

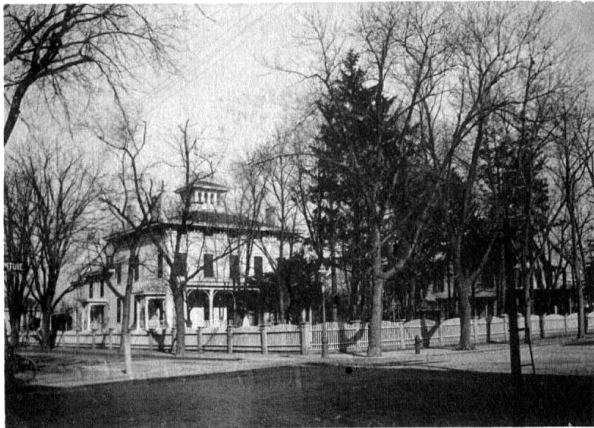
The Pharos: Tuckerton's First Family of Business (Part 1)

by Pat Johnson
The Tuckerton/Little Egg Harbor Leader
November, 1998

The Pharo family represents to me the movers and shakers of the towns of Tuckerton, West Creek and Little Egg Harbor," said Barbara Bolton, president of the Tuckerton Historical Society, as she opened the Pharo Genealogy workshop, held Nov. 7 at the Giffordtown Schoolhouse Museum.

This was the third such affair, following workshops on the Falkinburgs and the Jillsons, in a continuing program to gather descendants of Tuckerton's first families for an afternoon of history, recollections and reunion.

Bolton, along with genealogist and local historian Shirley Whealton, described the family tree most associated with Tuckerton.



Kelley & Crosby, Publishers.

Residence of J. J. Pharo, Tuckerton, N. J.

The Pharo Mansion - 1909 postcard

The first Pharos arrived in the New World in 1678 from Lincolnshire, England. They were Quakers and not popular in England because their beliefs were thought to be radical," said Bolton.

"The family consisted of James, his wife Ann, their sons Jarvis and Amos, and daughter Ann. They journeyed up the Delaware in the winter on the ship *Shield* and came in at what is now called Burlington City. The family had to walk to the shore over the ice.

"The Pharos had two other children once in America: James and Mary," said Bolton.

James' first-born son, Jarvis Pharo, married Elizabeth Willits and moved to West Creek, probably around 1718, buying a large tract of land, including almost all of West Creek. Jarvis and Elizabeth were named elders in the first month of the original Quaker meeting house in Little Egg Harbor Township.

Jarvis' son, James, married Ruth Smith in 1731. The land left to James by his father was sold to John Ridgeway Sr.

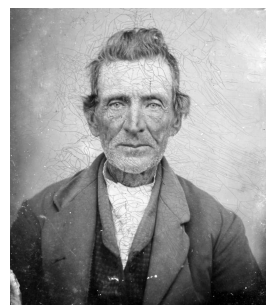
Whealton had brought an original deed to display in the museum, dated 1775 and written by James Pharo Sr. The deed allocated almost all of West Creek to James Pharo Jr. Although the deed was written in 1775, it was witnessed by Ebenezer Tucker in 1791.

James and Ruth's children were Amos, Jarvis, Timothy, James, Ann and Elizabeth.

Amos Pharo was a justice of the peace, a surveyor and the most prominent man of West Creek.

Jarvis Pharo is said to have designed the first garvey, a fishing and clamming boat, in 1820 in West Creek.

Timothy, son of James Pharo II, married Hannah Ridgeway. Their last child, Timothy Jr. (born in 1792), married Hannah Willits in 1812.



Jarvis Pharo

Timothy Jr.'s Financial Empire

Timothy Jr. and Hannah had eight children, three of whom died in infancy. The surviving five were Joseph W., born in 1813; Archelaus Ridgeway, born 1814; Phoebe, 1817; Eliza, 1819; and Albert, 1826. These last children were the focus of the rest of the talk given by historical society researcher Steve Dodson.

