



Waterford Echoes

VOLUME XX Number 1 (Issue 34)

Spring/Summer 2002

Waterford Historical Society



W.K. Hamlin, left, and four unidentified workers in front of the Waterford Creamery in this photo from the 1920s. The building burned in the 1970s..

WK Hamlin diaries

Memories of the 1920s in the 'City'

Part II

by Nancy Chute Marcotte

Walter Keyes Hamlin began writing journals of his daily life at least by the late 1800s. At one time, his daughters Alice and Flora had kept many of them. Today, the Waterford Historical Society owns two of them (1921 and 1922), while I have three of them (1924, 1925 and his partial final journal of 1938).

I don't know where the others have gone but there were some older ones in the W.H.S. collection at one time (see sidebar by the late Rev. B. F. Wentworth, who reviewed material for our 1976 book).

Born in 1854 at the America Hamlin farm under Hawk Mt. where the earliest Hamlins settled, W. K. Hamlin was a slight, ambitious man who was educated in Waterford schools and married in 1878. He went off to Connecticut with his bride, Clara Bell Hamlin, to learn carriage and wheel manufacturing.

By 1883 they were back in South

Waterford, living first at the family farm with his brother James and later at the small house across from his carding and box mills and just down the hill from his creamery ("Brookways," still standing).

In 1913-14, he renovated and modernized the big house once called "Oscar Brown Hotel" (see 1976 Waterford History, page 35.) This house remains in the Hamlin family today, having passed from W. K. to his daughter Alice Warren and from her to her nephew (W. K.'s grandson, Albert's son) Walter "Bud" Hamlin. Bud's widow, Clara, and daughter, Cynthia, live there today with other members of their family.

When W. K. and his Clara lived there, their daughter, Carrie Haynes, and family lived across the street; daughter, Flora Abbott, lived up the street where she would operate a store and post office; son, Albert, and his wife, Marion, lived just above Flora's place in the house where Albert Jr.'s widow,

(Continued on page 4)

Merrill Farm saga began in 1946

By Mary Merrill Delamater

On a spring day in 1946, Edgar E. Merrill stopped to pick up his mail at the post office in South Waterford and met one of the most beloved and revered members of the community, Flora Abbott. She advised him there was a farm for sale on Mill Hill and he should buy it for his wife, Margaret, and their children.

With \$3,000 cash that he and Margaret had saved from his job at the South Paris tannery and from his recently completed military service, he bought the Carroll B. Sanborn property of about 18 acres with farmhouse and barn on July 27 of that year.

Edgar and Margaret had been married for six and a half years at that time and had begun their family: Bob, 5, Betty, 4, Jane, 3, and Dick, 1. Their tax bill for the following year for real estate and personal property was \$58.55. Among their possessions listed in town tax books were two cows, a dog and a radio.

The five-bedroom farmhouse was where they would spend the rest of their lives raising 14 children, welcoming their children's spouses, enjoying their grand- and great-grandchildren, relatives, neighbors, friends and strangers.

Records indicate the farmhouse was constructed about 1846 by Benjamin Kilgore. Will Jordan built the barn in 1898, a

date that is carved in one of its beams. That date coincides with town records, which show a substantial increase in

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Edgar and Margaret Bell Merrill

In Memoriam

Edith M. Perry, 88, of North Waterford, died Dec. 27, 2001 at Bridgton Health Care Center. She was born in Waterford on March 24, 1913, the daughter of Jesse and Berniece Lebroke Littlefield. She attended Waterford schools and graduated from Gould Academy. She attended Gorham State Teachers College. She was a homemaker and worked as a substitute teacher. She was a member of the Rebekahs and the North Waterford Congregational Church. On Feb. 24, 1934, she married Ralph E. Perry, who died on Aug. 4, 1988. Survivors include two daughters Janice Enman of North Waterford and Kathryn Berard of Bridgton; a son, Dwight of North Waterford; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by a son, Kenneth, and a great-granddaughter, Jill Millett. She is buried in Bisbeetown Cemetery, North Waterford.

E. Stanley Swan, 69, of 5 River Acres, Waterford died at his home Jan. 1, 2002 after a long illness with arthritis and a recent battle with cancer. He was born in South Paris on June 13, 1932, the son of Fred and Ruth Morse Swan. He graduated from South Paris High School in 1951. He was a sergeant in the U.S. Army serving from 1951 to 1954, stationed in Munich, Germany. He married Gail Mullen on July 3, 1957, they were together for 44 years and shared many happy memories. He was a machinist and worked at W. H. Nichols in Portland for 10 years. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, friends, his home and especially his family. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. He is survived by his wife of Waterford; a daughter, Sheryl V. Swan of Oxford; and two grandchildren. He is buried in Riverside Annex Cemetery in South Paris.

