough to support the 1837 date. Nor can I find Goodwin's name on the 1840 federal census, most likely because he was still a boarder somewhere rather than a "head of household," or else because he was in Harrisburg serving in the legislature at the time of the census. For that matter, I can find neither Samuel or his nephew, Ichabod, anywhere in

*Below: 1838 letter to Samuel Goodwin.  
Bottom of page: Photo of Goodwin home on S. Mercer Street, c.1900*



Pennsylvania on the 1840 federal census, even when allowing for misspellings. In any case, at some point right around 1840, Samuel Goodwin erected the home on South Mercer Street, a building that would remain in the family for five generations, finally being sold in 2008.

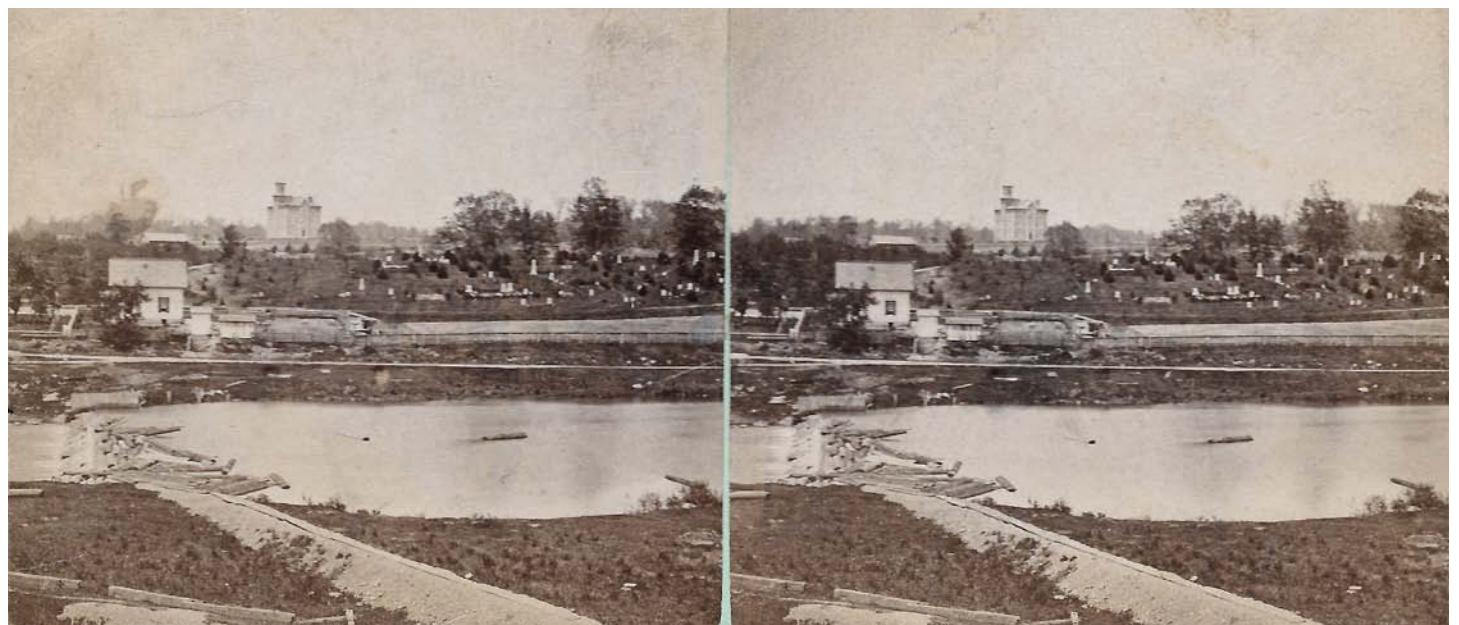
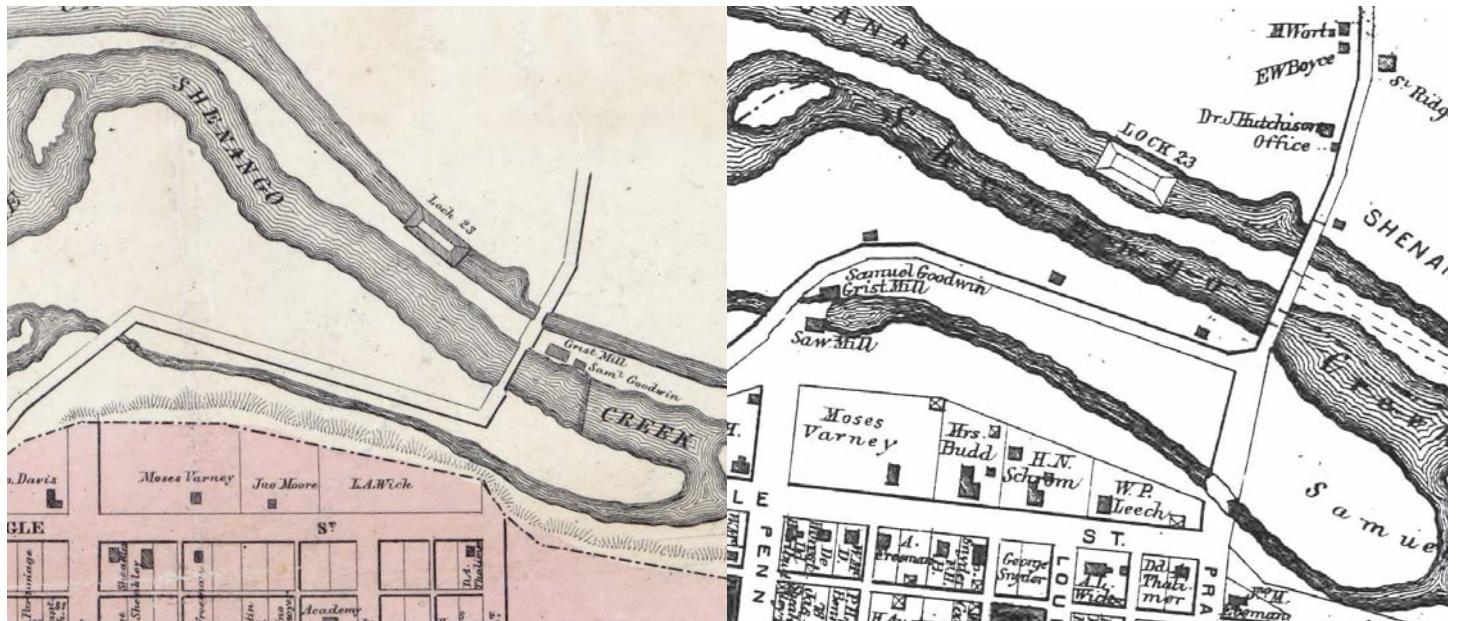
In 1843, Goodwin purchased a dam, mills, and twenty-three acres on the Little Shenango from John Christy and Owen N. Rice. Christy and Rice had built the dam in 1832, followed by a carding-and-fulling mill and a grist mill, both running on water-power. Samuel soon built a new dam below the old one and eventually dug a long race-way and added a saw-mill—reportedly in 1851 but that date conflicts with other accounts. The same source tells of a young man who "came to Greenville from Ohio in April, 1844, and began



