



# HARTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

• HARTFORD, VERMONT 05057 •

HARTFORD • QUECHEE • WEST HARTFORD  
WHITE RIVER JUNCTION • WILDER

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## *September Meeting . . .*

**WHILE THE SUN SHINES: MAKING HAY IN VERMONT 1789 - 1990** by Allen R. Yale, Jr. has just been published by the Vermont Historical Society. Mr. Yale will speak to us about researching the book, using contemporary diaries and personal accounts, as well as his own experience on his farm in Derby, VT. Financial support for his talk is provided in part by the Vermont Council on the Humanities.

**The meeting will be  
Wednesday, September 9, 7:00 P.M.  
at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ,  
Route 14, Hartford Village.**

The Lebanon, NH Historical Society will be our special guest the evening of September 9. We share a good deal of our history with Lebanon. Many of our first settlers, as well as theirs, came from Lebanon, CT. Jedidiah Dana of Lebanon designed and built in 1829 the church where we meet, as well as Wyllis Lyman's home and law office. (The brick buildings on the north side of Hartford Main Street.) There was a need for a bridge across the Connecticut between the two towns so that travellers could get to the 4th New Hampshire Turnpike, and for those in New Hampshire to use the White River Turnpike to Royalton. In April 1763 the town of Lebanon voted to open "a good skow ferry boat . . . sufficient to carry men, horses or carts. The boat was completed and launched in 1764 and was probably the only means of crossing at the junction of the rivers until Elias Lyman built the first bridge in 1804." (*SKETCH OF ELIAS LYMAN, 3rd., by Louise Homer Lyman, 1925. Gates Library*)

ALFRED T. WRIGHT, JR. (1918-1992)

We extend sympathy to Mrs. Elinor Wright and her family on the death of member Alfred T. Wright, Jr.

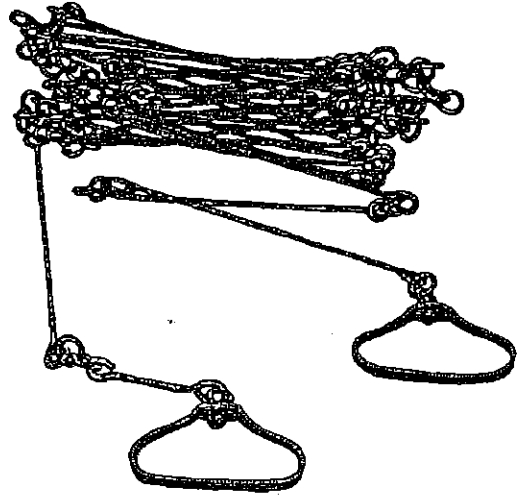
His generosity in donating copies of THE LANDMARK newspaper, and various other family memorabilia, will continue to be greatly appreciated by the Historical Society.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT/CATALOGER

- The gift from John Cone of two sets of metal shelving for the office is greatly appreciated! Things were getting a little crowded, and the box I wanted was always on the bottom, which meant moving the five on top of it.
- New purchases: a special acid-free box for our quilt and other clothing; drawer frames and hanging folders for our photograph collection, which is growing by leaps and bounds.
- Richard Steward stopped by the other day and noticed that our copy of Tucker's HISTORY OF HARTFORD was falling apart. He left and came back shortly to give us a much better copy, which he had purchased from the grandson of Alfred Watson, noted resident of Hartford Village. Thank you again.
- The Vermont Historical Society, in cooperation with the Center for Research on Vermont, has sent to local historical societies a copy of WE VERMONTERS; PERSPECTIVES ON THE PAST. It is a collection of essays on the history of Vermont and its people. "We invite you to explore Vermont identity. What does it mean to be a Vermonter at the end of the twentieth century and what role does geography play in defining that identity? What is the impact on the lives of contemporary Vermonters of the facts, myths, traditions, language, and, most of all the history of Vermont? Based on a two-year series of public programs, the essays in this collection provide a resource with which future generations of Vermonters - and readers 'from away' - can approach these and other questions." This book is in our library, and can be borrowed by members. Please call Priscilla at 295-2364 to arrange a loan.

## A Precursor to the Modern Measuring Tape

"A Gunter's chain is a sixty-six-foot long chain made up of one hundred links; it was invented in 1620 by Edmund Gunter, an English preacher turned mathematician who is also known for his invention of the sector and for introducing the words cosine and cotangent into the English vocabulary. The great usefulness of a Gunter's chain in surveying comes from its division into one hundred parts and from the fact that ten square chains equal an acre (66 feet x 66 feet x 10 = 43,560 square feet) and eighty chain lengths equal a mile (80 x 66 feet = 5,280). The chain is the reason behind many of the measurements used until recent times. City blocks, for instance, were laid out to equal three chains, and telegraph poles were placed either one or two chains apart. The width of a city street, or that of a canal, was set at one chain.