Mary E. Fillebrown, 81, of Waterford, died Jan. 13, 2002 at Market Square Healthcare Center. Born in Fitchburg, Mass., April 3, 1920, the daughter of Thomas and Margaret Breen Tiernan, she graduated from Fitchburg High School and received her nursing degree from Burbank Hospital in Fitchburg, Mass. Mrs. Fillebrown had been employed by Stephens Memorial Hospital for 30 years. She was a member of the Stephens Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, the Wilkins House in Waterford and the Waterford Library Association. She married Charles Fillebrown Sr. on Sept. 23, 1943 and he died April 25, 2000. Survivors include two sons, Charles Jr. and Thomas, both of Waterford; five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. She is buried in Elm Vale Cemetery, South Waterford.

Eleanor W. Blackstone, 88, formerly of Waterford, died Jan. 10, 2002 at Fryeburg Health Care Center. Born in Haverhill, MA, on Feb. 15, 1913, she was the daughter of Harry Pete and Agnes Bennett Watson. A graduate of Bridgton Academy, she had been an equestrian riding instructor. While living in California, she received her realtors/broker license and worked as an interior decorator for Kit Trailer Co. She later owned a decorator shop in Torrance, CA. She was an animal lover and cared for her sister, Edith, for most of her life. She is survived by a daughter, Pamela S. Prickett of Whittier, CA; a son, Peter Watson Blackstone of Cotuit, MA; three grandchildren; and a great grandson. She was predeceased by her parents and a sister, Edith Mae Watson. She is buried at Elm Vale Cemetery, South Waterford.

Gladys M. Knight, 98, of N. Waterford died Jan. 27, 2002 at Norway Rehabilitation and Living Center. She was born in Sweden, Sept. 13, 1903, the fourth child of Wilbur D. and Lilly Flint Moulton. She graduated from Bridgton Academy in 1921 and the Farmington Normal school in 1925. She taught school in S. Bridgton, Sandy Creek, Bolsters Mills and Sweden for many years. She taught at Harrison and Waterford Memorial School from 1956 to 1969, retiring in 1969. She married Ralph B. Knight of North Waterford in May of 1942. He died in 1953. She was a deacon and trustee of the North Waterford Congregational Church as well as treasurer of the church circle for many years and treasurer of the North Waterford Fire Association. She was a 70-year Golden Sheaf Member of the Waterford Grange No. 479. She is survived by nieces and nephews, and great-nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by four brothers, Herbert, Floyd, Ott (Orsen), and Reuel O. Moulton; and two sisters, Grace R. Lord and Marion Hamlin.

Constance Elliott, 77, of Elliott Way, died unexpectedly Feb. 13, at her home. Born in Portland on Sept. 16, 1924, the daughter of Clayton and Ruth VanCore Canning, she attended Portland schools and graduated from Deering High School. She later graduated from Maine General School of Nursing. She worked as a nurse for many years and when she and her husband moved to Waterford she worked with him in his advertising business. In her early years she was president of the Women's Club in Westbrook. She was an active volunteer for many organizations, including Stephens Memorial Hospital in Norway, where she worked in the coffee shop. On Feb. 22, 1946, she married George Elliott, who died in March of 1997. Survivors include a daughter and son-in-law, Barbara and Charles Buckley of Cohasset, Mass.; and two granddaughters, Kathleen and Jennifer Buckley, both of Cohasset, Mass.

Celia M. Littlefield, 73, of North Waterford, died May 20, at the Maine Veterans Home. Born in Norway, May 10, 1929, the daughter of Winfield and Edith Crousse McAllister, she attended school in North Waterford and Gould Academy. Mrs. Littlefield had been a homemaker, worked at Grover Dowel, was a cook at Stephens Memorial Hospital and Norway Nursing Home and was clerk at the North Waterford Post Office. She was a member of the Mundt-Allen American Legion Auxiliary in Bethel, the North Waterford Congregational Church and the Oxford Hills Christian Center. She married Alfred Littlefield on July 25, 1946. He died Sept. 13, 1989. Survivors include a son, Tim of Norway; two daughters, Bonnie S. Millett of Florida and Patricia Gaudreau of North Waterford; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and three brothers, Lawrence, Erlon and Gene McAllister all of North Waterford. She was

predeceased by a brother, Irving McAllister. She is buried in Hillside Cemetery, East Stoneham.

