Waterford Echoes

Issue 72 | Spring/Summer 2021 | Waterford Historical Society

Above, the stage of the Bear Mt. Grange Hall, decorated for an event circa 1910. Photo by Fred Johnson.

Bear Mt. Music Hall

When they bought the old Grange Hall in So. Waterford, musicians Elizabeth Roth and George Wiese set out on an exciting adventure to create a new performing arts center. Unfortunately, they started their adventure just as Covid-19 put an abrupt halt to the performing arts everywhere.

Roth, a harpist from Bridgton, ME, studied music at Cleveland State University. Wiese, the new organist at Waterford Congregational Church, studied at The Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University and at Juilliard.

They hope to open again with concerts, lessons, dances and eventually a cafe or coffee house. May the building in its new capacity again become the center of the community.

A Farewell to Bear Mt. Grange

In the summer of 2019, the last surviving members of Bear Mt. Grange #62, Patrons of Husbandry, decided that they were too few and too fragile to continue an organization that had been a mainstay of community life most of 145 years.

The first consideration was the building. There is a proscribed method for dissolving a Grange and disposing of a Grange Hall; the Maine State Grange must be involved. The contents were largely sold or given to the Waterford Historical Society.

The building, originally a Universalist Church when it was built in 1845 at the foot of Bear Mountain, sold quickly. Musicians Elizabeth Roth and George Wiese bought it for an arts center [see sidebar.] Although they cannot call it a Grange Hall anymore, the last of the old Grangers are glad to see it continue as Bear Mt. Music Hall.

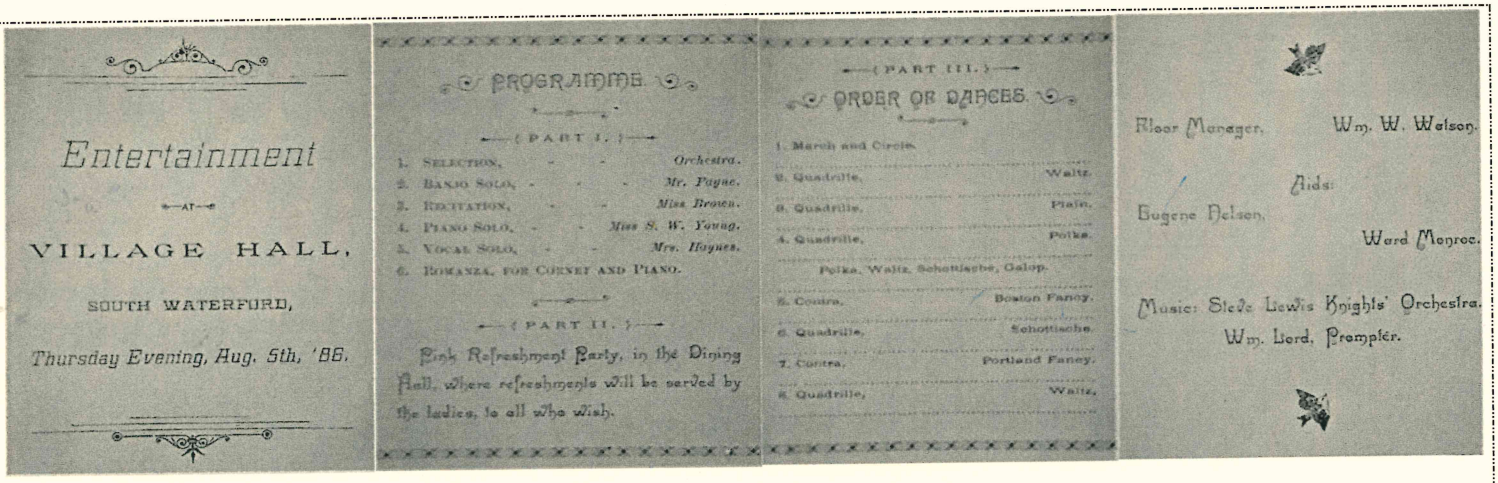
Patrons of Husbandry was founded in the 1870s to give farmers a fellowship to help combat railroad monopolies on shipping produce and goods. Its precepts included legislative and scientific farm education, wholesome (Cont. page 6)

The Country Dance

Every other Saturday night when we were young, there was a dance somewhere nearby—at a Grange Hall, an opera house, a school gym, a fairgrounds, dance pavilion or village hall. Some were rock 'n roll music, but even in the 1960s and 70s, there were regular Country Dances like our parents and grandparents knew. Refreshments usually included pie, coffee, and cider of some kind!

