

The Talcott Family Connection

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Planning a family reunion:

by Dexter Talcott

I firmly believe that leaders of organizations should experience every part of the organization they administer. As the President of The Talcott Family Association, Inc., I determined after the family reunion in Hartford, Connecticut in 2022, I needed to understand the amount of work that goes into planning a family reunion.

At the first Talcott family reunion in Hartford, CT in 2011, the idea was proposed to move the family reunion around the country from the east, to the middle, to the west, back to the middle, and east again. Thinking middle of the country for the 2024 reunion, I began searching for Talcott history in Iowa. This led to an online dead end.

I recalled a side trip to Rockton and Rockford, IL during the 2017 reunion and knew there was a lot of Talcott history in that area. I did a little more digging online and discovered Rockford and Rockton, IL held a trove of Talcott family history. The question, "How can we make this work?"

I called on previous Talcott family reunion planners to get their input and experience in the planning process. To get things rolling, I set up a Zoom meeting with the Board of Directors and a group of interested Talcott family members who became my planning committee.

Whitney Talcott, VP of The Talcott Family Association, had been the main planner for the 2022 Hartford reunion; so, I knew his input would be valuable in making the 2024 reunion a success. During the next Zoom meeting, the reunion committee agreed Rockford, IL would be the location for the reunion. I delegated Whitney to gather hotel prices and locations.

Whitney gathered the hotel information and shared it with the planning committee in advance of the next Zoom meeting. The planning committee reviewed the choices and agreed on the Baymont Hotel in Rockford. Also, the planning committee took into consideration other events that were taking place in Rockford to determine the best dates for the reunion. Less competition for hotel rooms equates to better room prices.

I reached out to the Rockford Library for any assistance they could provide after explaining a Talcott family reunion was going to be held in Rockford. Shortly after making contact with the library, a blessing came in a phone call from a non-Talcott person, Bill Edmundson. Bill was

researching and preparing to write about the history of the Water Power District in Rockford which meant he knew a lot of Talcott history. Bill became my contact and with his help things flowed beautifully. I must give credit to where credit is due, without his help my job would have been much more difficult in leading a successful reunion.

Bill had connections with people in the Rockford area which proved to be a valuable asset. One of the places I wanted the Talcott family to visit was the Talcott Building. Through Bill's connections, he was able to get us access to the Talcott Building. It is located at 321 W. State Street and called the "Residences at Talcott." Later in the newsletter, I will address the building's history.

With Bill's guidance of places to visit, I was able to formulate a "Reunion Schedule of Events." I came to realize there were a lot of things we could do but there was only so much time in which to do them. So, our time in Rockford was first spent visiting the Rockford Library on Friday where Bill Edmundson presented a "History of the Talcott's in Rockford, Wait and Sylvester Talcott" and the library staff laid out a display of Talcott historical papers, books, and other memorabilia.

From the library, we toured the Talcott Building, went to the Water Power District where Bill guided the family on a tour. Time permitted some family members to visit the Greenwood Cemetery in Rockford where numerous Talcott's are buried.

The afternoon was spent at the Midway Village Museum. The museum displays Midwestern life as it was during the early 1900s through artifacts and buildings of the era saved and moved to the museum to create a village.

Lunch and dinner were on your own. From 7-10 PM, there was time in the hotel Hospitality Room for late



registration, fellowship, and family genealogy checking and updating.

I had contacted the Rockton Historical Society and Talcott Free Library of our visit to their community on August 3. The Historical Society prepared a program for our arrival. The Rockton Village President was present and declared August 3, 2024 to be the "Talcott Family Heritage Day." Each family member received a copy of the declaration. Marilyn Mohring presented the "History of Rockton, A Proud Talcott Family." The museum was open for the family to view the artifacts collected from the Rockton area.

Next, was a visit to the Old Stone Church which is known today as First Congregational United Church of Christ. The church was originally organized on Friday, March 23, 1838 in the log cabin of William Talcott by 14 founding members as the First Congregational Church of Pekatoneka (as Rockton was then called).



Construction on the church began in 1848 and the first service was held on June 14, 1850. William Talcott in 1854 donated the 1400 pound bell that remains in the steeple today.

