

Dinsmore Homestead Museum Newsletter

Questions for our Staff?

Do you have any particular or general questions about the Dinsmore family or the museum that we might be able to answer?

If so, please let us know & we will try to incorporate the information into our next Newsletter.

Tilden Russell Selmes

Tilden married Patty Flandrau in June 1883 in the Dinsmore parlor.

From Patty's father, Charles E. Flandrau: "I can't say that Selmes is my beau ideal of a man, a lover or a husband, but we don't very often find our beau ideals in other people's love affairs, Now I think Selmes is a man of sense, I think he is well bred, I think he possesses what I deem very important in real life—the faculty of making his way in the world. I would not pick him out if I was a woman but as Patty has, I think they will get along about as well as people generally do, and that is nine points in the game of life out of ten ... and if he is no worse than men generally (they are all more or less brutes) they will be happy together." (September 1882)



Tilden with daughter, Isabella

Artifact Fun. The above is a Sioux war club that I had always assumed Patty & Tilden has picked up when they were in the Dakota Territory. But I recently transcribed a letter from Patty to Robert Ferguson thanking him for the "elk horn". Interestingly, Patty's letter was from 1893, when Isabella (Robert's future wife) was just 7 years old. At the end of her letter to Robert, Patty writes, "Isabella does not forget you – do Children ever?"



Frank Cutcheon



Nature doesn't stop for a pandemic! Our Dinsmore **swallows** have returned to Kentucky for another summer of nesting. Although they may be wondering where all those pesky humans are, I expect they are enjoying the peace and quiet.

The Dinsmore In-Laws

Because the Dinsmore family was dominated by females, there were several in-laws that spent time at the farm. This newsletter is dedicated to them.

Franklin Warner M. Cutcheon, "Frank"

Frank married Sally Flandrau in February 1891 in St. Paul, MN. There seemed to be general agreement that he would not have been anyone's choice for Sally. From Sally's sister, Patty, "Last night I went to the minstrels with Sally, Cutcheon, and Til, and had such a dreary time that I haven't gotten over it yet. Cutcheon who sat next me opened the ball by saying he had a racking head ache and that his eyes hurt him so he could not see – he put the programme over his face and groaned during the entire show. To live with that man would kill me!" (1888)

From Sally's father, Charles E. Flandrau to Patty: "Before this reaches you the firm of Flandrau, Squires & Cutcheon will be a thing of the past, and I will be going it alone, Cutcheon has worked the plan he has been at for several years... [In a letter] I tell Cutcheon exactly what I have thought of him for several years, and if he resents it, I will show him that if I am 70, I am able to take care of myself. He is a dirty curr." (1898)

From Sally's half-brother Charley to Patty: "Sally came home yesterday morning. She looks ever so much better than when she left... I have noticed for a long time now that a week or even a few days vacation from Cutcheon makes a different person of her.... Sally is a pitifully, lamentably feeble little figure-head in her own house – hanging with tremulous lips and watery eyes on every syllable and glance of that pompous whelp, her husband." (1898)

Robert Harry Munro Ferguson

After befriending Patty & Tilden Selmes, Robert married their daughter, Isabella, in 1905. Patty had known her future son-in-law for years (he was only 7 years younger than she was), but that doesn't mean there were no in-law tensions. Two years after the wedding, Patty complained of Isabella's new attitude, "I have tried to take the position of the ordinary mother and daughter, but even that is denied me—and now I am in the footing of an ordinary pleasant acquaintance. Isabella tries to imitate Bob in his reserve and every thing else. I long and pray not to care but you know how I am made—and after each time I go there it takes me days to brace up after the pain of being made to feel my position. I honestly don't feel that Isabella would care one bit if she never saw me again." And from Julia Farley Loving, who moved to New Mexico with the Fergusons: "[Isabella] has a hard life. No one knows it better than her mother who is scavenger wood chopper market woman pointer yard cleaner and a general servant. Mr. F. never comes around until he thinks of enough work for her to do to keep her busy. (Scotch)" (1914) Lastly, Charley Flandrau: "I realise (sic) the utter impossibility of my being able to get along with either Cutcheon or Bob. I dislike them both—one from knowledge, the other from accurate hearsay." (1916)



Robert Ferguson