In school, we learned square dancing and contra dancing from records, thanks to Henry Ford's celebration of Maine's 1925 champion fiddler Mellie Dunham (from Norway, ME.) At the real dances there was sawdust on the floor, a live orchestra, a "floor manager," caller or prompter.

(Cont. page 2)



Entertainment

AT

VILLAGE HALL,

SOUTH WATERFORD,

Thursday Evening, Aug. 5th, '86.

PROGRAMME

(PART I.)

1. SELECTION, - - - Orchestra.
2. BANJO SOLO, - - - Mr. Page.
3. RECITATION, - - - Miss Brown.
4. PIANO SOLO, - - Miss S. W. Young.
5. VOCAL SOLO, - - - Mrs. Haynes.
6. ROMANZA, FOR CORNET AND PIANO.

(PART II.)

Pink Refreshment Party, in the Dining Hall, where refreshments will be served by the ladies, to all who wish.

(PART III.)

ORDER OF DANCES.

1. March and Circle.
2. Quadrille, Waltz.
3. Quadrille, Plain.
4. Quadrille, Polka.
Polka, Waltz, Schottische, Galop.
5. Contra, Boston Fancy.
6. Quadrille, Schottische.
7. Contra, Portland Fancy.
8. Quadrille, Waltz.

Floor Manager, Wm. W. Watson.

Aids:

Eugene Nelson,

Ward Monroe.

Music: Steele Lewis Knights' Orchestra.

Wm. Lord, Prompter.

Country Dance (cont. from page 1)

As Neil Diamond sang in 1969, ♫ "Pack up the babies and grab the old ladies and everyone goes…"♫ Babies fell asleep on the coats; old ladies danced with each other; young people learned to polka.

Pictured above is a dance card for an "Entertainment" at the "Village Hall" in South Waterford on August 5, 1886. Knights' Orchestra played, William Lord was Prompter, and William Watson was Floor Manager. Inside there was a "programme" featuring a banjo solo, a recitation, other music and a vocal solo by "Mrs. Haynes" (who was probably the musical Edith Watson). Note the "Pink Refreshment Party."

The order of dances begins with "March and Circle" (also known as Grand March.) If you want to know how that worked, there is a good example in the John Ford film, "Fort Apache" (1947)--John Ford did grow up in Maine! [To see how dance cards worked, see the Christmas ball in the film "Meet Me in St. Louis."]

Next in the order is a "quadrille," which is a square dance with four couples (quads). Vermont fiddler Ralph Page in his publication The Country Dance Book tells us quadrilles came to us from the French Court dances. Terms like "promenade," "allemande," and "dos-a-dos" confirm that.

"Contra" dances such as Boston Fancy and Portland Fancy were danced in opposing lines (contra, see?). They came to us from the jigs of our Scot/Irish ancestors, probably the oldest forms of dance—from the druids. Reels were originally a little slower, often done to march time or bagpipe tunes. I can picture my long-legged grandfather Harry clogging to the rhythm of a contra dance while waiting at the foot of the line.

Country dance music is ultimately immigrant music. Polka, schottische, waltz and galop were German, Austrian or Polish. From the first settlement of Maine, the music was played at barn raisings, kitchen junkets and community suppers.

Square dance clubs and semi-regular revivals of contra dancing have kept it going for centuries. We celebrate it with Greg Boardman this year (see programs calendar on page 3).

Waterford Echoes phone: (207) 583-8335

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.

2020-2021 OFFICERS

President:	Bonnie Parsons
Vice-President:	Nancy Eaton
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MEMBERSHIP DUES

Classification: Individual/Couple
Life Member: $100/$150 – Annual $10/$15
Seniors (65 & older) - $5/$8
Membership renewals are due June 1st
Membership dues help to fund our newsletter and its mailing costs
Visit *www.waterfordme.org/WatHistSoc*
or the Facebook page of the Waterford Library

Send Checks To: Waterford Historical Society
PO Box 201
Waterford, ME 04088

We have the following publications for sale at $10 each: History of Waterford 1775-1875; History of Waterford 1875-1976; This is Waterford 1803-2003 (reduced price). Add $8 to ship one book, or $12 to ship two or three books.