Lunch was on your own. The afternoon was spent visiting the Talcott Free Library, a self-guided tour of Talcott homes in the community, the raceway area, and Rockton cemetery.

The raceway was constructed by Thomas, William, and Henry Talcott to power a grist mill and saw mill. Today, the raceway powers a hydroelectric plant. The cemetery contains several Talcott gravesites.

The evening plans included a dinner at the Machine Shed Restaurant near the hotel. Following dinner, a business meeting of The Talcott Family Association was scheduled to be held in the Hospitality Room at the hotel. Since I had planned the Business Meeting for the 2022 reunion, I made it possible this year for those who could not attend the reunion to participate in the business meeting via Zoom. Chuck Huffer helped setup and execute this.

Following the business meeting an auction is traditionally held to raise money for the Association to help with expenses. Having attended all the family reunions, I knew the auctioneer must be a humorous person, who can create fun, and raise as much money as possible for the Association. I knew from the preregistration who to select as the auctioneer. I chose James Pyle for the task because he was the auctioneer at the 2013 Talcott reunion in Kansas City. James dressed the part attired in a sport coat covered in dollar bills. He immediately set the tone and when the bidding began, the fun began with fierce and highly competitive bidding. Many folks walked away with a few things they wanted and some wished they had bid a little higher. The auction has been a wonderful and memorable time at the

reunions. It has been the best sendoff after a wonderful weekend together.

Remember, if you have any Talcott memorabilia or items that you are willing to donate for the next auction, contact any board member and we will gladly accept them.

In the planning process, we asked the question, "Where did the Talcott's go?" because we couldn't find any in the area. We questioned Bill Edmundson. It is believed they went to four states; Iowa, Montana, South Dakota, and Washington. Now, spread out all over the country.

As a planner of a family reunion, there are things that excite you. That happened one day when I received an email requesting information about the reunion from Jim Wiczorek of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Jim was not on our mailing list. Jim learned about the reunion through Bill Edmundson in his research on the question above.

Jim had just changed jobs and did not have much vacation time. He arrived late Friday evening at the hotel and joined the family for the Saturday events. He was an encouragement to me as a new reunion attendee, and everyone welcomed our newest Talcott family member. **T**

Talcott Building history & tour

The lot on which the Talcott building is located was originally owned by William Ariel Talcott. He had a meat market and clothing store on the site.

Wait Talcott, grandson of Wait Talcott who settled in Rockton, was the building's developer. Wait engaged the firm of Howard Van Doren Shaw. Shaw was on the planning committee for Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition; however, Shaw had died shortly before the firm was hired. The building was primarily designed by Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted. Perhaps that is why one source lists the architects as Daniel Burnham, Graham, Anderson, Probst & White. Its architectural style is of the Italianate, Classical Revival, and Art Deco.

The Talcott Building was completed in 1927 and the tallest building at the time in Rockford at 13 stories tall (163 feet). Today, it is the fourth tallest building in the city.

When the building was completed, it was a department store named Bloch and Kuhl Co. which later was renamed Carlson, Pierre Scott department stores. Because of the size of each floor, it was setup that each floor was a special floor for one or two types of products. the woman's floor was the 7th and the 8 floor for men's clothes, etc. The top two floors were used as offices.

Wait Talcott became the president of the Nelson Knitting Company and was elected a Illinois state senator.

The present manager of the building graciously agreed to escort the Talcott family reunion attendees to the 13th floor. Anyone superstitious? The 13th floor is the rooftop which is a patio designed for hosting parties, complete with a gas grill and patio accessories. A perfect setting for an evening social event overlooking the Rockford River and the city landscape with the glow of lights to the horizon.

The building has 63 apartments of one or two bedroom units. Information at <https://www.apartments.com/residences-at-talcott-rockford-il/dss5g9l/#descriptionSection> **T**



Talcott Family Reunion attendees at the Rockton Historical Society Museum on August 3, 2024, l-r: Linda (Sandison) Talcott, Tom Talcott, Jane (Talcott) Vogelzang, David Talcott, George Snyder, Jilian Pyle, Rick Pyle, Deanna (Talcott) Pyle, Charles Huffer, Gahrad Harvey, Dexter Talcott, Jim Wieczorek, David Talcott, Erica Fornari, Darrel Talcott, and Anne Fornari.