working in Samuel Goodwin's Saw-mill at \$11 per month and board himself, all of which was paid in orders on Goodwin's store." It also tells of a Henry Snyder working at Goodwin's saw and grist-mill, probably in the late 1840s, and saving \$100 out of the \$120 he was paid his first year. So not everyone was paid solely with credit at the store, and there seems to be some confusion as to which types of mills were being operated on Goodwin's property when.<sup>14</sup>

Further examination of old maps and photos has made it clear that those snippets from the old histories are not giving a complete, or particularly accurate, picture. The "long race-way" seems to have taken advantage of a sharp bend in the Little Shenango to create a straight, narrow, quarter-mile-long waterway—well-suited for supplying water power—that split off from the river just above the bend and reconnected just below. How much of that waterway existed naturally and how much was dug under Goodwin's supervision is not apparent from available maps, but this side waterway was gone by the mid-1900s. The mills built by Christy and Rice were north of the Little Shenango, upstream from the bend and tucked tightly in between the river and the canal. By 1873, Goodwin's mills sat astride the downstream end of the side waterway, a more spacious site, and well to the west of the old mills. The original buildings stood next to the dam built in 1832; one has to think that the later dam attributed to Goodwin was on the side waterway at the site of the later mills. Were I to guess how the dates from the History of Mercer County (1888) fit together with this, I'd say that there was some sort of saw mill at the original site but that the creation of the raceway and plans for a new saw mill were begun in 1851.