James L. Kimball, 56, of West Paris died June 2 at Stephens Memorial Hospital. He was born in Waterville on April 4, 1946, the son of W. Hervey and Marjorie Goodale Kimball of North Waterford. He graduated from Oxford Hills High School and the University of Maine in 1968 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. He was employed at Alcoa Aluminum Co. of Messina, N.Y., U.S. Gypsum of Lisbon Falls, Crown Zellerbach Paper Co. of Black River, N.Y., and Kimberly Clark of Sylacauga, Ala. He was an Elder in the Church of Latter Day Saints of Oxford, served on the SAD 17 Board of Directors and was a member of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee for Region 7. He is survived by his mother of North Waterford; two daughters, Patricia and Jennifer of Louisville, Ky.; five brothers, George of Rumford, John of Norway, Bill of Bangor, Don of Bangor, Wayne of Water Valley, MS.; two sisters, Barbara Riggott of South Paris and Gail Stetson of Bridgton; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his father; and a sister, Margaret Cyr. He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, North Waterford.



The Lovejoy house on Sweden Road in South Waterford, where Werner Park sits today. The sign on the house at right says "G.H. Ward, House Painter."

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The Waterford Historical Society newsletter is published to benefit its membership. The Society, founded in 1965, is a non-profit Corporation created for the purpose of preserving and making available to persons interested, any and all historical and other material that shall be deemed valuable and worthy of preservation, in an effort to perpetuate for this and future generations, events, customs and traditions of local history, past, present and future, and to make possible the diffusion of such knowledge.

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Send checks to: Waterford Historical Society
P.O. Box 201
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Purchase a pair of Waterford histories for \$20.



Logo design by Vivian Fanton

WK Hamlin diaries from the 1920s

(Continued from page 1)

Gertrude, and family live today. Later, W. K.'s daughter, Jane, and her husband Arthur Sanderson moved from a farm in Harrison to "Brookways."

South Waterford "City" was quite a family enclave. W. K. Hamlin was an entrepreneur with several businesses operating at all times. In addition, he was a civic guiding light and a member of several fraternal organizations. The men who worked for him did work for the town on his contract. As did most businessmen in those days, he also did extensive farming, logging and shipping operations. His daily journals kept track of all these activities. It's an interesting look at daily life in a Maine town.

A Year In the Life

In May of 1921, life went on following the death of his grandchild Helen Jane Haynes (see last issue), because it had to. A lot of people were depending on Hamlin enterprises.

Monday, May 16

Fair. Chas. (Kimball) hauled manure to Norcross Place, 6 horses. Joe (?) helped me a.m. and went to Norcross Place and picked rock on clover piece p.m. Chas. Bell worked on big truck. I helped him what I could p.m.

Tuesday, May 17

Fair. Chas. K. hauled manure to Norcross Place, 4 loads, 6 horses. Joe hauled up dump-cart load and picked rocks rest of day.

Chas. B. worked on big truck a.m. and took 25 bushels seed potatoes down to H. Seavey's p.m. 13 and one-half bush. seconds \$20.00 and 11 and two-thirds bush. first quality \$29.18. Took up load (freight) for Freeman (Hapgood's store), then went to Norway and got load of grain.

Wednesday, May 18

Fair and cool. Chas. K. and Joe at Norcross Place, took up one big load manure. Harrowed and picked rocks. Chas. Bell went to Norway 4 times with G.M.C. truck, firt. & grain. Ripley

(of Ripley & Fletcher) came over with 5 passing. Buick Car which we tried and bought. \$1995, Disc. \$50.

Thursday, May 19

Fair and cool. Chas. K. and Joe went over to old farm and plowed potato piece, took over one load manure. Chas. Bell worked at mill, 1 pr. horses. I went to Harrison with new car. Geo. Hill went with me. Albert, Marion, Ma and I went to ride after supper.

