



# Hartford Historical Society

The Garipay House • 1461 Maple Street  
Hartford Village, Vermont 05047

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD • WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER

Volume 15, No. 5

SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May 2003

## May Meeting

**Hartford Historical Society**

May Meeting

Special Guest Royal Houghton

will show the video:

**RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAR -  
A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF THE CIVIL WAR**

BY HENRY H HOUGHTON

Dunham Hill Woodstock, Vermont

who proudly served in Company K

3rd Vermont Regiment

1862-1865. The Video is narrated

and directed by

Walter Houghton, produced by Jeff Ford

**Wednesday May 14, 2003**

at 7:00 pm at the Greater Hartford

Church of Christ

1721 Maple Street, Route 14

Hartford, Vermont

*Free! - All Welcome!*

On May 14, 2003, meeting of the Hartford Historical Society, to be held at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Royal Houghton of Ascutney will present a video recalling the experiences of his great grandfather, Henry H. Houghton, a Vermont soldier who fought in the Civil War. The photographs we will see come from family members, the Smithsonian, and others taken by Royal's nephew who visited all the battle sites and took pictures.

Henry Houghton's story, originally published in the Vermont Historical Society Magazine in 1973, is compiled from his diary, personal letters and other memorabilia. He enlisted in Company F, the West Hartford Company, but was transferred to Company K, 3rd Vermont Regiment of the Montpelier Company. Between 1862 and 1865, he fought in nineteen Civil War battles.

Mr. Houghton was born on the family farm on Dunham Hill in Woodstock, and after the war he returned there. He died at the Old Soldiers Home in Bennington.

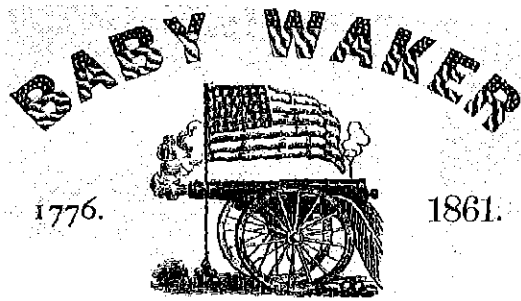
After the program there will be a brief business meeting followed by the election of officers

**Elections:** Our current officers have graciously agreed to run again, with the exception of Norman Lyman, who will be resigning due to health reasons. Noel & Eva Vincent will be nominated for the Board as co-directors. Nominations, of course, will be welcome from the floor.

Betty Mills, who has been our Membership Chairman for many years, has announced she is also resigning, effective immediately due to health reasons. This job does require a person with computer access. Please, if you know of anyone who would be interested in this crucial position, please contact a Board Member.

We wish to extend our thanks to Norman Lyman and Betty Mills for their years of invaluable service to The Hartford Historical Society.

# Civil War Letters



Baby Waker 1776 1861  
Headquarters Co F 3rd Regt Co  
Camp Griffin November 11th 1861

Friend Berkley

I will take this opportunity to write you a few lines to let you know how I enjoy soldier's life. I am well and enjoying good health and like first rate. I am somewhat fleshier that I was last summer my weight now is 155 lbs which makes me considerable big in the lower extremities of the bowels. This is not much such (some missing?) a country as I supposed it was when I started from Vermont. It is half or more woods and there is about as many hills here as there although not so steep, but we shall not stay here much longer as we have had marching orders for Fort Monroe and probably shall start within a week.

I should like to be in Vermont a week and go hunting with you, kill a few bears, etc. but Berk I want you should come out here with us. Our Ord Sergeant Phillip V. Thomas of White River has gone home to get some recruits for the regiment. and I think you and John had better come out here with him and enlist into this company.

Give my love to all the pretty girls you see and be sure and kiss them once for me when you kiss them for kissing and cuddling are some things we do not get much of here. When you receive this just write and let me know how you and the rest of the So Pomfret (can't decipher) get along.

From your friend,  
Edgar Ordway  
PS Direct to  
Co F 3rd Regt  
Vt Volunteers  
Washington DC  
excuse bad writing  
and all mistakes.  
Write soon, E. Ordway

