

# HARTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2013

*September is here, and with it the peak of hurricane season. Seventy-five years ago, on September 21<sup>st</sup>, Hartland was hit with the grand-daddy of all hurricanes. These were different times and yet the inconveniences weren't so different from what we would endure today. I remember as a young child, whose grandparents lived on the river in Vermont, the tales of how far they had to drive to find a bridge that would get them to New Hampshire. This letter was written by Winifred (Mrs. Samuel) Adams who lived on the Clay Hill Rd., to her neighbors who had returned to New York just two days previously. C.Y.M.*

“Oct.2, 1938

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Bail,

You may think I am slow in letting you hear from us but each day since the Hurricane has brought all we could possibly get about, and we haven't known what to tell you. We haven't got pulled together so we know whether we are going or coming. The Hurricane hit us between 5 and 6 o'clock on the eve of Sept. 21. Before dark most of our apple trees within sight of the house were up-rooted or broken off- probably no more than 5 or 6 were left standing. Shade-trees fell across the high-way both above and below our house, and our electricity and telephone were cut off. Clarence (hired man) had chosen that time to leave at 5 P.M. for Bethel to “see his girl”, so Kendall (Mrs. Adams' son) was alone with the milking and was about half thru when his power went off. Gladys (his wife) was with him- everything was so horrible- she felt that her presence might help him some – we had no lantern and she held his flashlight while he finished the milking by hand. One silo crumpled to the ground and the cow-stable roofing blew off but still the milking went on until it was finally done. They propped the barn-doors as well as they could in the pouring rain and in the face of the most terrific wind we have ever known in this part of the country crossed the door-yard with slate from the barn – shingles from the house falling with such force that we found them later driven into the ground so hard that we women couldn't pull them out – and finally reached the house. Until about 11 o'clock the wind roared and shrieked as we trust we may never again have to hear it. Mr. Eaton (Mrs. Adams son-in-law) was working 3-11 and as soon as the trees began to fall, Mildred and Pauline (Mrs. Eaton and her daughter) came up. They were obliged to follow up the low land by the dam and back of our sugar house and so in by our front door. Ken, Gladys, Mildred and Miss Liady went out and looked about as soon as possible- some time before midnight. Fences were down and cattle everywhere – our cows in barn. Our garage shoved back 12 feet into what was the orchard, and as there was no floor the cars hadn't moved and were unhurt except for many scratches where the doors, etc. had piled on them. I went out early the