Friday, May 20

Fair. Chas. K. and Joe took load of ashes and went over to (Hamlin) farm, finished plowing old potato ground, spread the ashes and harrowed. Albert, Marion, Carrie, Middie (Carrie's daughter Mildred), Ma and I went to Bridgton in new car, called on Samantha (his sister). Saw Mr. Edwards. Says he will come and help me a little later. That Saturday they spread the manure from the barn cellar and planted the garden at the house. On Sunday, May 22, 1921, a thunderstorm knocked out the new electric power in town and considerable



SISTERS—This 1948 photo shows the Hamlin sisters eating cake at the wedding of their niece, Happy, their brother Albert's daughter. From left, Carrie August Haynes, Flora Gertrude Abbott, Jennie Bell Sanderson and Alice May Warren.

cellar. On 5/31, W. K. went to a chicken pie supper at Grange--his first attendance since his illness the past fall.

In June of 1921 the home gardens were planted, both vegetables and flowers. Oats were sown at "the Philip Chase place." Carrie and Flora tested the cream for butterfat and their "Pa" helped them. He had to repair the "busted" cream tester. Once the cream was collected and tested, the "girls" then

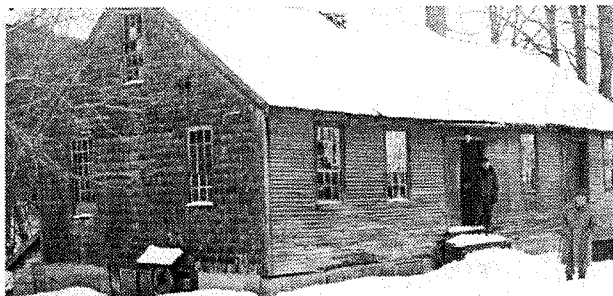
saw to it that the prize-winning butter was made and delivered. (Someone once told me these blocks of butter used to be stamped "W.C." for Waterford Creamery but elderly ladies objected to those initials on their kitchen tables, so the butter mold was changed to a flower design!) "Mr. Edwards" began work on 6/7, building a cement incline to the "auto room" in some building, and doing work at the Grange Hall with Joe's help.

Chas. K. began work for Camp Wigwam with two horses and a road rolling machine. Throughout June Mr. Edwards did a lot of work — he put in new sills and a "piazza floor" at "the Hall house" and built cement walks and cellar steps at various houses owned by W. K.

On Flag Day, 6/10. W. K. went to a celebration at the Flat, making three trips with the new car to "carry" people— "children and others." Sundays were generally occupied by one or two church services (at the Flat and at the Wesleyan Chapel) and then by auto trips or by relatives coming for dinner.

Monday, June 13

Some light showers. Hattie and Addie (his sisters, who had spent the night) started for home. Edwards came late and worked on hall. I was within most of day. Chas. K. work at Wigwam, 2 hosses (sic). Chas. B. went to Norway, big truck, twice. Joe at mill, 2 horses.



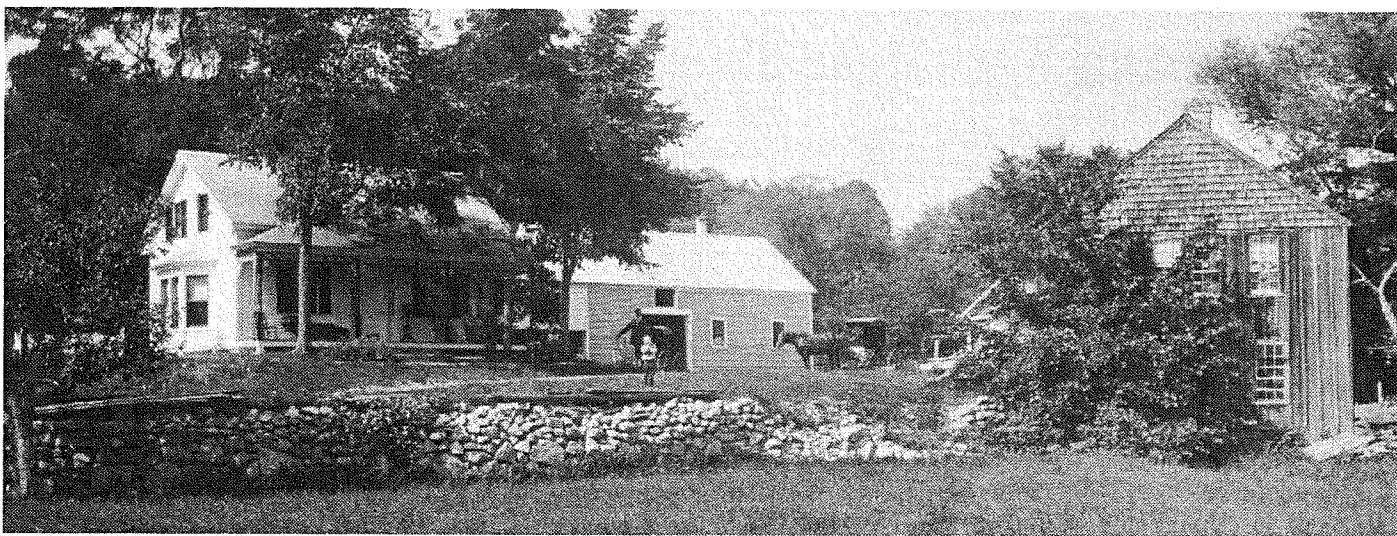
The Carding Mill in the winter of 1955. Guy Wescott is shown on the right and Holman Swinney stands in the doorway. The men were investigating the mill for Old Sturbridge Village.

