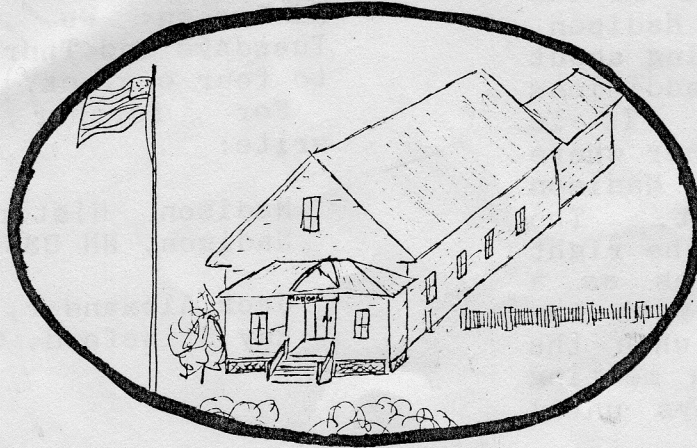


# Madison Historical Gazette



Volume 1

July 26, 1990

Issue 1

Welcome to the first issue of the Madison Historical Society Newsletter - We hope you find this enjoyable and informative reading. If you have any item you would like published, contact Becky Beaulieu, 367-8583.

## Why A Historical Society

Youngsters have probably always asked, "Why study History?" As adults we find the answers within our own lives, in the communities where we work, in the country under whose laws we govern ourselves, and in the ideas we have, the feelings we experience about the very meaning of life.

In Madison, a town that came into existence as a break-off from Eaton, we have in a single generation (say, a quarter century) seen fields grow into young forests; roads appear in old wildernesses; school

buildings receive additions, and the town hall move "up the road." A new post office has been built. Babies have been born, raised, gone off to college, married and moved away. Time is like the flowing streams of Madison, washing the shore lines, changing all surfaces, renewing and transforming. Our little society of members tries to preserve some sense of continuity, to retain a measure of understanding about who we are in the late 20th century, the successors to farmers and artisans whose presence may have marked us more than we know.



## Madison Historical Society Museum

Our museum is housed in the former town hall of Madison, New Hampshire, a building about 110 years old, with additions made in later years. It is located at Madison Corner where Route 113 and the East Madison Road (unnumbered) meet. The white picket fence on the right of the building serves as a good landmark, along with the American Flag, flown when the museum is open and on meeting nights (third Thursdays until autumn).

We have farm implements from mid-nineteenth century Madison; carpenters' planes, some of which may have shaped moldings of earlier homes in the area; household "gadgets," representing the progress of the Industrial Revolution in northern New England; and, on loan from the McNair family, a genuine pedlar's wagon with high spoked wheels and cupboards containing elixirs, household remedies, and pins and needles. We have a library of early New Hampshire court proceedings, Madison town reports from 1885, and several genealogical studies. Records, though scanty, remain of school days in the various country schools in the Madison countryside. "Fresh air aplenty," wrote a teacher in her annual report, including reference to broken windows, about 1860.

These and hundreds of interesting articles are contained in our nonspecialized collection. In the main, the museum is a repository of representative rural life from the middle third of the last century- and a continuing display of things from our more recent past. Want to see when the Fourth of July fell in 1947, for instance? We have a big calendar hanging on our wall for that year. We have a square grand piano, a reed organ, dolls, photographs, and some items we cannot identify.!

Our docents are pleased to have guests. No smoking of course, and no charge for admission. We are open Tuesdays and Thursdays from two to four o'clock.

For further information, write:

Madison Historical Society  
Madison, NH 03849

Jack Alexander, President  
Ray Stineford, Custodian

### Historical Society Museum Hours

2-4pm  
Tuesdays  
Thursdays  
Sundays

### Museum Items on Loan to Madison Library

We are pleased to cooperate with the Madison Library in making available occasional displays from our collections. Recently, we lent some old dolls, complete with early garments. Presently we are displaying a sterling silver Vanity Set.

### Museum Opens Its Own Library

We have a newly painted and shelved book room in the Society building. Becky Beaulieu painted the ceiling, walls and floors; John Earlewine set up new shelves and gave them a coat of paint. Virginia Hatton is helping to arrange our varied collection of old school books, court dockets, J. F. Chick Ledgers, and much more!!!



