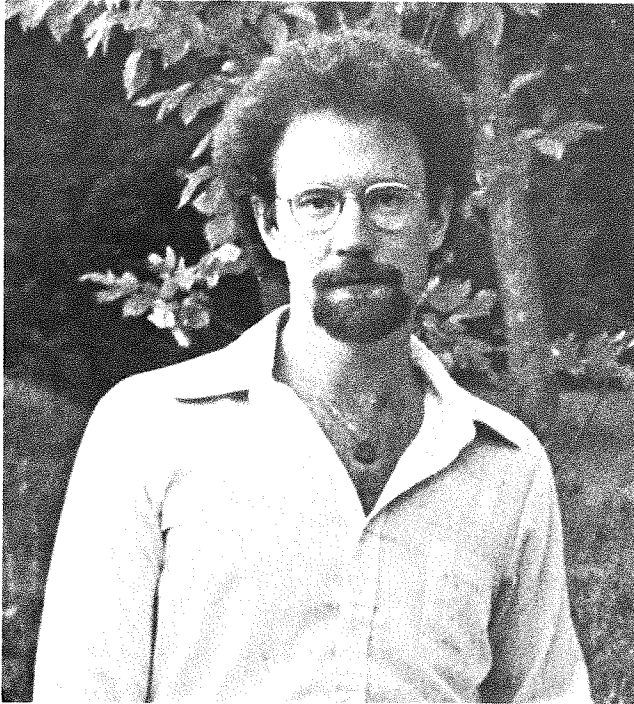


The Waterford Echoes

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Waterford Historical Society



Christopher A. Rounds

IN MEMORIAM

Christopher A. Rounds

March 16, 1952 – January 19, 1981

It is not the span of years that is significant but rather the quality of life. Christopher Rounds lived life to the fullest and left cherished memories to all who knew him.

His love for family and friends, his pride in his heritage, his talent and creativity will not be forgotten. His smile and contagious sense of humor will be remembered.

Chris traveled in Europe and Africa, throughout the United States and Canada, but Waterford was where his heart was and where he wanted to live. He found working in his church and in the Historical Society a joy and challenge. He was happy when the National Historic Register accepted his beloved Waterford and when the Mary Gage Rice Museum was made accessible to admiring visitors and tourists.

He loved music and the dance, but his creative talents were in the field of art. He enjoyed teaching and fostering in children a feeling for color and design, texture and form.

A fitting tribute to Christopher's memory would be to help realize his dreams for Waterford.

WESLEYAN CHAPEL, SOUTH WATERFORD

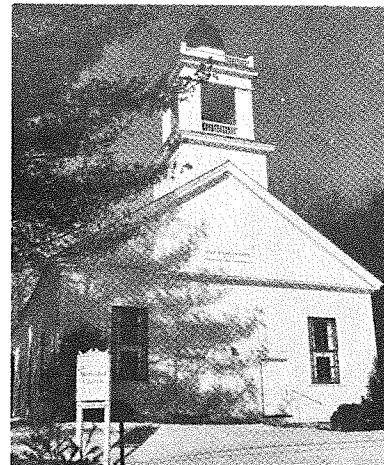
by Lois M. Hubbard

At the time of its founding in 1789, there did not exist a Methodist Society in Waterford. Traditionally, all followed the Congregational beliefs of their forefathers.

In 1802 Methodist missionaries introduced to Waterford new ideals and expectations which were, for a time, bitterly opposed.

By 1810, however, a few converts had been made and a society, led by Josiah Shaw, was formed.

This Methodist Class, as it was then called, met at Mr. Shaw's home until a small church was erected in 1818 at what was known as Mutiny Corner, one mile west of Waterford City. As the "City" grew it became desirable to relocate the church and a new Church was built on the present site in 1836. This structure was erected by John Sanderson for the agreed upon price of \$1,425. He was given no monetary consideration for his labor, but took his pay in pews. Oliver Hale, Jr. donated a bell to the Society, and the name Wesleyan Chapel was given to the building. Some eight years later in 1844, the chapel burned, and it was rebuilt on the same spot in 1845. Then in 1850 a parsonage was built by the Society. Members of that first Methodist Class were, besides Josiah Shaw - Peter Gerry, Mary Gerry, Israel Hale and Olive Haskell.