Fort Monroe  
May 29 '61



Hartford VT Civil War Memorial

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## Notices

- **Upcoming Coffee Breaks over July 4th weekend** - we'll need baked goods and helpers [Peggy, Fred or Dot can give you details]
- **VERMONT HISTORY EXPO 2003 June 21 - 22** - Discount tickets are available to Society Members at \$5.00 [regular price is \$7.00]. They will be good for one day only - either Saturday OR Sunday. If you'd like some, please get your money to Pat by May 27th. If you are willing to help sit at our booth for 2 or more hours, your admission is free - please let Pat Stark know if you can help us out with this. (295-3077 M-F 9-4) We will be putting together an exhibit on the filming of Way Down East here in Hartford. If anyone wants to help please contact Pat [295-3077 M-F 9-4]
- We are still in hopes of finding someone to **help us put together our loom for display**. If anyone can help with this project [muscle & time are needed] please contact Pat or one of the Directors. Thanks
- **PHOTOGRAPH PROJECT:** Our new scanner/printer has been hard at work since it's purchase. Pat has started to scan our photograph collection - the Fellows Collection, the Stereopticon Collection and the Events, Parades & Monuments Photos are completed. If anyone would like to help with this project [it's easy to do - just time consuming] contact Pat. The Ink Cartridges are quite expensive so if anyone would like to make a special donation toward this project of making our photographs more accessible it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

(Civil War Letters Continued)

Brother Bark

I take my pen this afternoon to write you a few lines to let you know that I am still alive and enjoying myself as well as could be expected in the place I am in situated it is one of the finest places that I ever saw it is as warm here now as July in VT. Corn is from 8-12 in high. Apples are as big as Eng Walnuts Figs almost grown Everything is as far along here as your place the Middle of July I don't suppose they is any need of my Writing anything about war for you hear more than we I dare say Norfock is only 15 miles from us and they is over 20000 Sothrn Troops there Our men of War blowed a fort up last Friday Saturday and Sunday the enemy erected two miles from our fort six mounted every cannon they had. One Iron bar hit our Vessel Harriett --anned but did not hurt anyone don't know how many was killed in the fort Our Navy take a Vessel or two every day from the Southerners they was 520 Troops from NY arrived here the 22

Gen Bulter was here today says he shall be here this week with 12000 Men I think we shall go in for the fun then if they is any in the Sothrn States the Northfield Co and ours went three miles out into Hampton Woods Monday the 19 on a skirmish saw some of the Enemy but they retreated at our approach it is stated that they is some 2000 of them in a piece of woods 2 miles of our fort we shall see about that thing this Week we go all the time now with forty Rounds of Ammunition ready for an attack our Company is all well and in good spirits with the exception of Carl Dimeck has been down but is on the gain went into fort today the Bradford Co lost one died the 18 they is one in the St Albans co they say cannot live long I have not been so well for 5 years as now I think it is good living live on Salt Meat Bread & Coffee have not tasted potatoes Butter or anything of the kind for 2 weeks They has been two Fights in our reg today and they are in the gard house now They is in this Fort over 20000 Cannon & morters the big Columbian the largest gun in the World is here Weighs 49099 our company manned two guns the 17 that weighed 15-5-69 pounds Drawed them 1/2 miles broke the rope pulling the Colonel says they never was broke before by so few men the Woodstock Co is bully of the Reg

I have written two letters to Mira have not Received any from her I wish you to see her and see if she has received them see if she is out of Money you need not tell her any thing about the money but let me know (as that I learned anything about it) a soon as you can see Mother or Mary give my Love to them tell them I will write them soon

Also your mother and Adele

Good (Radience?)

Ever your Friend

Edd B Maxham

Direction Fort Monroe Virginia

I Regiment 2 Co

care of Cap Pelton

From record of Vermont in Civil War, State Record: ?

Edwin B Maxham of Pomfret, 1st Reg B Company

9 month volunteer 1863 (/) age 23

enlited 19 Aug 1862, mustered 4 Oct 1862 (age given as 25)

Bark was Berkly Williamson. Edd's wife Mira may have been Berkly Williamson's sister.

## Quilt Raffle

This is the last chance to participate in the Quilt Raffle. We will be drawing for the lucky winner at the Annual Meeting in May. If everyone getting this newsletter could sell at least 6 tickets, it would be a big help. Thank you.

# My Heart on My Sleeve

By Alice Adams McGinnis Mireault

5th Installment Chapter 3 - 1921

## THE MINERAL SPRING

Along with the Summer Activities, Dad's struggle with poison ivy rages on. For several days at one time he is unable to get out of bed with fever and blisters on much of his body oozing the sticky fluid. Mother keeps medicated, moist packs on the most seriously affected areas. Ralph Leonard comes to carry on the farm work.

Dr. Rogers suggests, "Perhaps mineral spring water would help." So we go to Uncle Gage's Sunny Brook Farm on the Quechee road to bring home water, in milk cans, from his spring for Dad to drink and for bathing.

Have you ever visited a mineral spring? You should, if for no reason but to know the taste and smell. The thought of rotten eggs may enter your mind and you wonder, "What's so good about this putrid smelling stuff?"

However, it is said that many necessary elements for health are derived from it. When it is very cold, and especially after you've stayed with it for a while, you don't notice the taste so much. It didn't seem to do much for Dad.

