

Hebron Historical Society Gazette

Hebron, NH

Volume 10, No. 2, July 2012

www.HebronHistSoc.org

\$1.00 dollar



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Kathy Begor, Bill and Willa
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Layout: Collins Publishing

Printer: Venture Print
Plymouth, NH

Items for Publication should
be sent to

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FARMER'S: ENCOMPASSING THE YEAR'S 1838 - 1917

By Barbara Brooks

Travel back and follow me as we spend a year with a farmer and his family in these unsettled, desolate and challenging lands where Hebron, Groton and Rumney are growing. Farming is the mainstay of the existence but greatly subsidized by orchards and forestry.

Fall is the time for threshing Indian wheat, and picking cranberries. The corn must be shucked and as we do not waste anything, we often weave mats from the corn husks. Our apple crop provides the fruit for juice, drying and applesauce. When we dry the apples we can make wonderful dried apple 'people'.

Town Meetings will draw neighbors together while otherwise our loneliness is broken with family members coming to visit. Travel from Hebron, Groton, Bristol or other towns is mostly done on horseback. We are fortunate enough to have a buggy, but many walk those long and lonely miles. Livestock auctions are very popular and well attended probably as much for the sociability as the need for us to replenish our stock.

Of course, chores are never done with each season claiming its own. October is the time to get in the last of the vegetables: corn, potatoes, turnips, pumpkins and carrots. The chore of getting these dug, pulled or gathered not only keeps us busy but also well fed! If we are too overwhelmed, especially with the mounds of potatoes we might hire someone to help. Our helper is grateful to earn .84 CENTS a day! Farm buildings always need repair or we need to build a shed for that new calf. Off to the lumber mills in our wagon to Rumney or Groton for our boards.

While the Fall weather holds, we visit our neighbors or welcome those that travel to see us and with such great distances we offer an overnight stay. Gathering in the evenings with our guests or neighbors we will often have a sing-a-long, play music with our drums, piccolos, the occasional piano or organ, harp, fiddle or violin. On occasion, we are fortunate to have a traveling photographer stop by and make a 'likeness'. Today we appreciate having those pictures that capture so much of our lives at that time. Another frequent visitor was the local doctor who would take care of those broken bones (there were many!) cuts, burns, etc.

Most of us keep a few chickens and, of course, a cow for milk, cheese and plenty of sweet butter. The chickens provide meat, eggs AND feathers for feather beds. With all of these animals they always provided us with something to take to a sick or needy neighbor.

Snows in December with sleigh rides provide us not only with amusement but the necessary transportation to the post office or store. The Post Office we have is in our neighbor's home but it does change location frequently and can sometimes be in the store. Most of us keep at least one hog and when it comes time for the slaughter, we have made as many as 43 pounds of lard.

Lumbering is a big business with so many different types of wood to be had. The fir trees are used to make sap buckets and sugar tubs, while the ash and hemlock barks are

(Continued on page 2)

sold as needed. The men in our family work long days in the woods until blustering snowstorms keep them inside. Making the maple sap tubs serves them as a welcome chore to ready for the spring as well as bring in some money from their sales."Breaking out" is what we say when we can finally dig out from the deep snow and drifts.

We might note that on November 7th, 1864 there was a Presidential election. Records for the vote in Groton show that 74 votes were cast for Lincoln and 86 for McClelland. Little did we know that the following April of 1865 we would receive news of the assassination President Abraham Lincoln. During this time period, there were many elections held and most residents made that extra effort to vote.

Spring is maple sugaring time and we had plenty of trees to tap. Making syrup, maple sugar cakes, fudge and molasses are all made by most of us. "Oyster suppers" are very popular with 'maple syrup on snow' a delicious treat for dessert. Some of us farmers keep oxen which help with logging and the sap collecting. With all of these animals there is bound to be a need to dispose of the manure, hence our prolific gardens!

The women in our family are kept as busy as the men with all the washing, ironing and mending we have to do. Remember too, that we have to heat the flat irons on our stoves for the ironing. Canning or 'putting up' most of our vegetables is a big job but a rewarding one when the winter storms come. Making applesauce, jellies, apple butter, butter and cheese are all part of a days work. By taking the wheat to a grist mill we get flour to make pies from those delicious blueberries and cranberries we picked. Gathering butternuts is a pleasant way for us to spend an afternoon. I am lucky as I have a spinning wheel to turn the wool into yarn and can do a lot of knitting.