Our New Season:
Waterford Historical Society Programs for 2021

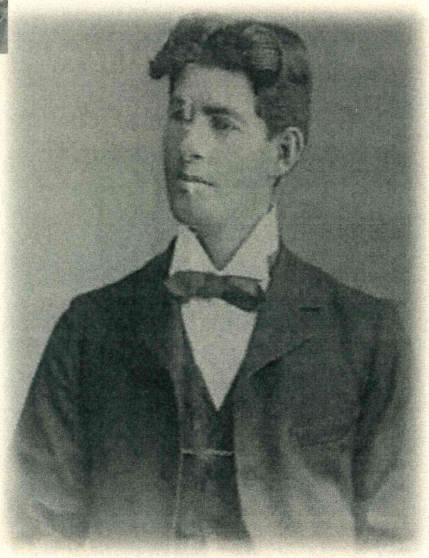
Note: These programs are tentatively scheduled. Waterford Historical Society programs are generally held on the second Thursday of the month, June through November. Follow local news and the Town of Waterford website for updates.

Date	Time	Program/Location
June 10	6:30 p.m.	Annual Meeting – Wilkins House
July 8	6:30 p.m.	American Music w/Greg Boardman at Waterford Fairgrounds. Donations to benefit the fair.
Aug 12	6:30 p.m.	Architecture in the 19th Century. Location to be announced.
Sept 9	6:00 p.m.	Tour of 1830s Warren House; Green Road, North Waterford
Oct 14	TBA	City Brook Walking Tour from Keoka dam to Werner Park.
Nov 11	6:30 p.m.	Veterans Program – Wilkins House

Flora Hamlin Abbott

Will and Flora Abbott – married 1903

Will and Flora Abbott, ca. 1930s



Willard W. Abbott

Nuances

Everyone Called Her Aunt Flora

By Nancy Chute Marcotte

She was very funny and very bossy. She treated her great-nieces and nephews with love, advice, piano lessons and sometimes candy from her general store.

She sponsored quite a few community organizations– especially the fire department, community club and Waterford Historical Society. She tried to get everyone to do her bidding in community service; she nagged, she joked. She kept track of village comings and goings from her home above the post office, in her own amusing way.

Flora Gertrude Hamlin was born in South Waterford on June 28, 1884, a daughter of Walter K. and Clara Bell Hamlin. She attended Bridgton Academy, but left before graduation to marry the dashing Willard Abbott and move to his family dairy farm on Plummer Hill [opposite the schoolhouse, it burnt in the 1920s and today there is an orchard there].

The stories she told us and the ones she printed in her newspaper columns inspired the next two generations of volunteers, journalists, teachers, writers, and historians in town. She had no children of her own, but to the whole village she was "Aunt Flora," the "Village Postmaster."

Flora's "To the Folks Away and at Home" *Advertiser-Democrat* columns are today priceless observations of life in a little Maine village in the 1940s and 50s. I just found what I think is her very first column, which I had never seen. From the things she wrote, it seems to be 1942. Originally for the soldiers, here it is:

"South Waterford Sends Greetings"

"Dear Boys,

Someone told me the other day that because I had no boys of my own I should take one of you on to write to. Why, I will take them all on, I said, and write to them all, so here is my first letter to tell you what is going on in the old home town. (Cont. pg. 4)

Nuances

"Bill Haynes has bought a new hound, which has since developed a series of high sounding ailments and because of this and other things I said, 'better plant the pup' and did I get blasted out by Doc Watson who has the case in hand, when I mentioned such a thing, but I still think the idea was sound...[here she includes a poem which ends, 'I like dogs but I want them spelt with a small d, Starting them with a capital is too much for me.']

"Bernice Sanborn who, as you know, stands about five feet on spike heels and weighs about one hundred pounds more or less, has so far proved herself adequate to cope with the South Waterford grammar school, which had previously proved too much for a man teacher. I am sure the students will not do anything to annoy she who has been so consistently kind always as Mrs. Sanborn has. The boys and girls of South Waterford know how to behave and do not have to go to some other part of the town to find out, as was suggested at town meeting. The trouble is they don't do as well as they know, which is not wholly confined to youth nor to any particular part of the town.