next morning and shall never forget the way everything looked to me. I picked up a few things around the lawn and went out into the road which appeared blocked both ways with trees. Most of it were only branches and easily cleaned up but two good sized maples were broken off and lay across the road just below our place. I walked on over to the brick house (Bail's) and saw it had stood firmly and looked to be o.k. The shed in back had fallen. What a short time before your car had been under it! The large fir tree near the mail-box broke off several feet up and fell on and broke off the mail-box which I brought back with me. The middle one of the three old maples this way from mail-box had the half toward your house broken off and the trunk split nearly to ground so it will have to be cut entirely. The apple trees look all right – we think they were not harmed much and no shrubs were hurt. All the corn in this region was laid flat. As yet we have had no frost and hardly any corn fields had been cut. Kendall has had a serious time keeping the cattle together with fences so broken and has had little time to look at our wood lot or yours but in hunting for a cow and calf since then, he got to the “Black Forest” and he told me to say to you that he did not wish to unduly alarm you but he told me to say to you that at least one-half of the trees there are broken or up-rooted, mostly latter. Our own wood lots are in same condition. We call them ruined. We don't know what relief, if any, will be possible for us. About 100 slate off our barns – roofing entirely off garage – which is otherwise just wrecked – ice house, and tool-house. Shingle off house so it leaked in countless places; Ken has patched the house roof splendidly,-so it is better than ever -we happened to have shingle on hand. He and Clarence have worked away at the corn, cutting some by hand and by very slow degrees getting some of it cut into the silo. The cattle hinder them greatly by getting out of the fields often. Kendall had to dress off a nice 2 year old Jersey heifer – which they found, pinned in by the fallen trees down back of Mildred's and we had to can the meat just when everything was topsy-turvey. My clothes posts were smashed and I was able to do your washing and also about two weeks of ours only very lately. We were without electricity 5 days which we thought very good. We still haven't the phone but a gang with a big outfit worked as far as your house today. They work long hours even on Sundays. Sam (Mr. Adams, Sr.) walked over but was told they wouldn't need to go inside. The telephone wires were a snarl all about here as well as where ever the Hurricane struck. Nelly & Hahnemann (Bradbury – Mrs. Adams' daughter) were unharmed though their street (White River Jct.) was filled with broken and fallen trees, many of them damaging the buildings, and so Doris' (another daughter) things could not be taken there when she was obliged to vacate her house because of high water which threatened them. On the next day – Thursday – they moved back in – a harrowing experience. We expect Hahnemann is still working on the Strafford job but with no phone, it is more than a week since we have heard from them. We were without our mail just one day. We got Rutland and local papers and a few letters all telling the same story – Sam's sister in Weathersfield – mine in Brattleboro – my brother at his cottage at Fairlee Lake – other relatives and friends – Jacobsen at Norwich for whom Hahnemann was working , you remember, had those lately repaired roofs on house and barn both badly damaged. One 80 year old neighbor across the hill back of Fairview (Daniel Webster) lost old-growth pine estimated at 1 million ft. It was all he had and the pride of his life. We believe he was offered \$10,000 for it on the stump in war time. Dean Bradley was a very heavy loser – Hoisington and Larrabee both lost their whole sugar orchards. Clarence was called home this forenoon because of the sudden death, while hunting, of his only brother – about two years younger than himself. So Kendall is alone for a few days and can do little only the “chores”. Gladys' brother and wife have been here all day – from Lebanon. We have had several relatives of Sam's and friends from Lebanon. So glad to have them all. We need company, for can't help but feel depressed. Must say Ray Spear (husband of Mrs. Adams granddaughter, Dorothy) drove here early this morn, because no telephone, to tell us Betty Ann's 6 ½ lbs arrived shortly after midnight and Dorothy and baby “doing well”. So “Sonny” has a sister.

I don't know what you will think of the length of this but my mind is still in a muddle and can only say that I hope it reaches you at an opportune time and not when you haven't a minute's time for anything. I shan't know if you put it aside for a week-end. We know you are feeling anxious. Except for

your wood-lot which we know little about – we are sure you got off remarkably easy. The shed was no good – your lawn and front shade trees are unharmed and the house was not hurt in any way that we can see. After our guests all went – Sam and I walked over today took the mail-box and laundry and found everything all right inside. I wondered about the windows leaking but found no sign of it. Ours all held, but the curtains and shades were ruined at Mildred's and at Miss Gates and much water came inside. 40ft square piece of roofing was blown off house at Miss Gates, on flat toward rear. Now I will stop and punch up the fire. It is a very cool evening. Sincerely Yours, Winifred K. Adams “

**Charles Monroe MacKenzie, con't .** *In our Spring Newsletter we entered the world of Charles MacKenzie, born in 1800 of Scottish parents, on Densmore Hill Rd. in the house now occupied by the Robert Bibbys.*

*After the death of his brother, Charles becomes extremely depressed. His mother and brother are both dead, his sister is not normal and his father depends on him in every way possible. There is a great deal of praying. Then in January of 1813 a young man from an adjoining district came to Charles and encouraged him to attend a meeting at the school house. He asked Charles to come to his house and they would go together. This man had preached at the schoolhouse two or three times and many were converted. He told of many men and women that Charles knew who had come forward for prayers. The friend was very persuasive and then the evening arrived. It was a very stormy, blustery evening and Charles's father had gone from home with the horses. The roads were very bad and blocked with snow. C.Y.M. “but my mind was on the appointment, to go to meet my friend, and go to the Meeting. I hastened and did up the chores about the house, and barns, so that my Father would not find no fault when he returned home, if I were absent. There was a man to work for my father in his Distillery who had a horse which my father was keeping for him, in his stable, I went and asked him for the loan of him to go to the Meeting, he at first refused me, the request saying that he did not want his horse to go out in such a stormy night and stand around in the cold. I told him, the Capt Camell (this was Capt. Robert Campbell) was an old Friend of my Fathers, and the meeting was at his school House, and he had a good barn, and Stable room a plenty and I would put up his horse, and feed him, if he wants. Well he said, if I would give him 4 quarts of oats, and take his blanket and put on him when I got there I might take him. “The roads were bad and the meeting had been moved to a nearby house. However, the house became so full that it was moved back to the school. All the chairs and benches had to be returned to the school in order to seat everyone. There was much singing and praying. The congregants were encouraged to pray for forgiveness of their sins that they may enter the kingdom of heaven when the time was right. Charles experienced a strong religious conversion that enabled him to deal with his depression, and it was a turning point in his life. His despondency left him and he turned even more to religion to sustain him until he became an older teenager.*