Methodist Church, South Waterford, 1976

Several successful Methodist preachers were raised in the church. The first leader, Josiah Shaw came to Waterford in 1796 from Standish and held not only a respected position in the church, but in the town as well. Josiah's son, John, also entered the Methodist ministry as did Stephen Sanderson of Sweden and his brother Aaron Sanderson, who preached for more than half a century throughout the state. Another brother, Moses, entered the ministry

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THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WATERFORD, MAINE

by Ruth E. Rounds and Lois J. King

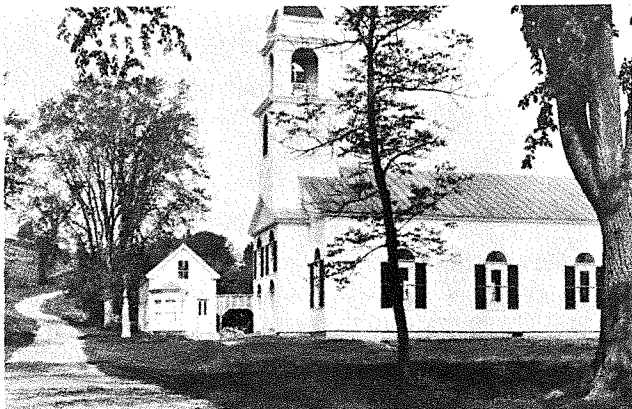
The Congregational Church was built in 1801 near Ordination Rock on Plummer Hill. According to the report in *The History of Waterford*, published in 1879, it was a handsome structure. The Meeting House consisted of a main part, 40 feet by 50 feet with posts 20 feet high; the porch was 16 feet square - the posts being a little lower than the main house. Around it ran two rows of windows. There were three entrances, all at the porch. Around three sides of the church was a gallery, reached by stairs from the porch. Square pews were located on either side of the entrance and continued around the walls of the house within perhaps 10 feet of the pulpit. The intervening space on either side was filled with slips, 5 feet by 6 feet, as are the pews in a modern meeting house. The slips on the right hand of the pulpit were called men's seats and those on the left the women's. The body of the house was divided by a broad aisle. The pulpit was a box or closed pulpit with doors on either side. The house was finished and sealed with "clear stuff" and handsomely painted except for the pews. The outside of the church was painted yellow. For twenty years foot-stoves, soap stones and hot bricks were the only means of supplying heat.

The town of Waterford was growing so fast that the Meeting House was no longer adequate. It was decided to build a new church and use the timbers of the old Meeting House in the construction of a Town House.

Land for the second church was given by Daniel Brown. Ground was broken in 1837 on the site of the present church. It looked similar to the church of today inside and outside. Pictures of both churches hang in the vestibule and are proof of the similarity.

The second church served the town for nearly one hundred years. At one time there were two hundred members. Two ministers served for 88 years, a remarkable record. About 1906 the Congregational Church entered into a federation with the two South Waterford churches, the Methodist and the Universalist. This was one of the earliest federations in Maine and in the nation. The bell of this church was cast by "Revere, Boston." After being cracked and recast, it was rededicated in 1925.

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The first Congregational Church in Waterford, built in 1837 and burned May 3, 1928. The parish house is beyond.



The Church at North Waterford, Maine

THE NORTH WATERFORD CHURCH

Compiled by Judy Green

In January, 1911, Henry P. Warren wrote a paper to be read at the 50th anniversary of the North Waterford Church. Following are some excerpts from that paper.

The period just before the Civil War was the end of the period of the greatest rural development of the western part of the State. There was a larger acreage under the plow, a larger acreage in pasture, more live stock, a larger population on farms and a vastly larger population in churches than today.

The settlers of the towns had come from Eastern Massachusetts for the most part between 1783 and 1800; young, sturdy, religious and respectful to religion, and very industrious. They had generally come from towns where schools were established and where the Congregational Church was the only church supported and encouraged by the State. They were accustomed to an educated ministry and would tolerate no other.

The grant of township after township in Maine had this stipulation: that *so much* land must be set aside for the support of a *learned* Congregationalist minister. The standing of towns in western Maine was determined for many years by the faithfulness with which this test was complied with.

The attitude of the whole community was reverential. The Sabbath was rigidly observed, the Bible was generally read, church attendance was almost universal and men believed that there was a God with personality who hated sin and passionately loved moral purity. It was a mighty healthy atmosphere to breathe, and no wonder it produced stalwart men and women and not a few giants.