Articles of Faith –

The Old Stone Church (First Congregational Church of Pekatoneka) in Rockton, IL was founded in 1838 by William Talcott, Herny W. Talcott, Mrs. Dorothy Talcott, Miss Prudence Talcott, Miss Harriet Talcott, J. Ambrose Wight, Luman Pettibone, Mrs. Almira Pettibone, Miss Mary Pettibone, Mrs. John Carpenter, Eli Hoyes, Mrs. Sophronia Hoyes, Mrs. Maria P. Ormsby, and Mrs. Sophia Adams. These were their **Articles of Faith**:

1. You believe that the Bible, comprised of Old and New Testaments is the word of God, dictated by the Inspiration of his Spirit, and is our only rule of faith and practice.
2. You believe that there is one only living and true God existing in three coequal persons; The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, self-existent and infinite in every perfection the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the Universe.
3. You believe that man was created in a state of perfect holiness but that he fell from this state by sinning against God.
4. You believe that man, as a sinner, deserves the wrath and curse of God; that God could not consistently restore him to his favor without an atonement, and that Jesus Christ the second person in the Trinity has, in our nature, offered himself a sacrifice for sin upon the cross so that God now be just and justifier of him that believeth.
5. You believe that the atonement made by Jesus Christ has opened the only door of hope to our guilty race; that Salvation is freely offered to sinners in the Gospel that all who truly repent of sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved and that those who reject Christ and

his salvation will perish thro' their own impenitence and unbelief.

6. You believe that all men, till renewed by the Divine Spirit, are under the influence of the "carnal mind" which is enmity against God, and that without regeneration or a change of heart no sinner can be saved.

7. You believe that a saving change is wrought in the heart of the sinner by the Spirit of God and that this change is effected in a manner perfectly consistent with the freedom and responsibility of man; that, while pardon and eternal life are tendered to all, through the propitiation which has been offered for the sins of the world and while all, if left to themselves would continue through their own fault to reject this great salvation, the Spirit in the sovereignty of its operations and according to the purpose of God inclined the sinner to repentance unto life and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. You believe that those who are renewed by the Spirit and pardoned and justified through the blood of Christ are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation.

9. You believe that the children of God are created in Jesus Christ unto good works and that a renewed heart will evince itself in the various acts and duties of an obedient life.

10. You believe that the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath and that it is binding upon all mankind to keep it holy according to the commandment.

11. You believe that any number of Christians organized, constitute a church of Christ the special ordinances of which are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

12. You believe, that Christ will appear at the end of the world to raise the dead and judge all men, that all changes in moral character which are incident to a state of probation will then cease, that the righteous will be received into life eternal and the wicked go away into everlasting punishment and that both of these states will continue without end. This you believe in your heart and thus you confess before men.

The Talcott Family Connection is published by The Talcott Family Association, Inc. It is published the first quarter of the year and mailed by USPS or by e-mail to all Talcott family members in the mailing address data base. Other times throughout the year, it is sent via e-mail to all Talcott family members in the Talcott e-mail list. It is edited by Dexter Talcott at 708 Mavor ST - Springfield, OH 45505 — djtalcott@gmail.com. Talcott family stories, historical information and articles of interest are encouraged and may be submitted to the editor. Inclusion in future issues is subject to space available.

COVENANT – 1838

And now in the presence of God, angels and men you do solemnly avouch the Lord Jehovah to be your God and portion, the object of your supreme love and delight, and the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Savior from sin and death, your Prophet to instruct you, your Priest to atone and intercede for you, and your King to rule, and protect and enrich you, and the Holy Ghost to be your Illuminator, Sanctifier, Comforter and Guide; looking to him for light, grace and peace; unto this triune God – this wonderful name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost – into which we are baptized – you do now without reserve give yourselves away in a covenant never to be revoked, to be his willing servants forever to observe all his commandments and all his ordinances in the sanctuary, in the family and in the closet. You engage to assemble with the people of God on the Sabbath and at the stated and occasional meetings of the church during the week for instruction and devotion as opportunity may afford and to discharge all those duties by which God may be glorified and the religion of the Bible extended and established among men. You do also bind yourselves by covenant as a church to watch over each other in the Lord to seek each others purity, peace and edification and conscientiously to submit to the government and discipline of Christ as here administered, counting it a favor not a grievance to be subject to that authority which he hath himself established in his church.