“Charles married Ann Hawkins of Bridgewater on April 25, 1825. After he was engaged to be married he was one day cutting wood in the woods with another young man when by an accident the young mans axe nearly severed grandfather’s left wrist. (*we have moved on to a different writer. C.Y.M.*) He came near to bleeding to death, and that hand was crippled, the fingers being partly closed, and perfectly stiff the rest of his life. He feared after being cripple his fiancé would not marry him but she did. They lived several years in Vermont (I think their home was near Woodstock) Four children were born there. Charles Hawkins, George, who lived only a little over a month, Richard and Laura. They moved to Adrian, Mich. where Joseph was born. Later they moved to a farm near the north end of Devils Lake. Here Mr. MacKenzie did farming and cooper work. Travelers were often entertained over night in their home. So, for the sake of privacy and convenience a bed was set up in the corner of the cooper shop here Samuel Duncan was born Sept. 10, 1837. Two more children were born on this farm Julia E. who lived exactly 3 years and Francis A. The same year that Francis was born, they moved to West Maumee St., Adrian, to what has since been known as the old MacKenzie homestead. Here he engaged in the business of making brick and tile and doing some farming on the side. Here Ellen was born in 1845.

He gave the land for the west side of his street and also donated the land for the school at the corner of Maumee and MacKenzie St.

As a young man he had been a member and petty officer in the Vermont State troops. When the Civil War was on he enlisted and drilled a company of men known as the Silver Grays. They were turned over to the government and Grandfather was afterwards known as Captain MacKenzie, but on account of his crippled hand he was not allowed to enter the service. Mrs. Ann MacKenzie (grandmother) choked to death while eating dinner, March 15, 1873. Charles MacKenzie died as a result of a fall sustained on the stairs of a Chicago hotel which bro’t on softening of the brain. He was a sufferer from this for quite a time. He died Nov. 13, 1873.”

*The great majority of the people who write to us for information have stories that follow this same vein. Generally, the families came to this country from England (or in this case, Scotland), and spent some amount of time in Mass. or Conn. before settling in Vermont. After a few generations, they strike out for the mid-west... Better faming, more room for the large families. Some continue on to the west coast and then they write to us. Recent inquires have come from Alaska and Vancouver, B.C. They want pictures of gravestones, houses, any information that we may have to help them fill out the picture of the history of the family. A lucky few get to come and visit and it is always fun to help them with their quest. C.Y.M.*

## A Lucia Webster letter

*Everyone enjoys our letters written in 1943 by Lucia Webster to her husband Daniel after his death, as she relives their life together. C.Y.M.*

August 9, 1943

Dear Dan,

This afternoon I have been looking at our book of the Trip. Do you remember how every year since we went west we have followed our course of four years ago thru the days as we lived them then?

Just four years ago today we went thru the Gates of the Mountains. It was a cool day, you remember. I was the only one of us all who realized that a wool dress was the only comfortable thing to wear, -that and a good warm coat. I knew there would be wind on the water and there was wind and a merciless, pelting rain.

The funny, important, elderly "captain" who took us on the fifteen-mile launch trip told wonderful stories of the geological formation of the canyon thru which the Missouri flows, of the height of rock above us, and of Lewis' encampment when he and Clark separated, each to find a passage thru the mountains on the way back east. You felt you had never seen anything so wonderful nor so lovely before and even after we were home that day seemed to you almost the high spot in our adventure.

Truly the setting out for the west. For lands we had never seen but often read and dreamed of, was your greatest undertaking till you set out on the great adventure seventeen weeks ago tomorrow.