wind damage was done in Portland. Potatoes were cut and planted from 5/28 to 5/31 at the Norcross Place (wherever that was!) Salt, grain and freight were hauled by the hired men. W. K. ground the buzz planer

and knives, filed saws and repaired a horse rake to keep the business going. He was 66 years old and still having problems with rheumatism in his shoulder.

Former potato fields at the old Hamlin farm were rotated this year and sown with oats and grass by Arthur Sanderson. Grass was seeded, some was mowed. Wood went into the

TO BE CONTINUED



"Brookways," The former W.K. Hamlin house, left, and the carding mill on what now is called Park Street. The mill that was built in 1810 by Oliver Hapgood was moved to Sturbridge Village, where it still operates there today. The child is probably Albert Hamlin.

Life In The City of South Waterford — Walter Hamlin's Diary

by Rev. Bertram F. Wentworth

Walter Hamlin kept a diary during the 1880s. From that record I gleaned some notes that tell of life in those days. He married Clara Bell and had four girls and one boy . . . they lived on Skunk Alley, along with some other Hamlins. Walter operated a farm when he wasn't working in the mills.

He carried 33 eggs to the Grange store and got credit for 66 cents. Adding 8 cents, he got a gallon of molasses. This was January 14. After a bad storm, he broke out the road. Walter raised his own oats, wheat and barley. On February 6th he took 6 bushels of wheat to the grain mill and brought home a barrel of flour. On March 15 he sold 6 doz. Eggs for 14 cents a dozen! At another date he sold 35 lbs. of salt pork for \$2.80. Again he sold 8 barrels of apples for \$1.40 per barrel. He made a trip to the cider mill and sold 27 bushels of apples for some gallons of cider. His wife went to the city another day with some berries.

The Bells lived on Blackguard — Clara's folks. Often she took the children up there for several days. Perhaps that was the time that the Bells decided to go to Dakota and take up some of the new land. On Feb. 22nd Walter took them to Mechanic Falls where they got on the train for Dakota.

On June 21 they got a letter from

the Bells, saying that they were all settled on the new land and in good health. Walter Hamlin became quite a businessman in the "city." He bought the carding mill from the Perry heirs—Geo. Dennis. It was in need of repair so Walter took



W.K. Hamlin as a young man. (Miss Libby photo)

down some hemlock plank for the flume. On Sept. 6th he lifted the gate and let the water turn the old wheel. Everything worked well. Walter carded wool there until the mid twentieth century. The mill was sold to Sturbridge Village, Mass. in 1963, through the generosity of the Rices.

For years Walter operated a wagon shop in the "city." He made wheels out of hickory and oak. one win-

ter he made 22 sets of wheels in 10 days for E. Corey and Co. The shop did other work. Walter turned out a couple of dozen wooden eggs.

Other interests sent him to North Norway to look at some mill stones. He saw A. S. Hapgood about buying the grist mill. In later years Walter started the Waterford Creamery and did a thriving business for years, winning many prizes for his butter and cream. Social activities took up some of Walter's time. He was

interested in the Lyceum, where he took part in the debates. Then there was the Grange, in which he had a prominent part. Then there was the Church; he was the treasurer. At one time he paid "Minister Abbott" \$4 in butter and \$4 in money.

Sometimes he went to Norway, where he bought himself a suit of clothes at the Blue Store (Pike's—still blue). He bought Alice a pair of shoes for \$1.25. One day he had his horse shod "forward" for fifty cents. Someone borrowed his buffalo coat for a Christmas play.