*Maps showing location of Goodwin's mills, 1860 and 1873. Stereoscope image is of dam at older, upstream site, c.1874. Towpath for canal is visible just above far bank; canal itself is hidden behind embankment. Thiel College and Shenango Valley Cemetery are visible in distance.*



*Maps from LOC.gov. Stereoscope image from family collection.*

Samuel Goodwin never married—there is no whiff of there ever having been a wife in any records or family papers—but a daughter was born to him on December 29th, 1844, Mary Louise Goodwin. DNA testing links me to a dozen cousins through the Goodwin line so there is little doubt that Mary Louise was indeed Samuel's biological daughter. DNA testing also pegs one of my siblings and myself as one percent "Cameroon, Congo & Southern Bantu Peoples." With so much of our genealogy documented as solidly European, it's fairly certain that Great-Grandmother Mary Louise's mother is the source of that ethnicity. Doubling the percentage through the generations would make this mystery woman 16% African—give or take depending on the accuracy of testing and the luck of the genetic draw over four generations. Mary Louise's death certificate gives the mother's name as Mary Powell, born in New Castle, Pennsylvania, but years of sporadic investigation have yielded no Powell families in the area that seem likely candidates. Further putting the accuracy of the name in doubt is the fact that I distinctly remember a comment years ago from my mother about how odd it was that my paternal grandfather didn't know his own grandmother's name. Which begs the question: Who supplied the name on Mary Louise's death certificate?

Illegitimate children are not something history does a good job of recording. In fact, if they're not deliberately erased entirely, their origins are at least not discussed and their blood ties not recognized. So there are no newspaper articles or letters or other items to be found explaining Mary Louise's parentage. Samuel's will refers to Mary Louise as his "dear daughter" and he leaves her the bulk of his estate, yet obituaries mention her only as his heir, and legal notices specifically state Samuel left "no widow and no children."

Samuel Goodwin	44	m	Merchant
Mary Anne Hinaker	25	f	
Samuel G. Goodwin	22	m	Clerk
George Gilbert	21	m	Laborer
Mary Anne Smith	16	m	
Mary Goodwin	5	m	

Mercer County census 1850

Putting together the little bits of information available, I have come up with a theory regarding the identity of my Great-great-grandmother. Is it accurate? I have no idea, but it's the best I can offer.

Mary Louise Goodwin was born in the Greenville house on South Mercer Ave<sup>15</sup> which would be a strong indication that her mother was residing on the property. There is no Goodwin household listed in the 1840 federal census, but in 1850 Samuel's household includes a 25-year-old housekeeper, Mary Anne Hinaker, as well as a clerk, a laborer, 5-year-old Mary Louise, and a 16-year-old girl named Mary Anne Smith. It's hard to imagine the Smith girl as being old enough to be the mother, which leaves Hinaker as the likely candidate.

Ten years later, Samuel's household includes 16-year-old Mary Louise, a farm hand, and a 35-year-old housekeeper, Mary, whose surname reads as Hunca, Henecer or Heneca, which could easily be a garbled version of 1850's Hinaker. By 1870, Mary Hinaker/Heneca has been replaced by 35-year-old Mary Powers, and Mary Louise Goodwin's husband, Clark Evans, and young son, Samuel, have joined the Goodwin household; there is also a teamster and his wife listed as residing at the address.

Samuel Goodwin	57	m	Merchant
Mary "	16	f	
Mary Heneca	35	f	House Keeper
Henry Omyar	28	m	Farm Hand

Mercer County census 1860

Goodwin Samuel	1	m	Black
Brown Sam	25	f	Blacking W.
Clark J. P.	39	m	Miller
Powers Mary	35	f	Wm. S.
Patterson Samuel	21	f	
George	22	m	Teamster
Conrad L. G.	3	m	

Mercer County census 1870



*This ambrotype is noted "Mollie E. Goodwin, Greenville." For various reasons, I believe the middle initial is a mistake and that it's Mary Louise, c.1860, not some visiting cousin.<sup>19</sup>*

The lack of marriage can presumably be attributed to class differences, or to her mixed race at a time when any amount of African blood would have made her subject to slavery in much of the country. But it still reflects poorly on Goodwin's behavior in what was undoubtedly a wildly unbalanced relationship in terms of power. He does seem to have cherished the child and provided for her well. It's also worth noting that his political career pretty much ended around the same time his out-of-wedlock daughter was born. His supporters may have been scandalized not just by Mary Louise's existence, but even more so by his embrace of such a child as his own.