"I'm going to speak about the middle years," said Dodson. "I call this the glory years.

"I'm not a genealogist. My approach is I just start paying attention to something in local history or a name in local history and then search through different sources and see what turns up," Dodson explained.

Dodson started with, Timothy Pharo Jr.

"The first account I came across was in Sarah Thomson's journal. In 1809, Sarah Thomson, a young woman, came to Tuckerton by stage coach with her mother and brother to stay for the summer at the home of Judge Ebenezer Tucker.

"She writes in July 16, 1809:

We had a walk in the afternoon, Aaron Tucker, (Ebenezer's son) Miss Deane and myself and lost the rest of our companions.

So we bent our way to old Josie Ridgeway, found him sitting up and a young man reading a Bible to him. We did not stay long.

“Now Eleanor Price, 130 years later, writes a foreword to that diary. Eleanor Price, some of you may remember, was the town librarian here in Tuckerton for 50 years. Her father was Theophilus Pharo Price and she writes in 1939:

The old Josie Ridgeway was my great, great uncle and the young man reading the Bible was undoubtedly his favorite nephew, my great grandfather, Timothy Pharo Jr. Timothy Pharo Jr., born in 1792, was made his bachelor uncle’s heir.

“By the way, the Ridgeways of Tuckerton were not poor dirt farmers. They were descendants of nobility in England,” said Dodson: “They were among the first to come to Tuckerton. They came from good stock and had some brains. They were great businessmen.

“Timothy Pharo Jr. was married in 1812 to Hannah Willits. According to Leah Blackman — who wrote *History of Little Egg Harbor* in 1880 — soon after his marriage, Timothy Pharo Jr. had the good fortune to have a farm given to him by his uncle, Joseph Ridgeway, and this farm was the foundation of his large fortune.”

Dodson paused for a moment, stepped off the well-beaten track of Blackman’s history and entered the area of postulation.

“That confused me for a while. Everyone was a farmer. So how did he parlay this nest egg into this massive fortune?”

“At first I thought maybe he had Atlantic white cedar trees on his farm, because they were in great demand for shingles, rails, barrel staves and other products. But then I remembered this man named John Halleck.”

Dodson read a passage from Blackman:

In the year 1816, John Halleck, a public Friend (Quaker), came from the state of New York to Tuckerton, where he purchased the Nathan Bartlett farm and entered into the business of raising castor beans and manufacturing them into castor oil, which at that time brought a remunerative price. Halleck initiated some of the farmers of the place into the mysteries of his occupation. They embarked in the castor bean trade, which to most of them proved a profitable business; in one instance laying the foundation for the largest fortune ever made

in the place, but for the roguery of this one, Halleck — who had taught him the way to wealth — was made a bankrupt. But this perfidious affair laid the foundation for the castor bean aristocracy of Tuckerton.

Dodson postulated that Timothy Pharo Jr., by reason of his wealth, could be the rogue Blackman alluded to. But Dodson said she never mentioned the rogue by name — probably because “even then people were afraid of lawsuits.”

Dodson, quoting Blackman, went on to say that Timothy Pharo Jr. was enterprising and after local businessman Simeon Haines’ death:

Pharo purchased Haines’ interest in the stores and mills which had constituted the business firm of Oliphant & Haines. After a few years, Eayre Oliphant sold out to Pharo, making him sole owner of the mills and stores, and soon he embarked in vessel building and other branches of trade and also various devices by which he accumulated a large fortune.

“I’ve been told his house was what was once the old paper store (on Main Street) across from today’s Wawa and that he also had a furniture store close by the lake’ said Dodson. “This would mean he owned timber, and we know that because of his vessel building and the shipping of timber to New York. He made a lot of money.

“This was how money was made in those days. If you had the saw mill and the grist mill, well, people had to come to you. They had to have their crops made into grain. They had to have their trees made into lumber.