There is always mowing to be done in the summer and early fall. Our hay is sold but not for much for the work involved. Last week we sold 557 pounds and were paid \$6.00! We have been to the mica mine in Groton to get mica for the oven window in our stove. With visitors we made an outing of going to the gold mine in Wentworth. Our family is very creative and thrifty making many of our own tools from tin or pewter and fence posts from our woods. Most of our property walls are made of stone (which we admire today). House shingles are made from wood in our forest. Wildlife provides our family a variety of game to be cooked for our table as well as fish from the lake and many ponds that are within easy reach of our farm. When need be, we even create our own medicinal syrups and INK!

Our church provides opportunities to gather for service and religious speakers. The Town House provides space for many different activities such as a dancing school, elections, dramatic plays or concerts. These activities provide much needed social opportunities for us.

During this period of our history we saw Halley's Comet, our first automobile and telephone.

We also saw our first balloon ascension at the Plymouth County Fair.

Of interest during my research I found a report of 12 earthquakes during this time period of 1838 – 1910 without ANY substantial damage being reported in this area. The month with most quakes was June 1871 – 1887 and 1891.

As we reflect on these times we realize that although there was much work for each and every day there was also time for entertainment and quality time was made for family and friends.

Information taken from journals written by Cyrus Blood b. May 9, 1838 d. April 9, 1917

Special thanks to Louise Traunstein, of the Groton Historical Society

Camp Onaway's First 100 years – Part 3

Families all have stories about the difficulty of obtaining staples such as flour and sugar, and you can find war time cookbook recipes that make do without certain items or use substitution. We were so fortunate because Mrs. Hollister had some very good New York connections for staples like flour and sugar. Butter was hard to come by, but a new substitution called Oleo margarine was used and continued to be used after the war. Because it was hard to buy beef and pork, Mrs. Hollister would drive her Dodge touring car around to the local farms to buy what she could, including chicken, eggs and any vegetables. Amazingly, the cook at this time, Sara Long, still baked a cake and served it with ice cream for each camper's birthday, as well as Sunday chicken dinners.

We are so fortunate to have the original descriptive logs from this period revealing how Mrs. Hollister's planning was able to counter the campers' anxieties about the war with patriotic activities that made everyone feel they were aiding the war effort. I remember the older girls would take campstools and sewing materials and walk up the road to the Youngman farm which was across the road from Camp Mowglis. Mrs. Youngman held Red Cross meetings, and the girls would make handkerchiefs and towels for the troops. There are notations in the logs that on occasion ice cream was served as a treat. So many Red Cross meetings held in homes across the country were knitting, sewing or rolling bandages for the troops, so this made our Onaway girls feel very proud of their contributions,

There were after supper drills, lasting ten minutes, led by two campers. Daylight savings time was not in existence at this time so, after drill, the girls would take their "bug lights" to the Rock at sunset to be used for the dark walk back to

camp after the evening program concluded. Included in the evening songs at the rock, as the sun set, were war time songs such as "It's a Long Long Trail to Tipperary", "K-K-K-Katy", "You're a Grand Old Flag", "There's a Long Long Trail A Winding", "Keep the Home Fires Burning". After campfire rock singing, about 8:30 pm, a lantern was hoisted to the top of the flag pole signaling that all was well. All our thoughts and prayers were going out to loved ones in the dark, quiet camp night. At 7:30 AM, the lantern which had shown brightly through the night was lowered, and the flag was raised as the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. As the lower field was all meadow and wildflowers, I'm sure that the beacon of light from the flag pole was a symbol of hope to all who saw it lit as they passed by in the dark of night.