Very few items from Mary Louise's childhood have survived—one or two school essays, a bible, and little else. Incidentally, there are no minutes on record for Greenville's town council meetings the year of her birth, which raises the intriguing (but admittedly faint) possibility of heated exchanges over the behavior of a leading citizen being "accidentally" lost. The History of Mercer County (1888) simply chalks it up to a lack of meetings that year.<sup>16</sup>

One last mystery, which may or may not be related: there's the body of an unidentified woman in the family plot at Shenango Valley Cemetery in Greenville. The body was discovered when a grave was dug in 1931 for Mary Louise's daughter, Sara, and a second grave had to be dug for Sara so that the mystery corpse could be left in peace.<sup>17</sup> The gap in the headstones is still visible today. While Shenango Valley Cemetery wasn't incorporated until 1864, the cemetery was carved,

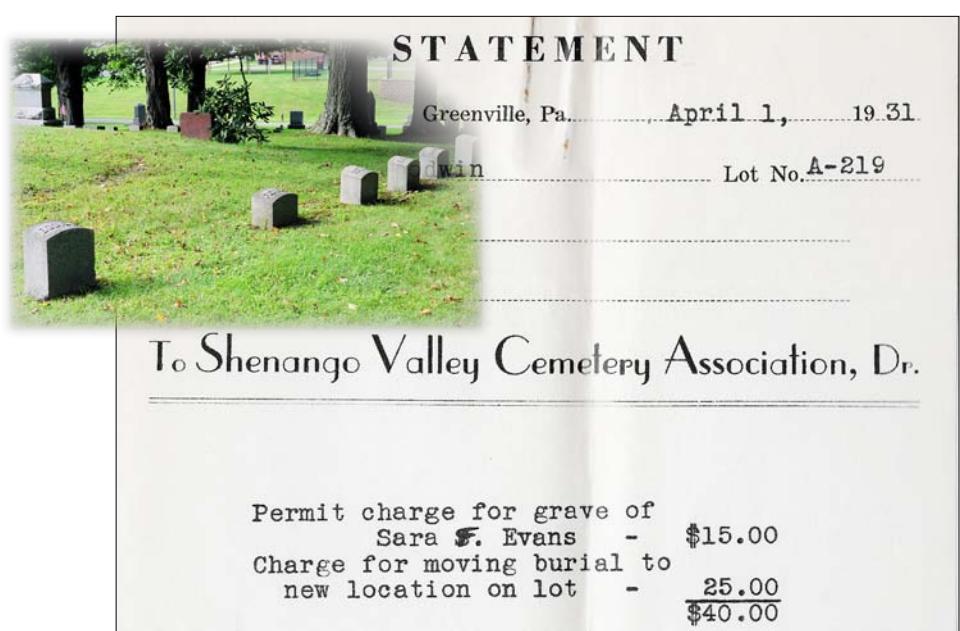
in part, out of the mill property Goodwin bought in 1843, so Samuel could perhaps have laid his mistress's body to rest there at any time after his daughter was born.

In the early 1850s, perhaps as a way of smoothing over the scandal or perhaps simply because he believed in supporting the community's growth, Goodwin contributed labor and/or materials to the building of the First Baptist Church, despite not being a member.<sup>18</sup> One Goodwin obituary states: "Although not a public professor of religion he always contributed liberally to the erection of churches and the support of the gospel."

The likeliest scenario seems to be that forty-five-year-old Samuel took advantage of his housekeeper when she was barely out of her teens, if that, and that Mary Hinaker/Heneca stayed on as part of the household and raised their child. This does not jibe with the part of family legend that says Mary Louise's mother died when she was young, but legends can sometimes be mistaken. If Mary Louise's children knew or suspected that their mother was the child of one of Samuel's housekeepers, and were flailing about for a name to put on the death certificate in 1929, they may very well have remembered hearing Mary Powers's name and quoted it as Powell. The name Powell does appear in one other place—in 1874 Mary Louise's husband mentions receiving a letter from a James Powell in his diary, but his diaries list lots of correspondence, both business and personal, and there's nothing that makes this entry noteworthy other than the name.

There is, of course, also the possibility that Great-great-grandmother was never a member of the household, or was only a member in between censuses, in which case there's little hope of tracing her now. If she was a member of the household only in the mid-forties, then she probably would have died when Mary Louise was around four—in line with the family stories—and Mary Hinaker/Heneca would have been brought in to help raise the child. Unfortunately, there are no state censuses for Pennsylvania that might offer a picture of the household in 1845.

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*Photo of family plot with gap in stones, 2006. Bill showing charge for digging alternate grave.*