“I found a document from the Mount Holly Fire Insurance Co. dated Nov. 14, 1833, a receipt: *received of Timothy Pharo \$5 to continue the risk on his stock and trade and merchandise for 6 months.*

“We tend to think of business as not being very sophisticated in those days, but apparently it was more sophisticated than we think.

“As Timothy Pharo Jr. made gains in his financial status, he also made advances in town government. In 1815, when he was 23 years old, he was made constable, along with William Cole. Constable was a low-ranking official at the time. Then in 1816, along with Eli Mathis, he was made surveyor of the highway. At that time, Ebenezer Tucker was freeholder.

“I asked an ex-mayor of Tuckerton one time what a freeholder does and I still don’t understand it. I do know it was the highest elected official in town

because Ebenezer Tucker wanted it. It was the most influential position.

"In 1823, Ebenezer Tucker was presiding officer of the town council and also freeholder. Timothy Pharo Jr. has advanced to collector; by that I think it means tax collector. In 1833 he has bought into the stores and mills with Oliphant and is now a chosen freeholder alongside Ebenezer Tucker. He is a big wig.

"Nine years later, he has retired from politics but his son Archelaus Ridgeway Pharo is a freeholder.

"One of the nice things about being wealthy is that your children do not start at the bottom. They start at the top," said Dodson.

Timothy Pharo Jr. died in 1854 at the age of 62.

"In his death his daughter Eliza's diary says, '*father died August 14, 1854.*'

Daughter Eliza, 'Boring' Journalist

"When I first found out I was getting Eliza Pharo's diary," said Dodson, "I thought, 'This is great! This is as good as it gets!'

"It wasn't. She is a boring diary writer. The first sentence in the diary is 'Left Tuckerton.' I thought, 'Oh, great.'

"She is going by stagecoach to Philadelphia with her sister Phoebe and her sister's fiance. They take a steam boat in Philadelphia up to New York City, where they take another steam boat up the Hudson to West Point, then on to Lake Champlain. They stayed at ritzy hotels all the way. They go up to Montreal, Quebec, back to Montreal, Niagara Falls and back across the Mohawk Valley by train to New York City.

"If Eliza Pharo had been a male and allowed in the family business, she would have been a bean counter. She was very good at recording where they stayed, how much they paid for hotels, what everything cost. Her travelogue turns into a series of ledgers in the back. She records the names of the officials of the Sewing Society in 1854, and the



Eliza Pharo Price

names of the members of the Tuckerton Library Association. She must have been an officer because she records who kept up with their dues.

"She also writes down the price of things. In some respects, they were the same as other Tuckertonians'. In other respects they were different. She bought nine yards of black silk for \$14.81. Your average Tuckerton girl probably wasn't buying that.

"She also bought a silver soup ladle for \$10.50. But she bought everyday items as well. Two pairs of hose for 50 cents; two kerchiefs, 37 cents; thread, 6 cents.

"I wondered, was she doing all this sewing herself or did she have a servant to do her sewing? I think she did both. I don't think you could be a woman back then and not sew. I don't think it was permitted.

"She was a bad speller; she spells cotton, *cottin*. But that's not unusual. A lot of people were bad spellers, even town clerks — some of them had the worse spelling. Women at that time were not expected to go on to higher education or into business. They were expected to be wives and mothers.

"She buys a pint of canary seed for 12 1/2 cents, one lemon for 3 cents, two oranges for 6 cents. You have to wonder, where is all this tropical stuff coming from? Earlier, Tuckerton sea captains were involved in the West Indies trade, but at this date in the 1850s, I don't know if that was still going on. I do know that Tuckerton sea captains were taking large amounts of lumber to New York City, and New York City, being the international seaport that it was, it certainly could have oranges, lemons and canaries.