I was impressed with The Articles of Faith and Covenant each member vowed to accept and live by when joining the First Congregational Church in 1838 and years since. I am encouraged by this church, which still exists today. It is on the Historical Building Registry and has been kept in its original format. It was one of the highlights of the reunion for me. The fact that God has been important to the Talcott's throughout history shows God keeps his promises of blessing to the third and fourth generation for being obedient to his word. Our forefathers enjoyed their relationship with God. The first Talcott to arrive in the new world came seeking religious freedom and found it in the New World. **T**

by Dexter Talcott

My Talcott Family Story –

A little story about Dexter Talcott's Family. I have some amazing Talcott's that I call family. As children, we cousins did not get together very often. The picture in the upper right corner was taken a long time ago when we were together. I'm not sure who all the individuals are in the picture; but, probably at a birthday party for Elmer, Sr.

My Grandfather Elmer Talcott, Sr. was my after-school playmate. He truly shaped my life in many ways, like being creative. I remember riding in the back of his Datsun pickup which had heat. He ran antifreeze lines from the engine's cooling system to a heat exchanger and added an old bus seat with a c-clamp holding it in place. I was never cold riding in the back of his pickup.

You could set your clock to his light coming on at 5 am, and he enjoyed his afternoon power nap. He was quite handy. He built crude model steam engines. Rather than



steam (a wise choice in my opinion), he used air to make them work. I have fond memories of watching my dad, Joseph Talcott, walking to Grandpa's trailer at 6 am and spending quality time with his father most mornings of the week. I learned much from both men in my life.

My Grandfather worked for E J Johnson, the shoe manufacturer in the Triple Cities of southern New York (Binghamton, Endicott and Johnson City). His three children are Dorothy Talcott (Pitcher) Belknap, Elmer, Jr., and Joseph. The cousins on Dorothy's branch are Fred Pitcher and his wife Rhonda, Mark Pitcher, and Wanda King. Elmer, Jr.'s children are Beverly Talcott Atwood, David Talcott, and Danny Talcott. I was never close to these cousins but I know they are very much Talcott's to the core.

I have memories of Dorothy and Ray Pitcher's



L-r: The Talcott's: Danny; Joe; Elmer, Jr.; and Dexter.

Hardware Store. In a town of 185 people, the store thrived because of their friendly customer relationships and rural American's buy locally. Fred was always playing some kind of sport; softball and hockey were his two big ones. Fred's wife, Rhonda, was the comedian in the family. She could make you laugh and kept things interesting. Their children are miles away now; Chris in Colorado and Tracy as far South as you can go in Florida, the Florida Keys.

Wanda's kids are a bunch; Kenny, Steven, Amy, and Philip.

Philip got Grandma back out into nature for hunt-



The Talcott family came together a decade ago to create the family crest insert that had been missing for years from the tablestone of Joseph Talcott, Governor of the Colony of Connecticut.

Now, the Ancient Burying Ground in Hartford has another Talcott stone in need of help – this time it is the marker for Capt. John Talcott, eldest son of the Governor. The stone, which is next to the Governor's tablestone, is one of several "leaners" now in need of straightening. The stones will be cleaned to remove the lichen. The estimated cost is \$500.00.

Your contribution toward the care of Capt. John's stone will help the AGBA reach our goal of straightening all the stones on our list. Donations can be mailed to AGBA - P.O. Box 347—Hartford, CT 06141 with memo note, Capt. John Talcott, or online giving to ancientburyingground.com/support/annual-fund.

Talcott Story continued . . .

ing season a couple of years. Amy helped Grandma enjoy major league baseball in the stands instead of on TV. Kenny and Steven both were in Scout Troop 299 Little Meadows. I enjoyed camping and hiking with them.

I remember being a bad influence on them growing up. It was natural to cut down dead wood and burn it. The Gettysburg National Forest rangers do not like this type of activity. David King, the scout master, took the tongue lashing from a ranger and I got one in turn. I deserved it! I had not followed the rules by cutting down a dead tree and burning it in the park.