There were many aspects of camp that were related to the war; the drills, songs and even two basketball teams named "The Army" and "The Navy", providing a release for the girls to escape their war fears. There was a baseball game at Camp Newfound in Bristol, and even with a loss, Team Onaway enjoyed the excellent refreshments and came home singing "Camp Onaway, We're coming back to you." Although Mr. Hollister only had time to visit camp twice during this camp season, Mrs. Hollister never wavered in motivating and nurturing her girls and she gained the endearment as "our second mother." There was a camp picnic at Crescent Beach; the girls went by steamboat while Mrs. Hollister drove her faithful Dodge carrying their lunch basket. After swimming and lunch with a marshmallow roast, everyone walked to Goose Pond, stopped to visit Camp Newfound and tired, but happy, took the steamboat back to camp.

As I look back on the early days, I remember this era was the birth of several songs that I have heard repeated by all my girls, passed from generation to generation. I heard these songs sung with gusto and jubilation, by young and old alike, at the Centennial Celebration. I hear "Camp Onaway, we're coming back to you" whenever my campers are returning, but I loved it when I heard voices lifted in song as small groups of returning alumni were coming up the hill to register for my birthday celebration last August. Whenever the girls leave camp, they sing "As Onaway Goes Marching Along", and the last night of awards walking to campfire rock, I hear "Let's All Give Three Cheers for Old Onaway".

One of my favorite songs is "When You come to the end of an Onaway Day". It was adopted from a popular song entitled a "A Perfect Day" by Carrie Jacobs-Bond. It was a song loved by the WWI troops she played for. The adapted Onaway words are beautiful. Picture a perfect lake sunset and as the last ray sinks behind the mountains leaving a magical glow, in the quiet of the coming night you hear the lapping of the water on the rocky shore, the breeze blowing gently through the pines – the girls all rise to their feet singing... "To stand in the fires last rays, and you sing the song you love the best, it's the end of a perfect day." This song is followed by "Onaway, My Onaway". The words were written by a 1913 camper Tertia Park to the tune of "O Tannenbaum". What joy to hear these songs ringing through the years and, hopefully, continuing to do so through the next hundred years.

Through the twenties, with continued hard work and camp and program improvements, Onaway expanded and flourished and its reputation passed from family to family. In 1924, Porter Sargent published the first edition of "Handbook of Summer Camps". Pasquaney and Mowglis had full pages; however, Onaway had only a short entry. After fourteen years of leasing, Mrs. Hollister bought Onaway's 45 acres from her cousin Elizabeth Wellington in 1925.

With the growth of camp, additional cabins were built and cabin groups were established. I heard something called electricity was coming down the Pike and in 1927 electricity came to Onaway. Goodness, what excitement, I would no longer have to worry about accidents with kerosene lamps and lanterns. I had a few flush toilets, but most of the girls used outhouses behind their cabin groups. They still had to take baths in the lake with their clothes on. We still had drinking water from our well, pumped by hand, and everyone drank out of the one tin cup.

This year, 1927, a special log cabin was built for returning alumnae. It was the idea of a counselor named Margaret Stiles who had been at Onaway since 1918 (later a Director from 1944-1966). Fundraising paid for this wonderful cabin that was built of spruce logs with heavy bark sheets used for roofing. It had a large porch with a big stone fireplace, a kitchen, dining room and bedroom. You could sit on the porch and watch the sunsets and see Hebron village in the distance.

The girls continued to use rail service into Bristol where Mr. Smith from Hillside Inn picked them up in one of his touring cars, driving to camp on the dirt roads.

Due to camp growth, it was decided to initiate daily activity groups, sorted by age. Each was given a name; i.e., Chippies, Beavers, Mohawks, etc. With some later additions, the names of these groups still exist today. The waterfront program expanded due to Miss Stiles who had been hired as a swimming counselor through a 1918 NY Times ad. Before the 1960's, when formal Red Cross classes were instituted, swimmers were put into groups and girls were tested before moving to the next group. Diving floats were added, as were rowboats and canoes for trips.

After buying the camp property, Mrs. Hollister added a second tennis court which led to the start of regular tennis classes. Basketball continued to be a popular afternoon sport, and to encourage baseball, the lower field was improved. Occasionally, Onaway played another neighboring camp in a sports event. When Camp Buena and its director, from East Union, Maine arrived wearing shorts, everyone was shocked. Mrs. Hollister was in a dress with sensible shoes and the girls in bloomers with black stockings. Oh my, fashion was changing! After being soundly defeated, the idea of instituting some type of competitive sports within camp was debated. In 1932, The Brown Eagles and Chippies played baseball against the White Eagles and Chippies and from that time to the present, the camp is divided into Brown & White Teams. Each summer there is ongoing friendly competition. To encourage sports, silver trophy cups with engraved camper names were awarded,

but were replaced several years later by white felt patches which are still used today.

