

The Goose Diamond of Roselawn Avenue

By Bill Poray, Perinton Town Historian

Christmas of 1927 was a real celebration for the Peck family of Roselawn Avenue. Bert and Caroline, both in their sixties, were at a point in their lives where they were able to splurge a bit. Their two grown children would be with them for the holidays, including Laura, who lived with her parents, and her brother Carl, who had recently moved to Brooklyn, and was making a triumphant return to his hometown from the big city.

Bert and Caroline decided to give their children something extra special for the holiday. After a trip to the South Main Street jewelry store of George D. Young, the Pecks were decided on something extravagant. They would purchase diamond rings for both Laura and Carl.



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Planning for the Peck family Christmas dinner included a trip to the meat department at Sibley's department store in Rochester, just a twenty-five cent fare on the Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern trolley. Caroline picked out a nice fresh, fat goose, a bit more plump than the others on display. The store delivered the bird to the Peck's Roselawn Avenue house a day or two later, in time for Caroline to prepare it for the holiday dinner.



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In dressing the goose for the oven, Caroline followed her usual practice, including opening the gizzard, where she found the typical assortment of bits of sand, gravel, and a tiny shell or two. Not long after the preparation was complete and the goose was in the oven, the jeweler, George Young, came by the house. He brought a selection of loose diamonds, from which Bert and Caroline would select two, to be placed in settings for Laura and Carl's Christmas presents.

Mr. Young was a bit perplexed when Caroline informed him that their plans had changed, and that instead of two diamonds, only one would be purchased. When he inquired as to the reason for the change, he was informed that it all came down to the Christmas goose. You see, along with the sand, gravel, and tiny bits of shells Caroline cleaned from the gizzard of the goose, there also was a beautiful one-half carat diamond. The story was front-page news in the Fairport Herald Mail, the knowledge of which must certainly have caused a stampede of customers for fresh goose at Sibley's.

Laura Peck was born in 1893. Her parents gave her the goose-diamond ring at the age of 34, and she wore it proudly for many years. As time passed, Laura gave it to Susue Packard Leith, a daughter of her good friend and neighbor on Roselawn Avenue, Clara Moore Packard. Although the ring is now 92 years old, no one knows how old the diamond is. If only we could ask the goose.

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