"Dr. Watson has now his winter supply of wood, and as a consequence the weather has moderated.

"Nancy Chase held [the] lucky number in the Pop Eye Club (whatever that may be) Saturday at State Theatre and upon arriving home immediately invested the dollar won in Defense Stamps. If we all would show a like spirit you boys would have all the arms you needed—but I am afraid the most of us would have saved out a quarter, at least, for our own pleasure.

"Mildred Haynes was home from Oxford over the week end. She is coaching the play "Lindy Lou" which was to have been played at Welchville with an Oxford High School cast last Thursday but the leading man came down with the mumps. How like a leading man.

"Raymond and Alice Warren drove up from Portland Saturday afternoon to look over their home in South Waterford and to see how their relatives had wintered. They are looking forward to the time when they can come here to live permanently.

"Hazel Learned is having another room finished off and other renovating done at Oak Lodge. Percy Kimball is in charge of the work.

"Gertrude Lehtola of Norway spent the week end at Albert Hamlin's and went to Harrison to the dance with Stan, Buddy and Happy Hamlin. [Gertrude married Albert Jr. later that year.]

"L. C. Minard is in town for a few days and is stopping with Charles and Florence Nelson.

"Harry Haynes has had drinking fountains installed in his cow barn and has now sold off quite a part of his stock. Not because the drinking fountains were not a success, however. Harry Oakley of Bridgton did the work.

Plummer Hill, Abbott Farm – burned 1920s

The Hamlin family, l. to r., Carrie, Alice, Jane, W.K., Clara, Albert, and Flora. Carrie was pregnant in 1925 with her youngest child, Ruth.

Nuances

"Mrs. Maude Sanborn spent the afternoon recently with Mrs. Marjorie Kingman.

"Otta Chase, Gusta Relihan, Marion Hamlin, Evelyn Rogers, Marjorie Kingman and Carrie Haynes attended the meeting at the Wilkins Community House at the Flat last Thursday. Trust this is an improvement on square meals for health.

"Arthur and Marjorie Kingman took their refreshments and went to Past Chiefs Night at Norway Saturday evening...

"Mrs. Jennie [Haynes] Hammond has received word of the serious illness of her grandson, Carl Stevens, who is in a hospital in Connecticut. Mr. Stevens, who is an instructor in mathematics at Tufts College, was in an automobile accident and was badly injured several weeks ago.

"Well, boys, the ladders, siren and spot light are all installed on the fire truck but that doesn't mean that we have nothing left to work for. We still need more hose and should have it by summer, when we should be supposed to have more fires. There are still some places we cannot reach with what we have. If anyone is willing to have a card party or a supper or do most anything for the benefit of the fire company, I hope they won't be bashful about coming across. The outfit has saved enough property already so it doesn't owe us a cent and we should all be grateful. Wish you were here to help man it. We shall either have to rob the cradle or take on the women, whichever seems more feasible to the ones in charge.

"Bear Mt. Library is still getting books for you to read when you get home but in the meantime if you would like reading matter, in case you have time for it, I am sure we should be only too glad to send you some of the older books. Just drop us a line...

Above: Flora on Bessie's Beach

South Waterford village before the road was paved. At center right is Flora's store and post office, later Bear Mt. Library.

Left: Flora enjoying her flower garden.

Right: Flora in 1922, at age 38.

If you would like to know more about Aunt Flora and her columns, see <u>This Is Waterford.</u> Will Abbott died long before Flora did, but she lived until 1975, having retired and turned her store into the Bear Mt. Library. Today the Waterford Library offers a scholarship in her name to an Oxford Hills graduating senior from Waterford who exhibits community service.

Grange Hall, ca. 1900. Fred Johnson Photo

Grange Store

A Farewell to Bear Mt. Grange (Continued from page 1)

lectures, entertainment, and recreation, as well as participation by women and children over the age of 14. Members usually met twice a month.

Our local Patrons of Husbandry—the 62nd Grange founded—was established in 1874 with 29 members. At first, they met in homes and then small halls. Later, Waterford Grange #479 was begun in North Waterford; it still exists.