His business took him to Portland. He met the stage to Bridgton at 5:30 a.m. and left for Cumberland Mills—fare \$1.57. He came with Maxfield's Stage to

Waterford the next day. On another day he paid his fire assessment 80 cents, paid the doctor 50 cents, bought a lamp wick for 29 cents and 4 yards of calico for 28 cents. Walter wanted to finish off a spare room so he stopped at (Arthur Kingman's) mill and bought two sacks of plaster.

One thing that I remember was his accident off the bridge to Bethel, when his REO car sank in eight feet of water. He was glad that he survived to serve for many more years in his useful ways.



W.K. Hamlin in a 1920s mill scene.

Josephine Sanderson's short-lived school days

By David Sanderson

"The school house was in a very lonely spot called Gambo...." School in Waterford, ca. 1897.

Sometimes we are lucky, and find a glimpse of history that surprises. Here are excerpts from essays by Josephine Sanderson, written between 1895 and 1900, when she was attending Waterford schools, then Bridgton Academy. Some explanatory comments are in brackets.

From "Early Recollections:"

McWain Hill, which was named in honor of David McWain, the first settler in Waterford, is and always has been my home. From here (the Sanderson farm, built about 1854 by her grandfather Marshall Sanderson) a very pretty view may be obtained, but from the top of the hill a much prettier one is visible, for you can see not only Mt. Washington, but also many other mountains and lakes.

The school house where I first attended school was in a very lonely spot called Gambo [near the current Post Office], where only one house could be seen [almost certainly the current Labti/Truman house]. Here, although it was so quiet, we had many good times. Near this place was a brook, from which many of the scholars drank water, until a little boy was taken sick and died of typhoid fever.

From "School Life:"

During the spring and summer I attend a district school, and though that is not as interesting as a graded school where one has the pleasure of looking forward to promotions and the desire to keep up with one's class, yet there is that feeling that exists in any school, no matter how few its numbers, that you have something to do, and that if

you do that something, which is paying strict attention to your studies, you are sure of success and advancement.

Besides, in school life we are all on equal ground; we are all striving after the same thing — knowledge, and we each have the same chances and privileges.

I began going to school when about five years of age [she was born in 1884, so this

I studied Arithmetic, Physiology, History and Geography.

In the summer I did not go to school, but my brother and sister [her oldest brother Burton, b. 1875, and Helen] went to Bridgton Academy. In the fall I went to E. Waterford again. We had a term of nine weeks, and after one week of vacation I came to So. Waterford to attend the High

School here [the Free High School, so called, typically about six weeks long].

There are about thirty scholars, enough to make it very interesting. My studies here are Rhetoric, Physical Geography, Arithmetic and Algebra. I enjoy them all, but my mathematics particularly. Surely, if my after life is as pleasant as my school days thus far have been I shall have had a very pleasant existence.

One of the most interesting things about Josephine's accounts of her education is the way the Sanderson children switched from school to school. This may have been more common than we know, and seems to have been no problem for the

schools. Florence, Josephine's mother, was fiercely protective of her children and never shy with her opinions; and though there is no real evidence to support it, one may speculate that teachers and education quality had something to do with the switch to South Waterford and back to East Waterford.

Josephine's second essay was obviously written while she was a student at the Free High School; the first excerpt is from a later essay, written when she was at Bridgton, where she graduated in 1902. Josephine shared some of her mother's independence, and it is interesting to see that while the Free High



The family (and friend), April 1, 1901. L to R: Florence, Helen, Leroy, Elsie, "Harry" (possibly Harry Brown; invited by Helen, apparently a beau of hers at that time), Arthur (seated on floor), Josephine (holding photo of Bridgton athletic team), Burton. Photo from 4x5 glass negative taken by Burton's college friend William Keyes.

was probably 1889]. My first term was at Gambo, about two and one half miles from my home.

In '96, my brother, sister and myself [her older brother Arthur, b. 1880, and older sister Helen, b. 1882] came to So. Waterford. We rode five miles night and morning, in sunshine or storm [their mother usually drove them]. In the winter, I went to East Waterford. At recess and noons we would go down on the mill-pond [of the Haskell/Rolfe mill; the pond remains today]. It was frozen and good skating most of the time. We had good sliding there also.

School essay is written in a hand that shows the penmanship she was taught as a girl, by the time she was at Bridgton her handwriting had changed markedly, to an open, square style that she obviously developed on her own.