Due to Miss Stiles urging, the camp trip program became more challenging, involving more overnight and canoe trips even if they were still around the lake. To support more challenging trips, in 1928, I saw this very big car drive up the driveway. It was called a REO Speed Wagon, and it could carry 16 campers. Everyone was excited that Aggie, our nickname for the REO, was here except maybe the campers that had to sit in the back trying not to smell the fumes or the poor counselors who had to drive her. Aggie was retired in the late 40's. Mrs. Hollister added an extra wood bodied station wagon that could take extra campers and gear enabling the trip program to grow with camping, canoeing and hiking trips expanded to the White Mountains and the Connecticut River.

Sundays remained the most constant; swimming in the morning followed by a huge lunch with homemade ice cream and candy, rest and writing hour, and chapel. The "Onaway Prayer" written in 1934 by an Onaway camper became part of chapel that continues to this day. Chapel was followed by laundry, walking across the road to Mrs. Nutting's who returned clean starched clothes the next week. Mrs. Nutting always kept a large jar of NECCO wafers for children, so I'm sure she always gave them out when the girls brought their laundry. On Sunday evenings, baked beans and brown bread were eaten on the rock, if the weather was nice. After singing and final circle as the sunset – it was the end of a perfect day.

Mrs. Hollister had a two room cabin built halfway up the hill towards the Birch and Hilltop cabin groups. She moved from her Woodland Hall apartment and lived in this cabin until the late 1920's. I could see she felt very comfortable with the leadership of her senior staff, Miss Frost and Miss Stiles, because she built a lovely cabin on the shore, close by the beach. Mrs. Hollister was still aware of every movement of camp, but here she could feed and protect her fish by the shoreline and relax just a bit.

I have to tell you about a lovely Irish lass, Mary McCarthy, who came to camp in 1920 as a cook's assistant and became the master cook and meal planner for the camp until 1943. She was talented and loyal and very compassionate about serving cocoa and cookies late at night to the cold, wet campers returning from miserable wet trips. She married Forrest Adams, who was a successful farmer from Bristol. Mary worked in a Bristol manufacturing plant during the winter but returned to Onaway each summer.

And, I have to tell you about Archie Tyler's "Famous Fudge". In 1920, Archie opened a little store, right across the road from Camp Pasquaney. It was said Archie's fudge was served at President Harding's inauguration. It was also said that sometimes Mrs. Hollister would allow the girls to canoe down the lake to Archie's. In 1926, Pasquaney purchased the store and named it the Mary Lamb which generation after generation of Onaway girls still talk about. Mysteriously, Archie disappeared with his fudge recipe, but Wilson and Nelson Adams made their fudge and also served lunch sandwiches, teas and snacks. The Mary Lamb was open to tourists and Pasquaney, Mowglis and Onaway counselors. Onaway girls had private times to go, but if they encountered men, they were strictly instructed to ignore them with their eyes cast downwards. What the Mary Lamb and I could tell you of the summer romances that started at this place!!

If you have a chance to visit the Pasquaney or Onaway Camps, look for a bronze plaque cast by artist George H. Borst, to honor the close connection between these camps and the two incredible, beloved, people Mr. Ned and Mrs. Hollister.

I know most of you are wondering about the Great Depression and the years following and how Onaway was affected. Surprisingly, camp remained very strong during the depression, although the normal enrollment of 60 girls dropped to 50 at times, reflecting the economic climate of the times. Few people realize that the Depression was felt more in cities than in rural areas where life was more self-sufficient and many aspects of life were not entirely affected.

By the mid 30's, Mrs. Hollister was 68 years old. She was not only the founder of Onaway, but had been its director for a quarter of a century, and she was now planning the continuation of Onaway under the strong leadership of Miss Frost, her first counselor and Miss Stiles, another long time counselor. Mrs. Hollister's love for Onaway was as strong as her love for her son Henry, and she had nurtured and provided a strong foundation for both. Throughout her life she would continue to be a part of Onaway, mentoring and ensuring that the strength of her ideals, values and traditions would be continued, and I can tell you that, after 100 years, they continue with enduring strength.