Now Elmer, Jr. was a small engine wonder worker. He married well. Peggy had a cake and candy business. Elmer was a farmer by trade but did many other things. He was known for running everywhere he went on foot. He drove for Ward and Van Scoy delivering feed and fertilizer. I was introduced to photography by Dave and Danny. It is strange that both are color blind but took great care in developing pictures, both black & white and color. I was not very old when Beverly was getting married. If memory serves me correctly, I was a ring bearer for that joyous occasion. Thank you for including me.

I remember my dad telling a story about a roommate Elmer, Sr. had for while at the old farmhouse. The roommate was of color which was no surprise to my dad. The lad was in America on a green card from India studying at Cornell College in Ithica, NY. He needed a place to stay while studying at Cornell's Ball Hatchery located in Owego, NY which is a distance from Ithica. It provided company for Elmer and perhaps a little extra income. With the hatchery and farmhouse located on Waits RD, it was an ideal place for the foreign student to stay. His course of study was learning how to inoculate chickens. When his training ended, he returned home to India.



L-r: Sarah Talcott, Becky Brack, Ella Brack (in front), Peggy Talcott, Beverly Atwood, Jennifer Talcott, and Diana Howe Talcott.

Elmer, Sr. got sick shortly after that in the winter. The old farmhouse was "out in the sticks" on Waits Road. Back then, the winter plow trucks had a difficult time clearing the roads. When dad learned Elmer was sick, he borrowed his cousin's 4X4 military vehicle and followed the plow truck to get to the farmhouse. He brought Elmer to our trailer home to care for him. It took Elmer about two weeks or so to get his strength back. An agreement was reached that Elmer needed to be near someone who could care for him. Consequently, Elmer purchased a house trailer and dad purchased land that adjoined our property. Thus, Elmer, Sr. became our neighbor. God was always important to Elmer, Sr. as long as I knew him.

As time goes on, keeping in touch seems to be harder with everyone, family and work. Life goes by and then someone passes away and we find ourselves catching up at their funeral. At Aunt Dorothy's Celebration of Life, we were together as a family and we gathered afterward for a meal. Thank you Peggy for suggesting photos because the two photos in this article are from that joyous celebration. **T**



You are invited to join the **Talcott Family** group on Facebook which is limited to descendants of John & Dorothy Talcott who came to America on September 16, 1632.

"Memories" — Chapter 4

*by Neil F. Talcott of Lovelock, NV
(June 26, 1928 – December 19, 2005)
when he was growing up in Unionville, NV.*

Prospecting —

My Dad always liked to prospect for that rich mine he hoped he would find someday when he was riding looking after the cows he ran on the East side of the Humboldt Range. He would see a likely looking piece of rock, pick it up, and put it in his pocket to carry home and pan when he had time. He usually stored these samples on a shelf just inside the cellar door. He claimed he knew where every one of the samples came from. There was at least 500 lbs. of rock stored in the cellar.

When he had time, he would sit on the back steps with the mortar and a piece of drill steel for a pestle and powder a piece of rock, then pan it in a tub full of water to see if there were any values in the rock. I remember one time he had a piece that glittered with "gold." He knew he had found IT. Well, after panning it down, there wasn't even a color in the pan!!!! After thinking about this for some time he came to the conclusion that he must have carried the rock home in the same pocket where he also carried a brass tire valve stem.