## SEPTEMBER 1921--SCHOOL

**WE HAVE NEIGHBORS.** The Fox family move into the little house nearby. Mother thinks they are temporarily out of cash so this is a stopover. They are serene people. Mr. Fox looks like a parson ready to preach a sermon and Mrs. Fox acts like a good parson's wife. They have Georgie, younger than I, Barbara, my age, with blond ringlets and Hazel and Wesley, both a little older. I love them immensely and tease to go there until Mother's patience wears thin; then I pout. Dad says he can sit on my lips. Mother puts up with none of that foolishness. I straighten out or get spanked.

On the first day of school in September, Dad takes the three Foxes and me when he drives Dick to the creamery. Barbara and I are excited. Mrs. Gray is our teacher. I know her already, and we find it pretty easy -- so far. Grades I through IV are downstairs and grade V through VIII are upstairs. I already can print my name and a few words and a few numbers.

The toilets--five of them, are in a row in the basement. I observe this strange arrangement and notice a word that I don't know printed on the wall but it is only four letters and I remember them. That afternoon, at home, I have a pin and scratch those letters on the wallpaper behind the living room stove. Don't ask me why. I don't remember ever writing on the wall before.

The following day all goes well at school. The four of us walk home at the end of the school day. I see Mother coming with a cloudy expression. This is not a good indi-

cation, as I recall. Looks like trouble, but what is the matter? I'm grabbed by the arm and with considerable pressure I'm taken to the site of my sin. I quickly assume that marking the wallpaper is the problem.

But it appears that is not the case as it looks a little roughed-up there, but my word is gone. I am asked, "Where did you learn that word?" I'm very apprehensive at this point. Deep Trouble! I say, "It was on the wall in girl's basement, I don't know why I did it." Mother administers the yard stick to my bottom rather more ambitiously than necessary, I feel.

I scream too much which doesn't help my case at all. I am put firmly at the table and given bread and milk, which I don't like but today I eat and drink it. During that time Mother rings up poor Mrs. Gray and gives her a definite piece of her mind. I'm sorry for me and sorry for Mrs. Gray. I wish Mother wouldn't have these times because she's good most of the time. I'm sent to bed then, to think about it.

It is quite some time later when I finally find out what that word that begins with S and has 3 more letters means. I resolve not to copy words anymore that I don't know the meaning of, especially if I see them on girl's basement wall.

## BIG MISTAKE

School is fun. We first sing: Good Morning to you, Good morning to you, We're all in our laces, With sunshiny faces, And this is the way, To start a new day. Then we salute the flag and recite the Lord's Prayer.

Mrs. Gray leads us in doing a few exercises with our arms. She is always nice. She has two daughters and a dog named Peggie...and a husband, of course. She tells us about putting a penny on the rail and finding it after the train had passed. All flattened out. She brings one for us to see. I tell Mother about it. She said, "You can cross two pins on the rail and have a permanent + after the train presses them." Interesting.

One day I am bringing the cows down for night milking. As I cross the tracks behind them I see where the men have been working to repair the tracks. There, I see some pins (like those driven into the ties, to hold the tracks). I think, "What luck!" I carefully balance two of them on the rail. (Not easy.) After I have the cows in the barn yard I go to the house and tell Mother we will watch for the +. "Where" she asks, "did you get the pins?" "I found them where the men were working." I answer proudly.

"It's almost train time," she gasps, as she rushes out of the house. I follow. She runs as fast as she can possibly run, the train is whistling below and Mother yells to me, "Stay there." something is the matter here, I realize. When Mother reaches the track she gives those pins I had carefully balanced, a mighty kick and runs back toward

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Continued from page 4)*

me. She sits on the stone wall to rest and I go over to her. I don't understand but I know something about the pins is wrong. Mother is nearly crying.

The train passes and I wave to the engineer at the window. Mother breathes a prayer, saying, "Thank you, God." then she explains that she meant common pins that she sews with, but she knows that we've called those railroad pins--just pins-- when they are around the crossing. She understands and isn't mad. I can't tell her how sorry I am. I feel like crying but Mother doesn't like crying. She tells me that a terrible train accident could have happened. I will remember that and be sorry for Mother all of my life.

### **ALAS SAD DAY!**

The Fox family moved away! Georgie, Hazel, Wesley and especially Barbara, my buddy, have left for a new home. Our picnics in the pasture always included a small jar for each of us to pick wild strawberries or sometimes raspberries to bring home. We'd each gather a cupful or possibly two, depending on how many of the delectable red gems we ate on the spot.