I am looking forward to finishing up my amazing story and telling you about my 100th birthday in the next Gazette issue.

Willa and Bill Lucarelli would like to acknowledge as a reference source for this article, the new book written by Helen Stokes Graven, author of "Let Her Strong and Ageless Be", the history of Camp Onaway. The Author was an Onaway camper, counselor, assistant director and one of the original members of Onaway's Board of Trustees. Also a special thanks to Kathy Begor, Barbara Brooks and Bobby Brooks for proof reading.

Plymouth's Boy Scout Statue and Hebron by Howard Oedel

How many times, while driving errands in Plymouth have we passed by the Boy Scout statue on the Common, with its accompanying drinking fountain and a granite "pot hole" for birds and dogs?

The constant flow of fresh water was provided by the "new" reservoir on "the College Road". Plymouth's present water system now provides ample water for thirsty folks, as well as their dogs and feathered friends – and squirrels!

The boy who posed as the Boy Scout for the statue when he was thirteen years old, is nonagenarian Harold A. Webster, Jr. who presently lives in Holderness.

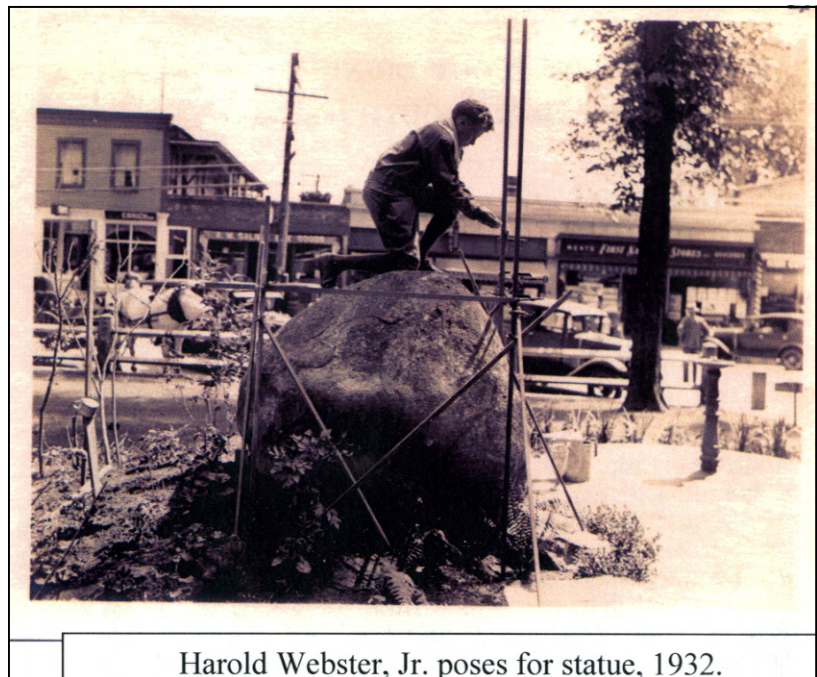
There is an important Hebron connection with the Boy Scout statue. The sculptor, George Borst of Wayne Pennsylvania, was a summer resident at the Hillside Inn. He stayed at what I always called The Thistle Cottage on the lake side of Mayhew Turnpike, north of the inn itself.

For nearly a whole summer from time to time, Harold posed in his scout uniform for the sculptor at his residence in Hebron. "Pretty boring" is his recollection.

During the winter of 1933, back in Pennsylvania, George Borst, the sculptor, got another boy to pose nude for the finishing touches to the statue.

I asked Harold if he ever posed nude!

"I should say not!" said Harold. Our interview ended abruptly! But it was a real treat speak with the Boy Scout himself, some 80 years after the statue was erected on Plymouth Common.



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July 6 - Pot Luck with Thomas Hubka presenting "**Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn**", connected farmhouses of New England.
Sep. 15, HHS Annual Meeting and Pot Luck with Ron Collins presenting "**Hebron names—where they came from**"

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