The old church at the Flat was full in any pleasant Sabbath in summer. How well I recall the gathering Sabbath morning! My uncle Daniel always took time by the forelock, and so we were always tied in some store shed by 10 o'clock. After noting with pleasure all minor improvements at the Flat, we sauntered to the Common under the Balm Gilead trees. Soon carriages came streaming in loaded with old folks, while children filled the chinks.

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(The North Waterford Church), con't.

The men drifted to the Common. The crops and the weather were not wholly neglected but slavery and prohibition with just a spice of politics (this was safe, for the old church was pretty solidly Republican) filled up the time until the warning came by the silence of the bell that service had commenced. Then with heavy stride the fathers streamed in, somewhat to the annoyance of good Father Douglass probably, but he knew his men and overlooked the seeming disrespect.

North Waterford had always supported the old church with vigor. For 40 years, Rowley -- the old school district bordered by Deacon Hersey's on the east and Lovell on the west -- had maintained a weekly prayer meeting. It was held at five p.m. Saturday throughout the year. The minister was present occasionally.

The influence of such a meeting was wide-reaching. It kept North Waterford well seasoned with grace. You have in the Rowley prayer meeting the seed of the North Waterford church.

Until about 1850 Waterford Flat was the trading center of Waterford. The keen eyes of William Warren Green about this time saw that North Waterford village -- or hamlet rather -- was the natural center of East and North Stoneham, South Albany, and North Waterford: so he devoted himself assiduously to its up building.

The conditions were then ripe for a church at North Waterford.

A community eminently religious and a body of business and professional men -- all intensely sympathetic and most of them actively religious -- lived there.

The distance from the Flat precluded church attendance for all unprovided with horses, and during most of the year it was a long dreary ride for all.

William Green felt that unless something was done and that speedily, church going and with it vital religion would die out with the passing of the fathers of North Waterford.

I recall that in 1857 Father Douglass held preaching services at North Waterford at 5 P.M. Sundays. The old school house was thronged, and this led to the further discussion of the wisdom of building a church.

After a few years of afternoon services Mr. Green thought the time ripe to launch the new church. He had persuaded North Waterford generally of the wisdom of the course, but it was with great reluctance that many yielded; for the change would not only sunder precious religious associations but the weekly social meetings as well between families closely related. A powerful revival of religion in North Waterford compelled a decision and with benedictions to the old church thirty-two took letters of dismissal for the purpose of forming the new church at North Waterford.

William Green presented the site and picked the architect. His gift to the building was, I think, \$500. A more beautifully proportioned church better placed cannot be found in Maine.

According to the Waterford history, the meeting-house in North Waterford was raised on July 4, 1860. The steeple was built in the vestibule and raised by long ropes. The sanctuary contained a magnificent chandelier which burned kerosene. The total cost of the building was about \$2,600.

It was dedicated on December 24, 1860.

Irregular meetings were held until 1865, when a church was formed, known as the Second Congregational Church. It had about 50 members, 32 from the First Congregational Church. There was a succession of ministers, beginning with Rev. Joseph Kyte.

In the 1920's, the Oxford County United Parish, under the leadership of Rev. Hilda Ives, reunited the North Waterford and Waterford churches, along with the churches of South Waterford, East Waterford, Stoneham, and Albany. Rev. Wilbur Bull led the Parish for 29 years. Many programs -- religious, recreational, cultural -- were carried on. In 1964 the Parish was divided once again; the North Waterford church continues in the United Parish with the churches of Stoneham and Albany.

The meeting-house at North Waterford continues to be a favorite view for photographers and residents alike.

(Wesleyan Chapel, South Waterford), con't.

for a short time, but retired due to ill health. Also drawn to the calling were Nathaniel Pride, William Brown, and Jonathan Fairbanks.

Succeeding Rev. Shaw as pastor of the Society was the Rev. Delano Perry in 1874. He remained in Waterford two years and was followed by the Revs. Linwood Green 1876-77; Walter S. McIntire 1878; N. D. Centre 1879-81; J. H. Snow 1882-84; C. Abbott 1885-86; J. Robinson, 1887-88; C. Purinton 1889-91; W. H. Gowell, 1892-93; J. H. Rounds 1894; Wm. Bragg, 1895-96; Geo W. Barber, 1897-99 and the Rev. J. B. Howard 1900-1903. From 1903-1906 no pastor was named and the Society was so weakened by deaths and movings that the membership was at an all-time low and giving serious thought to joining other societies in order to stay alive.