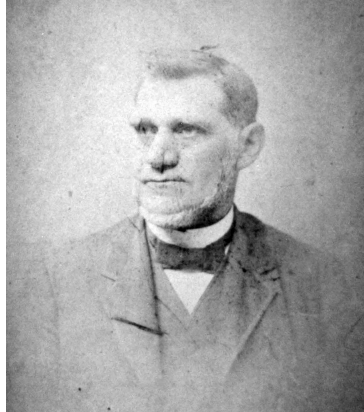
"She bought whortleberries; a half a peck of quince; a pound of sugar to make jelly; threads; various doodads; gingham, muslin, calico; stuff I don't hear too much about anymore. I don't think many women do, either.

"After she was married, the last thing in her ledger is hired help.

Eliza Adams, hired girl, was married today her wages since we started to keep house were three weeks at \$1.25 a week Jan. 23, 1856, Sarah Weatherby came to live with us at \$1 per week Feb. 8 Sarah Weatherby lived with us two weeks and ten days. Rebecca King then came on the 10th of Feb. Paid her \$6 to March 30th. April 11, 1856, Sarah Luker began to work for us. Settled up July 18th, \$17. She left Aug. 21. Sarah Gale came and stayed three weeks. On Sept. 23, Margaret Monrow came to work for Mrs. Pharo Price.

That's six girls in nine months. Draw your own conclusions. The work was hard, the pay was low and Mrs. Pharo Price may have been very demanding.

"Eliza Pharo married Theophilus Townsend Price from Cape May, Nov. 1854, shortly after her father's death. T.T. Price was one of Tuckerton's most prominent citizens. He was a private physician and was the chief surgeon for the Marine Hospital here in Tuckerton.



Theophilus Townsend Price

When there was a shipwreck on Long Beach Island and people were hurt, they were brought over here and he tended to them.

"For several years he was superintendent of schools for Little Egg Harbor. He served in the state Legislature and he was the secretary of the railroad. In his spare time (and I don't know when that was), he managed to write a book, *The Historical and Biographical Atlas of the New Jersey Coast*.

"Eliza Pharo had two older brothers and one younger."

Part Two: The Pharo Family: 19th Century Movers and Shakers

by Pat Johnson

The Tuckerton/Little Egg Harbor Leader – December 18, 1998

This is the second part of the Pharo family's long and interesting history in Tuckerton. "The Pharo family represents, to me, the movers and shakers of the towns of Tuckerton, West Creek and Little Egg Harbor," said Tuckerton Historical Society President Barbara Bolton as she opened a Pharo genealogy workshop held at the Gifortown Schoolhouse Museum on Nov. 7.

The first part appeared in the Leader's November issue with a tracing of the family tree, starting with the first pilgrims from England - James and Ann Pharo and their children 'Jarvis, Amos and Ann in 1678 - through the generations to Eliza Pharo, daughter of Timothy Pharo Jr.

As a girl, well-to-do Eliza traveled in Victorian first class to Niagara Falls,

Montreal, New York and Philadelphia. She married prominent Tuckertonian Dr. Theophilus Townsend Price in 1854. Eliza's brothers, Joseph W, Archelaus and Albert Pharo, were well-known businessmen in the middle 1800s.

We pick up the story as Steve Dodson, Tuckerton Historical Society researcher, tells the story of the successful but, by today's standards, short life of Joseph W. Pharo, son of Timothy Pharo Jr.

Joseph W., the first born, might have been one of Tuckerton's most prominent citizens through history except for two things: one he moved away, and two, he died young.

Dodson read his obituary from an 1861 newspaper.

Joseph W. Pharo received his education in part from the French school in West Town. Pa.

At the age of 19 years, his father placed him in his store and bestowed him with its principal care. In December 1839 he married Beulah H. Oliphant, daughter of Benjamin Oliphant Esq. of Manahawkin, and the following year they moved to New York City where he entered into the wholesale dry goods jobbing business with George Barnes Esq., the firm being known as Barnes and Pharo.