Josephine was the fourth of five children of Leroy Sanderson and Florence Shaw Sanderson. Leroy operated the farm his father had built on McWain Hill, which still stands, looking very much as it did then. The mix of field and forest land is about the same also, except for the loss of a wide strip of pasture land on the east side of the McWain Hill Road, now forest.

At this time Josephine's oldest brother, Burton, had taken advantage of all the education available in Waterford, and after several years of farming with his father, had started at Bridgton Academy, where he graduated in 1899 at the age of 24. Burton had to finance his Bridgton tuition himself. By the time Josephine went to Bridgton, the State of Maine had passed a pivotal piece of legislation that required towns to pay for the secondary education of students who wished to go beyond what the town itself could offer.

Burton went on to Bates, Class of 1903, and from there into teaching, returned to live in Waterford about 1923 and spent the rest of his life farming where he had grown up. Josephine followed her brother to Bates, as a member of the Class of 1907. Florence was less than delighted at her daughter's ambition; Josephine's letters to Burton when he was at Bates and she at Bridgton complain with some bitterness that Florence doesn't see why Josephine can't settle down in town and be satisfied.

Both Josephine and Helen had regular work in Waterford for Mrs. Atherton at the Flat, who ran what seems to have been a combination boarding house and summer hotel. Where this establishment was, and what its history was, is something that is not clear from the Sanderson family documents. At Bates, Josephine seems to have looked for better

paying seasonal jobs; she spent one summer at a hotel in Bethlehem, New Hampshire, and another at Poland Spring ("They think they're going to go down there and make big money," was Florence's disparaging comment to Burton). Between Bates terms, she did what Burton and other college students typically did, which was to take a school in some town for a single term, a schedule which meshed closely enough with the Bates schedule to cause a minimum of missed college work.

By this time Josephine's independent character had begun to assert itself. Florence writes to Burton about Josephine teaching at the Woodsum School, in Harrison on what is now Route 117 near the cemetery. Josephine was a slight woman, maybe a hundred pounds at



The Haskell/Rolfe mill in East Waterford about 1911.

best. One day one of the older boys in her class got obstreperous and disruptive. Josephine proceeded to deputize one of the larger girls; the two of them wrestled the boy to the floor, where Josephine sat on him until he calmed down or embarrassment got the better of him. Problem solved.

At Bates, Josephine was active in religious organizations, and eventually acquired a beau, a man named Guy Von Aldrich (Von was his middle name, contrary to what one might assume). It appears that they were to become engaged after they graduated in the spring of 1907. Guy was treated like a member of the Sanderson family, and spent vacations staying at the house.

But we are now reminded that this was a time before medicine believed it could do anything, a time when people got sick and died, simply died. Josephine came home from Bates at the end of November 1906; Guy came with her for

the holidays. Her obituary (almost certainly written by Guy) tells what happened next:

Since Christmas time, Mr. Aldrich had been at the Sanderson home in East Waterford and all the while there had been sickness in the family. First, Miss Sanderson suffered an attack of tonsillitis. She had just recovered, when her sister came home, ill with measles. She took care of her and then suffered the measles herself. This developed into pneumonia, which caused her death. Meantime, five members of the family were ill with measles, at the same time, and as has been stated, the mother for two weeks has been seriously ill, and is still confined to her bed.

Mr. Aldrich, with two nurses, Mrs. Cushing and Miss Frances Taylor, with the family did everything that could be done to save the life of Miss Sanderson. They were faithful, kind, sympathetic and helpful, ministering to the wants of the sick one, night and day. Tho the young woman did not suffer intense bodily pain, she suffered much in her mind for she realized her critical condition and knew that the

end must come soon. Notwithstanding, she never uttered a word of complaint—no one could suffer more patiently. She retained consciousness until within ten minutes before her death.

The nearest hospital, of course, was in Lewiston, an impossible trip for a person near death in those days. An agonizing end for a person one might wish to have known, and a loss that Florence and Leroy found painful for years afterward. Leroy carried a photo of his dead daughter in his watch case; Florence, in moments of self-pity, reminded herself in her diary that Josie's pain at least was over. The trunk Josephine brought home from Bates that November contained her college clothes and memorabilia. She had no reason to unpack it at home; and after she died it was simply put away, intact, never opened again until discovered in a closet a few years ago, some 90 years after it was packed, a small time capsule of an interrupted life.