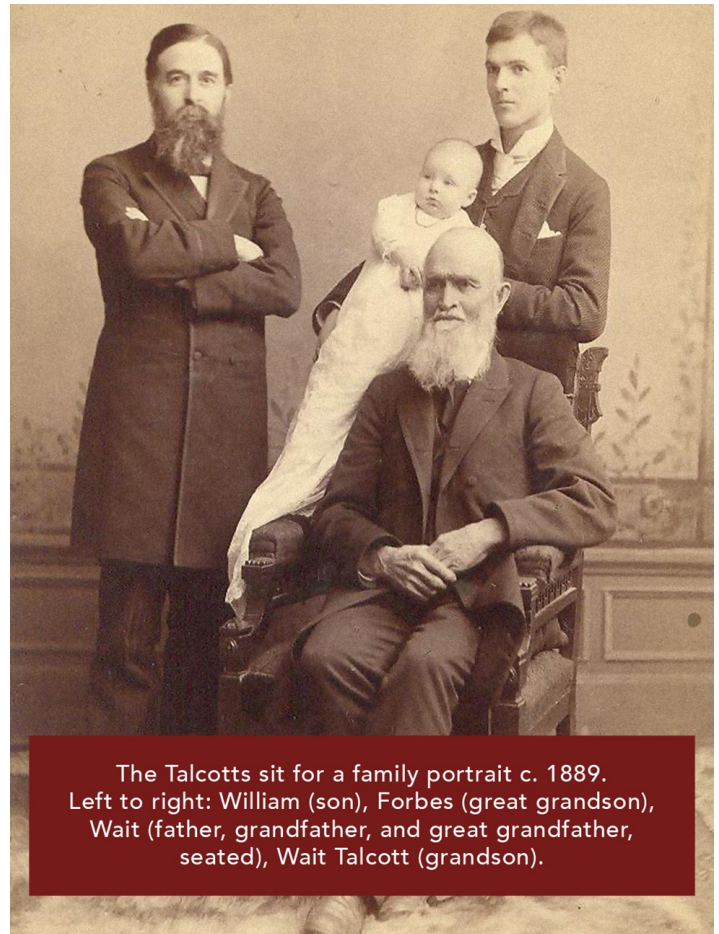
A bit of information for the younger set who don't know that car tires used to have inner tubes in them, and the valve stems were made of brass threaded on the out side so they could be clamped in to the tube with a nut and washer. All the roads were either dirt or gravel. The only black top was U.S. 40. So, if you did much driving, tire patching, and repair was a very common thing.

I think the best mining deal Dad ever made was the time he traded the lead mine for the 1928 Model A Ford 1-ton truck. Joe Thornton had the Ford stored in an old barn. The truck hadn't been run for years, and Dad needed a truck to haul hay up from the ranch to the place in Unionville. The old 1928 Chevrolet had finally wore out. I think the time was about 1943.

There was, (still is) a timbered incline shaft about 100 feet deep on the hill just above the old brewery. It showed some value in silver and lead, mostly lead. Dad kept up the assessment work on it for years and finally traded it to Joe for the truck. Joe and his son Victor, thought they could find enough good ore in the old dumps to run through a small 5-stamp mill they had built. Nothing ever came of the operation. If I remember right, they got the mill running but for some reason never went on with the project. Joe and Victor didn't have to work, they made their money when they sold the Star Peak mine. They also had a ranch in the valley that they sold for a good price.

The old Ford truck, I remember it well. We used to park it on a hill when we could so we could roll down hill to start the engine. How many of you reading this has ever hand cranked a car engine to start it? The six-volt starter system didn't work very well especially in the winter. We used to use a gasoline blow torch to warm up the oil in the

engine pan and pour hot water in the radiator. If the starter wouldn't turn the engine we would get the hand crank. The Ford engine had a ratchet type nut on the front end of the crank shaft that the crank fit in. Good idea, but the damn thing was always worn out letting the crank slip. The result was usually skinned knuckles when the back of the hand hit the frame. **T**



The Talcotts sit for a family portrait c. 1889.
Left to right: William (son), Forbes (great grandson),
Wait (father, grandfather, and great grandfather,
seated), Wait Talcott (grandson).

Wait Talcott (grandson) was the Talcott that built The Talcott Building. The Talcott Building and the Talcott family (above) pictures were copied from the website below—

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?p=talcott+building+rockford+il&fr=mcafee&type=E210US105G0&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fi.pining.com%2F736x%2F83%2Ffd%2F97%2F83fd97c6258fe9ee0901113d4ba1c70c.jpg#id=13&iurl=http%3A%2F%2Frockfordhistorywalks.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2017%2F10%2Ftalcott-building_featured.png&action=click

Check out

the Talcott Family Association website at
<https://www.talcottfamilyassociation.org>

where you will find the following:

<i>In the Beginning</i>	<i>Presidents' Letters</i>
<i>Newletters</i>	<i>Talcott Coat of Arms</i>
<i>Talcott Family Tree</i>	<i>In Memory</i>
<i>Reunions</i>	<i>Photo Gallery</i>
<i>Document Gallery</i>	<i>Historical Pictures</i>
<i>Resource Links</i>	<i>Ancient Burying Ground</i>