At this point in history the same thing was happening to other societies in the area, and it was felt that by uniting, the town might be able to support regular religious services. Thus the formation of the United Federated Parish of Waterford.

The 100th Anniversary of the Wesleyan Chapel was held on Sunday, September 16, 1945 with a large congregation in attendance. The Rev. Dr. Bull presided over the service.

Although over the years the building has changed little in appearance, and today the original pews remain with few numbers still intact.

The belfry and dome was moved from the old Universalist Church (Bear Mountain Grange) many years before to the present structure. In 1947 repairs were made to the leaking belfry tower, at a cost of \$292.73, by Clinton A. Nason of North Waterford. At that time the dome was repainted as it originally had been.

The summer of 1980 found the belfry once more in need of repair and the structure badly in need of paint. Church members pitched in to do the painting and the belfry was repaired by a contractor. The dome received a fresh coat of red paint, and today stands as a symbol of a flourishing parish, being used for services now in May, June, September, and October of each year by the United Confederated Parish of Waterford.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON AT ROUNDS STORE

by James Tyler

Please let your minds wander back in time about fifty years to a little village store situated in Waterford Flat, the same store that still stands today with few changes. Picture if you will, a tall pot-bellied wood stove standing in the center of the room, where the freezers are today, a glassed-in candy counter filled with chocolates and candy bars and a bunch of bananas hanging from the ceiling.

It is a cold, windy, snowy Saturday afternoon in February. Frank Morgan has arrived after his mail. As usual he is ready for a game of checkers. The checker board was made by Percy Kimball of solid White Birch in one piece so that the players can hold it on their laps.

Fred Wentworth has walked the four miles from his farm to see what is going on at the village. Frank and Mac Millett soon arrive in a sleigh pulled by Old Chub. Frank has brought a few dozen eggs which he will exchange for groceries.

At the checker board, Mr. Morgan has talked Fred into playing with him. Everything goes well as long as Frank is winning, but when he thinks he is going to lose he has a trick knee which conveniently gives out, letting checkers and the board go onto the floor with no winner.

Guy Bancroft more affectionately known as Moxie, arrives out of breath. Someone asks him why he is so breathless. He replies that he has been trying to put out a grass fire. He must be crazy to think anyone would believe a story like that, but he insists the fire is running in the grass under the snow. Every once in a while it would come up through an air-hole in the snow but before he can get to it the fire takes off under the snow again. He's got quite a problem.

Our minister, Dr. Bull, comes in and says to Moxie: "It's pretty cold out, my wife says the mercury has gone into the little bulb at the end of the thermometer. That's pretty cold."

"Hm," Moxie says, "that's nothing, when I left home my wife was down cellar with a spade digging, but so far hasn't been able to find the end of the mercury yet."

Waterford Historical Society
Waterford,
Maine 04088

It is getting late in the afternoon, almost dark. Fred starts to walk the four miles back up the hill. Frank and Mac get into the sleigh and Old Chub starts for home. All the checker players have gone so Mr. Morgan goes home.

How do I know about this Saturday afternoon at Rounds Store? Because I was a little twelve-year-old boy sitting in the corner watching and listening.

(The First Congregational Church of Waterford, Me.), con't.

During the summer of 1926 extensive repairs were made and the church was redecorated. Then a terrible disaster occurred. On May 3, 1928 the church was destroyed by fire. Fortunately, the rose brocaded hangings, the wall plaques, and the communion service were saved and are in the church today. One pew was also salvaged and could be used as a model for those in the new building.

The contributions of members and friends, plus the insurance, made it possible to erect a replica of the church which burned. This beautiful edifice was dedicated on December 22, 1929. It is an architectural gem. Visitors come from far and near to photograph it. Pictures of the Waterford Congregational Church are found in calendars, pamphlets and books which show the beauties of Maine.

Join the Waterford Historical Society. Check appropriate category and mail to Box 2, Waterford, ME. 04088.

Name _____

Address _____

MEMBER CLASSIFICATION

_____ Life-Couple	\$75.00	_____ Senior Citizen	\$ 1.00
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