Here is a newspaper account of a special meeting, from *The Bridgton News*, September 1877: "Waterford Matters. The Bear Mt. Grange of this place (Geo. A. Hall, Master) met to dedicate their new hall. A goodly number were present and a very interesting and pleasant time was realized by all. The hall is situated on School St. and was built through the kind and much appreciated efforts of J. R. Hall. He... proposed to raise the roof of his workshop at his own expense and rent the hall to the Grange."

This, of course, is the red building across from today's Kimball's Hardware; it was later known as the K.P. Hall. At this dedication, an address was given by Brother W. W. Andrews, Master of Crooked River Grange in Otisfield. He gave "many strong proofs why we should work and strive for the benefit of our Order." Other speakers followed, including Brother J. M. Shaw, a reading by Miss Miranda Billings, and organ music by Mrs. C. D. Morse, accompanying the Grange Choir.

The afternoon concluded with supper, "which had been prepared by the ladies, in that inviting manner known to the ladies of South Waterford," accompanied by selections from the South Waterford Band. In less than twenty years the Order outgrew this hall.

Bear Mt. Grange members bought the Universalist Church around 1896. At that time, the lower floor contained two primary school rooms for South Waterford, which remained until 1949. The main floor had a stage; a meeting space; anterooms for the rituals of the Grange; and an excellent dance floor, used on frequent Saturday nights with an orchestra.

Dances were preceded by suppers – first, inconveniently on the top floor with a woodstove, pump and long tables. There was a dumbwaiter to haul up firewood, baked beans and casseroles. A stable was added at the back of the hall. There was no plumbing.

In the 1960s, the lower floor was opened up, with a new, covered entry, a kitchen, and a dining room where Bingo was played and Bear Mt. Community Club held strawberry festivals, etc.

According to our second history book, the Grange operated a cooperative feed and grain store, at first in Jones Hall's building, and then across the street in what is today Kimball's. From 1904 to 1919, Loton Flint, Eugene Kilgore and Freeman Hapgood were successive agents, until the Grange sold the store to Mr. Hapgood.

At that time, the Finance Committee did an extraordinary thing that has ended up benefitting the whole area – they invested the sale money. Ever since then, the dividends have kept the heat and electricity on, although the investment was never explored. We have W. K. Hamlin to thank for that. [When he died in 1940, W. K. was the last charter member of Bear Mt. Grange.] At closure in 2019, the surviving members had money to donate to the new cemetery fence, the library, Waterford Grange #479, and area food pantries, among other organizations.

The last members to meet were: Clara Hamlin, Edith and Prentiss Kimball, Fred Fortier, George Tibbetts, Beverly Brown, Stanley and Alice Brown, Dan and Kathy Graney, Bill "Dood" Haynes, and Nancy Marcotte. [Dood and I joined at age 14 and were the last relatives of charter members.]

In Memoriam

Eva Katherine Lundstrom, 86, of Myrtle Beach, SC, died Aug. 31, 2020, at Conway, S.C., after a brief illness. Born in South Waterford, ME, on Sept. 8, 1933, a daughter of Nils "Henry" Lundstrom and Anna (Tervo) Lundstrom. Raised on Deer Hill in Waterford and in Harrison Village, Eva graduated from Bridgton Academy. She was a district training manager for New England Telephone Company. In her lifetime, she lived in ME, NH, MA, FL and SC. Before retiring in the south, she was an active member and officer of the Finnish-American Heritage Society of Maine and the Harrison Historical Society. Eva's passing follows her three children, Brian, Marcia, and Thomas; her parents; siblings Lawrence, May Seilonen, Marianna Preble, and Ruth Mattson; and ex-spouses Edward Burkett and Malcolm Bean. She is survived by her stepson Edward Burkett Jr. and family; also several nieces and nephews.
Eva's entire obituary can be found at https://www.sunjournal.com/2020/09/30/obituaryeva-katherine-lundstrom/