Distances shorter than a chain were measured in rods and links. A rod, known sometimes as a "pole" or a "perch," is sixteen and a half feet long or one-fourth of a chain, so rods were also called "quarter-chains." All of these measurements appear again and again in the decisions and renderings of colonial and postcolonial fence viewers, decisions that were always filed with the town." from *SERMONS IN STONE*, Susan Allport, pub. by W. W. Norton, 1990.

An example of the use of this chain here in Hartford is found in the Town land records, volume B: (note the use of rod.)

On the sixth day of June, 1781, Elisha Perkins, Yeoman, sold to Samual Udall for 160 pounds, L.M., 98 acres, "... bounded as follows (viz) beginning at a Maple tree marked 50 & 51 being the N.E. Corner of Capt. Bramble's Lot he now Lives on . . . thence North 16 rods & 19 Links to the Highway..." (sic)

## Have We Found Our Mystery Lady?

Her picture was in the collection from the Gates Library. There was no name on it, but we thought she may have been active in the Loyal Club, an organization formed in 1891 that assumed charge of the books belonging to the Library Association. The Gates Library building was erected in 1906.

A letter dated July 18, 1992 from George W. Smith, Jr. gives more information. He thought the picture looked familiar "perhaps I had seen it long ago among family photos." He strongly suspects that she is Miss Helen Williston Smith, sister of George Williston Smith, his great grandfather who moved his father's business of candy and crackers from Hanover to White River Jct. in 1871. Mr. Smith was active in town affairs, - he was instrumental in building the original high school (now the Municipal Building) and gave time and money to the building of the State Fair Grounds (on what is now Sykes Avenue) and building the railroad to it. He also was a founder of the White River Paper Co. in 1881, and first president of the First National Bank of White River, in 1886.

Mr. Smith's letter goes on to say that his great grandparents "...lived on North Main Street, where the branch of the Randolph Bank is today. After Mrs. Smith's death (in 1876, age 31) the household on North Main Street was taken over by George W. Smith's sister Helen. She was very active in local affairs, including local history, and doubtless was involved with Gates Library...She gave to the town the watering trough, part of which is now situated by the Municipal Building, in memory of her brother."

Helen W. Smith's association with the Loyal Club is affirmed with the



Helen W. Smith (?)



George Williston Smith 1841-1905

recent gift from Sarah Donahue of the Loyal Club Cookbook dated December 1896. There are several recipes by H. W. Smith; Miss Smith; and one from Helen Williston Smith, which are reproduced below.

Have we found our mystery lady?

BEAN SOUP	
Cold baked beans,	1 pint.
Water,	1 quart.
Onion,	1 slice.
Pepper,	1 salt spoonful.
Cayene,	1/4 " "
Mustard,	1 " "
Flour,	1 tablespoonful.
Butter,	1 " "
Lemon,	1.
Eggs, hard boiled.	2.

Put the beans and water with the onion to boil, as the water boils away add enough to keep the quart and boil two hours. When boiling add the flour and butter (which have been rubbed together and cooked with a little water,) then the pepper, mustard and salt. Put the lemon and hard boiled eggs in tureen and pour the hot soup over just before serving. HELEN W. SMITH.

**ESCALOPED SALMON.**  
 Open a quart can of salmon, pour off the oil, fill it with boiling water and set on the back of the stove. Then put on a sauce pan with 1 pint of milk, a good sized piece of butter, salt and pepper. When it cools thicken with 1 heaping tablespoonful of corn-starch. Take the fish on a plate and pick it to pieces with a fork. Cover the bottom of a pudding dish with crumbs. Take a layer of fish, then sauce and crumbs, with small pieces of butter and pepper; proceed in this way until the dish is full. Bake 1/2 hour.  
 H. W. SMITH.

**ORANGE JELLY.**

Gelatine,	1/2 box.
Lemon,	1 (juice).
Cold water,	1/2 cup.
Sugar,	1 "
Boiling water,	1 "
Orange Juice,	1 pint.

Soak gelatine in cold water until soft, add the boiling water, then lemon juice, sugar and orange juice, stir till sugar is dissolved and strain.  
 HELEN WILLISTON SMITH.

**COFFEE.**

Coffee,	6 tablespoons.
Water cold,	1 cupful.
Egg,	1.
Water boiling,	5 cupsful.