Children and grandchildren gathered at Windsor to see us off and, to your delight, Edwin drove Lucius' Stebbins' family to Springfield to say good bye. So we were sent gaily on our way for nineteen happy days. You liked the other seventeen who went with us. - farmers mostly - all from New England. You liked the comfort of the train - you were lost in the big hotels - you wished you could stop longer to look at the crops - you loved Mt. Rainier and were awed by the Grand Canyon and were very tired the days we spent at Treasure Island, San Francisco's huge worlds fair, and at New York's "World of Tomorrow" - but the thing you went for, a sight of the redwoods, left you hungry for more.

Do you remember the day we decided on the trip? In 1938 there had been a hurricane that roared thru our forest and when it stopped half of our beautiful pines were broken off or uprooted. We took the Governments offer to buy the logs we could deliver at the lumber yard near the station and had almost made a deal with Leslie Lyman for hauling them when Millard White telephoned that his price would be much cheaper. We were delighted and reckoned how many hundred dollars it would save us. There were several people in the room and I exclaimed, "We'll use that to go out and see the big trees" and you answered, "Yes, we will"

Till we started I was in daily fear that you would refuse to go and so when we had decided to go with a group sponsored by the New England Homestead, I sent the money for our reservations long before it was necessary.

I shall never forget how happy you looked when you stood in front of the first redwood we saw and gazed up at its great height. It had been the thing you had always wanted since you were a boy - to see the big trees - and you were not disappointed in them.

On of my most precious photographs is of you standing near the largest tree we saw and one of my greatest satisfactions is that the money our trees brought could give you this trip. For your pine trees had always been very dear to you. There was not a one you did not know and their loss had been a sad blow.

The joy of the trip staid with you till the last. There were calls after we came home from members of the party who lived not too far away and letters from others.....Four years ago tomorrow we saw Mt. Rainier. Do you remember how cold the night was close by the glacier and how marvelous the sunrise was early the next morning? No sight in this world could ever be lovelier. I wonder if you remember it. "

## Society News

*Jane Beck will be with us on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> at 2 P.M. at the Library.*

*Some of you may not know that we had a mis communication at our annual meeting in May and Jane arrived after we had disbanded. She has agreed to come again and I hope we will have a good crowd to enjoy her presentation on Alex Turner as told by his daughter, Daisy. Whit and I enjoyed lunch Monday at a restaurant behind the Grafton Inn, and had a pleasant talk with the owner who directed us to Turner Hill Rd. We drove up the road, found a cellar hole and a mountain bike path that goes to the site of the Turner home. We also visited the Rockingham Meeting House which neither of us had seen before. I promised to spread the word about what a wonderful spot that is to visit.*

*The generous additions to your dues make it possible for us to keep these letters coming as well as the series being done by Les Motschman on the Civil War. I hope I am not missing anyone with my Big Thank Yous! Barbara Spear, Cathryn Meecham, Ildolyn Ahearn, Jay Barrett, Charles Cushman, Ann and Carl Comstock, Gary and Paula Staples, Bob and Diane Bibby, Peter Welsh, Bob and Rosemary Morancy, Emily Silver, Pierre Fournier and Richard Waddell, David and Cindy Hale, Richard and Barbara Taylor, Robert and Elaine Ambrose, Deborah Luquis, George and Nancy Smith, Elizabeth Graham, Elizabeth Haartz, Marion Kenyon, Roger and Eleanor Shepard, Beverly Lasure.. On this subject. If you have a "bill" with this letter then my records show that we have not received your dues for this year. I can be wrong. Please let me know if I am, but if I'm right, I do hope you will continue your membership with us.*

*We also receive wonderful "things". To name a few: from Rosemary Morancy, MacKenzie-Knight family C.D. Steve Howard, C.D. "cutting and removal of trees at Center of Town Cemetery" and photos of culvert where bear attack took place, Lee Hood, Post card of N. Hartland Church, John Hammond, Jazez H. Hammonds Civil War letters, Book return box made by James Bowers for library while in Memorial Building. Donated by Martha McGlinn. Marion Rogers Howard gave us Sims, Rogers and Rodgers genealogy, 2 Civil War camp pictures, family photos, all copies. Earl Lyman donated Analdo English's instruments and polyphase slide rule. I will catch up on some more of our gifts in the next letter. Meanwhile, I hope to see you all on the 29<sup>th</sup>.*

*Carol Mowry, President*