George W. Morse ,77, of Cape Elizabeth, ME, died March 28, 2021. Born in Rumford, ME on May 5, 1943, a son of Frank and Elaine Morse. George married Elizabeth on June 5, 1965. He earned a Bachelor's Degree from University of Maine, a Master's Degree from Purdue University and a PhD from University of Wisconsin in Applied Economics. George was a professor at Ohio State University from 1977-1989, then at University of Minnesota until his retirement and return to Maine in 2007. Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Elizabeth; children Ryan Morse, Bradford Morse (Julie), and Pamela Gutmore (Josh); three grandchildren; siblings Ken Morse (Nikki Millonzi), Peter Morse (Jane), and Dianne Morse Leonard (Del). Predeceased by his parents and his brother, Frank (Chipper) Morse. Read George's entire obituary at https://www.hobbsfuneralhome.com/obituary/george-morse

Evelyn M. Pike, 88, of Harrison, ME, died Dec. 7, 2020. Born Jan. 2, 1932, in West Paris, ME, she was a daughter of Orin D. and Eunice (Joslin) Sprague. Evelyn married Fred Pike of South Waterford on Sept. 7, 1950. She worked at Wiley's Market in Norway for many years. Evelyn was also the Deputy Town clerk of Harrison from 1981 until 1987; that year she was elected Town Clerk and remained in the position until her retirement in 1999. She is survived by her children, Russell Pike (Gail) of Harrison, Roxanne Thieme of Escondido, Calif., Kathy Bracken (Michael) of Harrison, David Pike of Harrison, and Clifford Pike of Otisfield; sister Anita Mason; 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. Read entire obituary at https://www.sunjournal.com/2020/12/15/obituary-evelyn-m-pike/

Keith G. Willoughby, 94, of Norway, ME, died March 25, 2021. Born in Milwaukee, WI, on Feb. 5, 1927, son of Geoffrey and Marion Van Arsdale (Helliwell) Willoughby. He grew up in Whitefish Bay, WI, enlisting in the U.S. Navy during his high school senior year. After the war, he earned a Master of Economics from University of Wisconsin, and later, a degree from Stonier Graduate School of Banking. In college, he met exchange student Lieselotte Haack, of Bielefeld, Germany. They married in 1954 in Cologne, Germany. Returning to the U.S. in 1955, he worked for Dun and Bradstreet, Wm. E. Pollock and Company, Chase Manhattan Bank, and others. After retirement, he moved to Waterford full time and was a highly active volunteer for numerous worthy organizations. He is survived by his wife, "Lilo" Willoughby of Norway; sons, Geoffrey A. and Gregory J.; and grandsons Lukas J. and Tucker L. Read his entire obituary at https://www.pressherald.com/2021/04/25/obituarykeith-godwin-willoughby/

Performing on the Grange Hall stage

The Grange Hall was where many townspeople went on stage for the first time. I was about five when I sang "Bicycle Built for Two" with my cousin Robert in a variety show.

In 1947 Flora Abbott wrote in her newspaper column about a Christmas show put on to raise funds for the fire department. Unfortunately to us today, it was a minstrel show, complete with joking endmen: Bud Hamlin, Haynes Noyes, Wallace McDaniels, Junior Hamlin, Oscar Andrews and Bill Haynes. The accompanist was Ruth Haynes Chute, and the stage manager was Glenn, her husband of two months.

Pianist Ruth Chute at Grange, ca. 1996

Chorus members were Norris and Dorothy Scribner; Ann and Betty Pike; Phyllis Winslow; Evelyn Kimball; Carrie Haynes; Jane Sanderson; Mildred, Bertha and Elizabeth McAlister; Marie Marr; Stanley Hamlin; and various soloists.

Seventeen-year-old Happy Hamlin sang a solo, "Sylvia," followed by her soon-to-be-husband Wallace McDaniels, singing, "I Love the Ladies." Bill Haynes sang, "Wal, I Swan" and his new wife Diane sang, "You Do." Kathleen Scribner tap danced to "Little Grass Shack" and "Millie" Noyes did a clog dance to "Darktown Strutters' Ball."