Stir the coffee, and whole egg together and add the cold water, then into the coffee pot add the boiling water and let it come to a boil move to the back of the range and let it stand five minutes. Always allow 1 tablespoon of coffee to each person and one for the pot. MISS SMITH.

*Recipes from*  
**Loyal Club Cookbook**  
 White River Junction, Vt.  
 December 1896

## THOUGHTS FROM THE ARCHIVIST, Pat Stark

The mission statement of a historical society clarifies the reason for the existence of the society and, includes among other things, the scope of its haphazard method of collecting - ensuring the limited funds are spent wisely. Our society's archival mission is to collect and preserve documents, photographs and artifacts which enlighten the past of Hartford, Vermont, its people and their activities, for the purpose of research and education.

Thus, acquisitions need to be limited to items pertaining to Hartford and the activities of its people (not Sharon or West Lebanon for example). Our mission is two-fold - to acquire and preserve, and preservation-conservation is the most expensive and important of the two aspects. For example - it does little good to acquire old documents or photographs if they cannot be used - if they are so brittle with age they fall apart when handled. Their value is lost unless copies or other restoration methods are used to allow research.

Another value of good preservation is directly related to acquisitions - folks will be more willing to donate their "priceless" heirlooms if they know they will be taken care of in such a manner that they will be accessible to their great-grandchildren.

Working in concert with neighboring historical societies eliminates duplication of acquisitions. This is done by offering such items that do not have historical value for our society to the appropriate historical society, creating a reciprocal situation. We are fortunate to have a good working relationship with the Sharon, VT and Lebanon, NH societies.

**?**  
***Did You  
Know?***

The Rev. Alfred J. Hough, who organized the Methodist Church in White River Jct. in 1877, and was instrumental in the construction of the church building, was a poet of considerable note and for years was called the Poet Laureate of the State of Vermont.

Reference(s): *Child's Windsor County Gazeteer and Rev. Hough's obituary, 1922.*

## RECENT GIFTS:

- Richard Steward:** photographs and memorabilia from the Mira Williamson Davis estate; Tucker's *History of Hartford*\*
- Kent Buffelli:** photographs and letters from the Winona Bogle home\*
- Herbert Adams:** Photographs; copies of *The Interstate Journal*, 1904-1906\*
- Mr. & Mrs. Fred Bradley:** items from their collection\*
- Trustees, United Methodist Church, WRJct.:** typewriter and addressograph
- Evelyn Stevens:** Treasurer's Ledger, 1864-1881\*
- Edith Williams:** papers of The Women's Literary Club of White River Jct., 1883-1971\*
- Bernice Ballard:** Book, *A. G. Dewey Co. 1836-1936*\*
- Margaret Dandeneau:** Toledo Stove Co. cookbook, 1920\*
- Pat Stark:** books, 1892 *American Commonwealth* and 1980 *Colonial Frontier Guns*; children's book; paper fan\*
- Town Manager's Office:** copy of cemetery surveys; town reports
- Mr. & Mrs. Max Church:** photographs and misc. items\*
- Helen Aher:** 55 Vermont State Fair ribbons won by her father, Willis Howard\*
- Bernadette Sullivan:** White River Medical Association minutes, 1885-1911; Ledger belonging to John Champion, 1828-1851; iron surveyor's chain\* (see article on Gunter's chain, this issue)
- Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Adams:** Photographs and items from the former Albert Tomkinson residence\*
- Charlotte Lehar:** Lyric Theater program, May 31, 1942\*
- Sibyl Gilbert:** children's book; planchette board; book of embroidery patterns, 1901\*
- Sarah Donahue:** Loyal Club cookbook, 1896\*

*\*These items will be on display at the September meeting.*

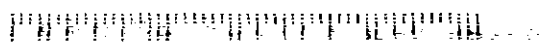
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Office: Room 110, Municipal Building, White River Jct.

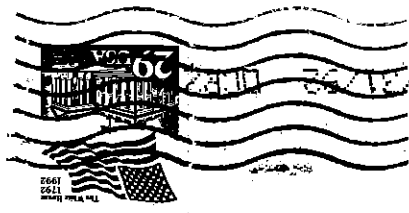
Hours: By Appointment

Priscilla Gadzinski, *President*, 295-2364 • Mary Nadeau, *Vice President*, 295-2123

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of March, May, September and November at the Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Route 14 in Hartford Village.



Pat Stark  
P.O. Box 184  
Wilder, Vt. 05088



WHITE RIVER JCT VT 05047-0547

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HARTFORD, VT 05047-0547