The stains and flavor on our hands remained for a while as we wandered home. On chilly days when we couldn't go outside, Mrs. Fox would cut thick slabs of her giant loaves of bread for us to toast directly on the griddle of the old wood stove. We'd sit around the bare, well scrubbed oak table and smear on apple or grape jelly, lick our fingers and talk silly stuff and giggle.

### **KILTY ON A LATE SEPTEMBER DAY**

Uncle Rob takes Dad and me to South Woodstock to see Anne Bosworth Greene who owns Star Hill Pony Farm. She is a gracious lady living in a big rambling house with barn and corral across the yard. Several Shetland ponies graze on the hillside pasture.

As Mrs. Greene shows us around, one tiny brown one named Kilty tags along. Mrs. Grene loves all her ponies and calls each of them by name. From late June 'til early September she rents ponies to well-to-do summer resident families. The rest of the year they go to responsible people for their "keep."

You may guess; we come home with Kilty, with her own small bridle and Western saddle. Uncle Rob takes the back seat out of his touring car, then he and Dad lift Kilty in. She stands crosswise with me kneeling at her head all the way home.

From that time on Kilty takes me to school every day. In cold weather I stable her in the creamery's barn. When it is warm I tie her to a tree beind the school house or in the church horse sheds. One day we are late. In my haste I leave my tin lunch box (with the cut plug tobacco name in dark blue paint covering it) by the tree, so Kilty helps herself. She chews at it, gets it open and eats the sandwich and cake, leaving the paper slightly town. She knew the paper was not edible! She'd always pass up her own food for "people food."

Often at noon I saddle her up so other kids can ride her. Everyone loves Kilty. Dad presents me with my own curry-comb and brush and it is my job to take good care of her. One day I vigorously brush, Dad remarks "You'll wear Kilty's hide off pretty soon."

"I want her to shine like Jim and Ned." is my reasoning. He is amused....I can tell by the way one corner of his mouth quirks up. "She has a different coat, she's Shetland." Dad explains. He gets something to put on her brush that makes her smoother and she shines a little. He trims her black mane and she is a prize winner. Kilty and Tootie, our Scotch Collie with bright orange curly fur and wide white shirt front, are my constant companions.

### **THE ICE HOUSE**

WHEN A WINTER remains constantly cold and the river ice is thick and strong it is time to cut and store the ice for summer use.

First, Dad goes to the sawmill in Sharon for fresh sawdust. I like to go with him to walk around the edge of the tall pile, kicking up the cool, light weight stuff around my legs (and getting my boots full of it). As we drive between the high stacks of lumber we inhale the rich wood scent. Smells good! We shake out our clothes and my boots as we go home.

The river runs deep and smooth behind the library in the village, making the best spot for the ice harvest. It is also central for everyone. The initial cut is made when several men meet with their equipment. The ice is cut into squares, pulled up with heavy tongs and placed on the sleds. As each sled has a full layer of the crystalline blocks the driver takes it to his ice house. A rough wood floor is liberally covered with sawdust, a layer of ice is added, sawdust is then spread over the ice and between the pieces. This continues and side boards are added until it is deemed sufficient. Finally, a thick layer of sawdust covers the top and a heavy canvas is added. Our ice house is about 20' x 20' and rises to the eaves of the storage shed. What a refreshing place to go on a scorching summer day!

In summer, ice is added daily to the big water tub where foods and beverages are cooled in large, tightly sealed jars. There's more. Often on Sundays Mother makes a secret custard. Dad cracks up ice, adds salt to it in the freezer and cranks out a half gallon of creamy, delicious ice cream. I bring a pan and two spoons.

Dad and I are first to know whose choice of flavor it is today. I always hope a lot will cling to the dasher as he removes it and puts it in the pan. As soon as he packs the freezer to hold till serving time, we spoon up the drippings. We sit on the step spooning and smacking our lips as Tootie and Mrs. Peter, our black and white mother cat watch and wish for some. "Maybe Mother has something you can give them," Dad says. I go to get a doughnut out of the jar.

*(Continued in fall issue)*

# Hartford Historical Society

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## Upcoming Events:

Our last meeting until September:

**Wednesday, May 14, 2003**

at Greater Hartford Church of Christ  
at 7:00 pm. Talk is on the Civil War by  
Henry H. Houghton.

*Please make every effort to attend and  
support Henry and your Society's efforts.*

**Gold Star Mothers** Vermont Public Radio is putting together a program about Gold Star Mothers in Vermont from various wars. Since you all have your fingers on the pulse of your local history, we thought you might be able to help them. So- are there any Gold Star mothers living in your area? If you know of any, please contact Sandy Levesque at [Sandylev@together.net](mailto:Sandylev@together.net) Thank you for your help!

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