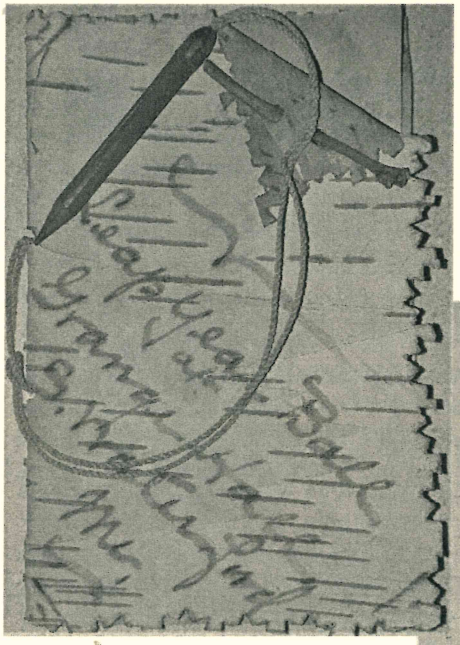
I was not even a twinkle in my father's eye at that time, but what I wouldn't give to see my Grampa Harry Haynes perform "Sioux City [Sue]," or see the "pretty girls" (Ann Marr, Mary Andrews, Happy Hamlin, Pat Hamlin and Trudy Hamlin) in "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

I cannot imagine who was in the audience, as the whole town seems to have been in the show! Most of these people are gone now but what fun it would be to see another Grange variety show! N.M.

From Our Files

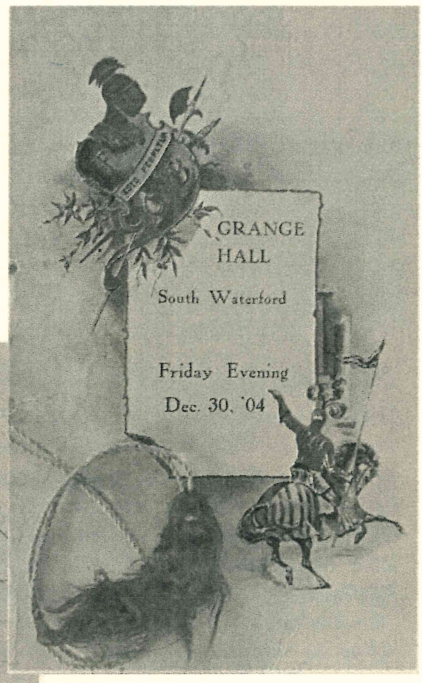
Dance Cards

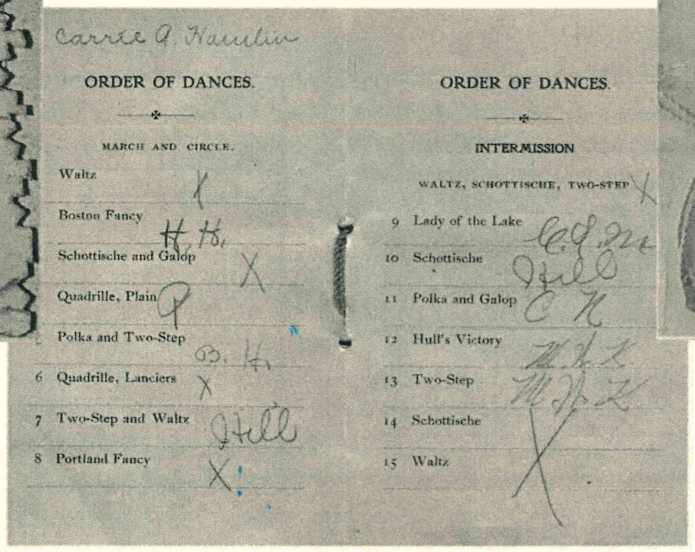
Below is a beautifully preserved, homemade, birch bark dance card for the Leap Year Ball at South Waterford Grange Hall on January 31, 1908. Note the attached pencil.



At center is the order of dances from Carrie Hamlin's 1904 dance card. Note the initials H. H. on the Boston Fancy. [Harry Haynes became her husband a few years later!]

At right is the front of Carrie's 1904 dance card.





Carrie A. Hamlin

ORDER OF DANCES.

MARCH AND CIRCLE.

Waltz X
Boston Fancy H. H.
Schottische and Galop X
Quadrille, Plain Q
Polka and Two-Step B. H.
6 Quadrille, Lanciers X
7 Two-Step and Waltz Hall
8 Portland Fancy X

ORDER OF DANCES.

INTERMISSION

WALTZ, SCHOTTISCHE, TWO-STEP X
9 Lady of the Lake
10 Schottische
11 Polka and Galop
12 Hull's Victory
13 Two-Step
14 Schottische
15 Waltz X

Waterford Historical Society
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Waterford ME 04088