The first 10 years, Pharo traveled extensively through the western states in that business. After his father's death he dissolved his business in New York and returned in the spring of 1857 to his native town. There he erected a commodious and tasteful residence on the old Ebenezer Tucker property and adorned the grounds with useful and ornamental trees and shrubbery.

He entered into partnership with his brother Archelaus Ridgeway Pharo in the firm J & A.R. Pharo carrying on an extensive general business in stores, mills, lumber, wood, ship building, agriculture, etc. They were largely interested in the coasting trade and perhaps they represented the largest interest in coasting vessels than any other family in the state.

In the fall of 1861, he was chosen by very popular vote to be state senator of Burlington County. His legislative career was short but promising and satisfactory.

"Pharo was young when he died, 47 or 48, said

Dodson. "This part of the obituary goes on for another two pages in laudatory fashion and in the most flowery praise; he was the loving brother, the good friend, the kind man who did charity work, the good Christian."

Dodson said in the Pharo family, riches went hand in hand with benevolence and humility.

"They were elected to offices over and over, and for rich people they were not jerks.

"I think that may be because they had strong religious principles in the center of their life. I see this in Eliza Pharo's letters to her son, Theophilus Pharo Price, when he was in college in the early 1870s. She was very religious and centered and was trying to impart good moral lessons on her son.

"If you look at the Quaker cemetery at Archelaus Pharo's tombstone, he could have had one as tall as this ceiling, but it is very short and modest. He did not use his wealth to create a monument to himself.

"The Pharos were grounded in something other than money. Even in his obituary, it said the chief joy in life for Joseph Pharo came in the running of his many large businesses. The money came with that but it was not an end in itself."

In 1859, all the Pharo brothers held government positions. Archelaus was freeholder, Joseph W. was on the town committee, Albert was a member of the court of appeals and brother-in-law T.T. Price was school superintendent.

"It's a shame Joseph Pharo died when he did. He missed out on probably the most important decade of Pharo history."

Dodson read an article from the *Toms River Currier* dated Nov. 22, 1866 to give the audience a snapshot of what Tuckerton was like then. Archelaus Pharo was prominently mentioned.

This pretty village lies in the very romantic location in Little Egg Harbor. Pohatcong Creek runs through the village, dividing the town in two. Much taste is displayed here with the erection of fine houses and they assume the air of ease and wealth. Ship building is extensively carried out here.

Archelaus Pharo, known among the residents of his town only as Archie, is probably the wealthiest inhabitant and with Mr. Jarvis Bartlett probably employs several hundred people. Mr. Pharo has two large schooners, 100 feet keel each on the stocks. Bartlett has one measuring 100 feet keel he is launching this week, a

magnificent vessel costing \$2,400. He is raising the frame of another 100 feet keel and has contracted for another 110 feet keel, making for five vessels on the stocks in Tuckerton.

A large number of vessels are engaged in carrying coal and wood to New York and bring back merchandise in return. The harbor abounds in fish, fowl and transplanted oysters. The oyster trade is large. There are a large number of stores here of which we might mention: Pharo and Ridgeway, Jarvis H. Bartlett, C.D. Thompson, Lanes Brothers, three or four Escoffiers, one or two ministers and 1300 inhabitants.

The 1860s was a big decade for the Pharo family, Dodson continued, because this was when Tuckerton's largest ships were built.

Dodson read off a list of ships owned by AR. Pharo that were plying the coast at the time.

"A schooner, the *Albert Pharo* built in 1853 in Tuckerton; a bark, the *Eliza Pharo* built in 1853 in Tuckerton; the *Joseph J. Pharo*, a schooner, three masts, 120 feet, built in 1867 in Alloways, home port Tuckerton; the *James Eldrin*, 111 feet long, schooner, two masts, built in 1867 in Tuckerton, home port Tuckerton, owner Archelaus Pharo; the *William F Wilson*, schooner, two masts, 114 feet, built in 1875 in Camden, owner Archelaus Pharo; the *Anne Cranmer*, schooner, 110 feet built in 1868 in Alloways, home port Tuckerton, owner A.R. Pharo."