Merrill farm becomes a family gathering place

(Continued from page 1)

valuation of the property in April 1899.

The previous owner, Carroll B. Sanborn, inherited the property as the only child of Benjamin F. and Minnie A. Sanborn. Minnie was the daughter of the barn builder, Will Jordan. Carroll's father, a blacksmith, died in 1914 of heart disease at the age of 57.

The Sanborns

Carroll and his wife, Maude E. Learned Sanborn, a Waterford school teacher, apparently lived on the farm with his mother and their three sons, Charles, Richard and Paul.

According to the death certificate, Maude accidentally fell down the back stairs on Sept. 28, 1942, fracturing her skull and lacerating her brain. She died Oct. 3 at age 52.

Carroll's mother died on the farm nearly four years later on January, 1946 of congestive heart failure. She was 85. Carroll, 65, sold the property seven months later to Edgar.

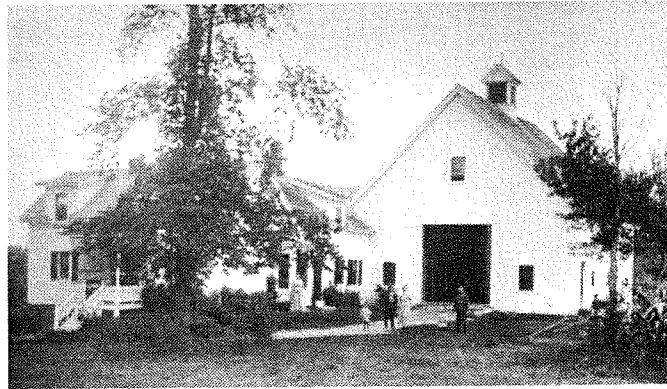
Staying in Touch

The 14 children of the late Edgar and Margaret Merrill are sharing the events of their lives with each other through the **Merrill Family Times**. The three generations represented by the seven sons and seven daughters total 111 people ranging in age from less than one month to 61 years and are spread out from Maine to California to Texas.

The idea of a family newspaper started with a conversation between daughters Karen Hill and Mary Delamater soon after the death of their father in October, 2000. The 14 siblings and their families talked about their desire to continue to make the Merrill Farm in South Waterford their gathering place. They

agreed to work together to restore portions of it and develop facilities to accommodate their large number.

"As we discussed creating the newsletter with family members, we discovered that the farm was very important for some of our children who had already seen the sale of their childhood homes for various reasons," Karen said. "It was the one remaining place where they could 'come home again' and share



Edgar and Margaret Merrill purchased the Carroll Sanborn farm in 1946. They had been married 6½ years and had four children when they bought the farm and 18 acres. Shown in this 1912 photo, from left, are Minnie, Charles Carroll, Maude, Richard and Benjamin Sanborn.

their memories with their children."

Karen, who has a degree in computer technology, and Mary, a copy editor/reporter/photographer for the Lewiston Sun Journal, wanted to use their skills and home computers to keep everyone informed about the plans and progress of the restoration. They also saw it as a way to continue the strong family bonds.

"Our parents taught us by example the importance of togetherness and we didn't want to lose that because of their passing," Mary said.

The two sisters also saw another purpose to be served by the newspaper: chronicling family history.

Following the death of their mother in 1997, Karen researched family genealogy and discovered "dad did not know much of his ancestry prior to his great-grandfather Merrill. On Father's Day of 1999, I presented him with the missing pieces of his ancestry from about 1444 to the present — 20 generations. I could not have given him a greater gift."

The first edition of the Merrill Family Times — eight pages of articles, color photos and graphics — was published in February 2001. The front page story told of the timber harvest at the farm, plans for an artesian well and work on a new barn foundation.

A column inside, which has become a standard feature, announces engagements, marriages, births, job changes and promotions, academic and professional achievements, retirements, civic and sports activities, vacations, buying and building homes and other news. Each edition has an update on the farm restoration and a list of the birthdays and anniversaries of family members for that quarter.

The summer edition featured an article on the history of the farm, and the fall edition contained accounts from four family members directly affected by the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11. There were also histories of the military careers of the eight veterans of the family, and a report on a "Service of Remembrance" in honor of Edgar and Margaret Merrill at Elm Vale Cemetery in South Waterford. It was held in July as part of the first official family reunion.

The newsletter is e-mailed to those with that service and the rest are printed in color and delivered by postal service or in person.

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