The brothers together with T.T. Price, their sister's husband, also built the finest homes in Tuckerton. Joseph's mansion once stood on the corner of North Green and Main and was built in 1857. It was last known as the American Legion home and was torn down in the 1970s. T.T. Price's mansion once stood across from the Presbyterian church on Main Street. Built in the 1860s, it was torn down in the late 1950s. Archelaus' mansion once stood next to his brother's on Main Street. The location is where the Dynasty diner now stands. The mansion was also built in the 1860s, and was torn down in the 1970s. Albert's Farm Mansion is also gone. It once stood next to the Redman's Hall on Route 9.

Dodson stopped in his historical tracks to ask of the audience, "How many of you are direct descendants of Albert?"

A few hands went up, and historical society President Barbara Bolton leaned over to tell a woman, "You are."

"I am?" she asked.

"Sure," said Bolton, pointing to a genealogy chart. "Just about everyone is.

"I thought everyone was directly descended (from Albert)," said Dodson. "I know you're not direct descendants of Joseph W. He had just one son, Joseph J., and Joseph J. had no children with his wife Katherine. Archelaus had one son, Walter, but he left town.

"I know that some present-day Pharo descendants are the Ingersolls over on the Island.

"Albert had nine boys and one girl but his name doesn't come up as much as Archelaus and Joseph. He may have been more Willets (his mother's side of the family) than Pharo/Ridgeway," Dodson postulated.

Shipbuilder Turned Railroader

The Tuckerton Railroad wouldn't have happened without Archelaus Pharo, continued Dodson. "He was a ship builder and yet as smart as he was, he probably saw that shipping was coming to an end. After the 1860s the lumber was going and so the coasting trade was going with it.

"A.R. Pharo was always interested in bringing a railroad to Tuckerton and he was involved in several plans that never materialized. He finally formed a partnership with John Rutherford from north Jersey. Rutherford owned large tracts of land between Whiting and the ocean and he wanted to develop that land, so he put up the money with Archelaus," said Dodson.

But the railroad was no sooner built than Rutherford died, leaving Archelaus president of the railroad and financially responsible for its upkeep.

The railroad was a family affair, said Dodson. T.T. Price worked in the state Legislature and he used his influence there to help get it built. Albert Pharo cleared and graded a lot of the ground between Tuckerton and Whiting for the tracks.

Archelaus was president; Price was secretary. Archelaus' son-in-law, Samuel Ashurst, later became president as did Price's son, Theophilus P. Price, at one point. "When T.P. Price was elderly he was kicked upstairs as chairman of the board," said Dodson.

T.T. Price's granddaughter, Florence Price, was a clerk for the Tuckerton Railroad for many years and one of Albert's sons, Archie, was an engineer for 50 years.

"The Tuckerton Railroad was and was not a success," said Dodson. "It was a success in that it got built and the trains ran more or less on time. They brought tourists into Beach Haven and took clams and oysters out, but it was not a financial success. It only had a large ridership for three months of the year when people were coming in and going out of Beach Haven: The rest of the year the shore was thinly populated; it just didn't have a large ridership.

"If he made any money at all it was through the development of Beach Haven rather than anything else.

"But the Tuckerton Railroad probably did more to change the life of the average Tuckertonian more than anything else in the history of Tuckerton," said Dodson.



Tuckerton Railroad: Engine 5 - 1933

"Before the railroad, if you wanted to go to Philadelphia or New York City, you took a stage coach or a ship. And if it took several hours or the weather was bad, it could seem like several days.

"Now, suddenly, you could go to the depot, pay a few bucks, get your ticket, sit on a bench seat and in three hours you could go to Philadelphia or New York City.

"Suddenly, you had access to professional services, lawyers, doctors, dentists. You had all the culture of the city, libraries, theater. You had large department stores to shop from rather than the little stores in town," said Dodson.

"I looked at a town ledger (from the middle 1800s, and the occupations were mariner, farmer, laborer, oysterman and some others. In 1880, eight years after the railroad came to town, you have hotel keepers, telegraph operators, lawyers, insurance salesman ... Some people might say that was not a change for the better," joked Dodson, "but the railroad did take Tuckerton into the latter half of the 19th century."

Gas Engines And the Marine Railway

At the turn of the century, the gas engine changed boating forever and the Pharos were at the forefront again. This time it was Albert's sons.

The Pharo Boatworks and Marine Railway, officially known as the Tuckerton Manufacturing Co., became incorporated in 1903.

"But," said Dodson, "I have to assume that the Pharos were working on boats all along. The difference was, during the 1860s they were bigger, 100 feet long. In the 1870s and '80s they were 55,45 feet long. Ship builders in the area were no longer building lumber schooners. They were probably making sailing yachts for the new tourist trade to Beach Haven, or fishing boats.

"The Pharo Boatworks and Marine Railway was incorporated by four of Albert's sons: T. Frank, Albert E., Merritt and Joseph. They didn't sell stock, they didn't build yachts," said Dodson, "they worked on boats.



Merritt Pharo, Sr.

"In 1903 the Pharo brothers were working on engines. The gasoline engine was developed in 1885 and it took a few years to get to Tuckerton but suddenly everyone was taking the masts off their sailing garveys and everyone wanted an engine. Baymen could run out into the bay in a few minutes rather than try to work the wind to get there."

The Pharo Boatworks and Marine Railway building is prominent in photos of the times. It was a large barn-like building situated on the spillway next to the grist mill. The marine railway was powered by a water turbine connected to the Pohatcong Lake spillway.

The rail carrier would go down into the water on the rails; the boat was floated on it, and the carrier hoisted it out of the water into the building to be worked on. The company also sold gas and oil, said Dodson.

"I want to go on record saying that while the

Baymen's Museum plans of building the Heinrichs Boatworks and Marine Railway, I hope they won't ignore the Pharo Boatworks. Pharo's was built a full quarter of a century earlier and was around at a more transitional and interesting time when the sailing boats were being converted to engines," he said.

"The Heinrichs Boatworks might not have come into being without the Pharos because the land it sits on was given to Edward 'Socks' Heinrichs by J.J. Pharo. Heinrichs was his chauffeur and right hand man."

Dodson said Marge Heinrichs Holloway had told him that she believes the land was given to her grandfather Edward by J.J. Pharo.

But newspaper records tell a different story. J.J. Pharo died before he could give the land to Heinrichs, land that was promised to Heinrichs in lieu of wages during the last few years of Pharo's life. Heinrichs sued J.J. Pharo's heirs for the land.

Dodson summed up his talk.

"Ebenezer Tucker and Archelaus Pharo were both great men. They both changed Tuckerton for the better, employed hundreds of workers. I wouldn't want to take a bet on who was the greater man.

"Instead, I'll steal a line from Barbara Bolton. She told me that when she thinks of the Pharo family of Tuckerton, Little Egg Harbor and West Creek she thinks of the pharaohs of Egypt because the pharaohs of Egypt built the pyramids and the Sphinx and they were great builders and the Pharos of Tuckerton, Little Egg Harbor and West Creek built the railroad and ships and great mansions. They were great builders, also."

This was the third genealogy workshop hosted by the Tuckerton Historical Society. Covered so far have been the Falkinburgs, the Jillsons and the Pharos, all of which have descendants still living in the area. Next to be presented will be the Mordecai Andrews family. A date and time have not yet been set.

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[Note: The photos, courtesy of the Tuckerton Historical Society, were added to the original article text.]