## Going for the Mail

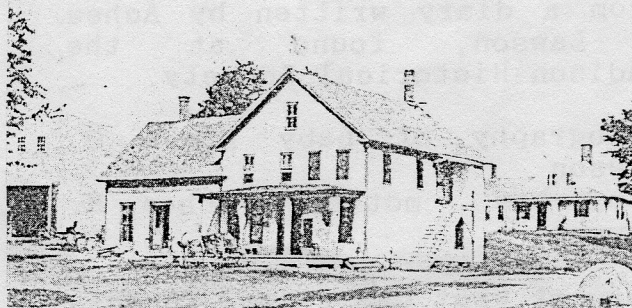
H. Campbell July 4, 1990

Way back in 1926 when we began spending summers here in Madison, life went at a far more leisurely pace than it does today. On some days I was allowed to go to the village to get the mail.

On those occasions it was an especially lengthy procedure as I went on horseback.

My horse was a small western pony bought at the Fryeburg Fair for the fabulous sum of \$100.00. Never was a girl more delighted than I was my parents let me have "Wildeave" (I had just finished reading Charlotte Bronte's Wuthering Heights). Wildeave and I would start off shortly after breakfast. Before leaving I always cut a short switch carefully leaving a few leaves at the tip with which to brush away the deer flies that annoyed Wildeave to distraction. And sometimes when heading away from home I had to use it on Wildeave himself to persuade him to step along. Somewhere near Leonard Bickford's there was a large stone watering trough. On hot days like today we would pause and Wildeave would dip his nose gratefully into the water and have a cool drink.

It is about two and a half miles to Madison from our farm, and since we were in no great hurry, it probably took Wildeave and



*Arthur Tyler's Store*

me close to two hours to reach Mr. Tyler's store. Mr. Arthur Tyler's store was both general store and Post Office. It stood right at Madison's sharp corner on what is now Jack Alexander's lawn. The building has long since disappeared.

Mr. Tyler carried a few basic groceries: bread, milk, eggs, etc. It did not pretend to be a supermarket such as we have today, but it was mighty useful when one ran out of something and did not want to travel far. It also held the Post Office and Mr. Tyler himself presided behind the letter boxes. I gathered our mail and stowed it in my saddle bags and then turned Wildeave's head for home. It was amusing to see that it never required any persuasion to get Wildeave to step right along when headed in that direction.

Nevertheless, it always seemed to have consumed a whole morning before I managed to deliver our mail to our parents.



The following is an excerpt from a diary written by Achea M. Lawson, found at the Madison Historical Society.

"Biography of Baby Frank G. Lawson  
by his mother Achea M. Lawson

Born at West Cambridge, Tuesday April 17th 1866 at half past nine o'clock A.M. in Dana Bickfords' house upstairs. Mrs. Drew, Miss Atwood and Grandma Bickford were the principal actors of the occasion. Mr. Bickford and Mary went down to Mrs. Shay's and her father Mr. McBride went for the Doctor his name was Jonas Harris and he lives at West Cambridge centre.

Oh! how my heart leaped for joy the moment God gave my darling breath and how much I felt to thank him for giving me my hearts desire a little boy perfect in limb and feature - they brought him to me in about half an hour after he was born all washed and dressed and I thought there never was so pretty and cunning a baby in they whole world and I loved him so well that I felt perfectly happy. Miss Atwood dressed him and took the care of Baby and me till Grandma Mooney came which was the next day about 3 1/2 o'clock P.M. and his Uncle James Garey came with here from Lawrence. Grandma loves him dearly and takes excellent care of him. Mr. Bickford weighed him and he said he weighed 8 lbs. but Grandma thinks it was about 9. He is a dear good little thing and gains very fast. He has large dark blue eyes and will have brown hair and I think is a most wonderful Boy. Grandmother staid (sic) with me till he was six weeks old. I went into Boston with him the day he was six weeks old and had his picture taken. He was very good. I had two with him

sitting in his Great Grandmother's lap and he did look so cunning. I wonder if every body loves their Baby as well as I do mine. How I did miss Grandmother after she went home it seemed as though I could not trust myself to take care of my darling alone but baby was very good. I did not have to get up a single night with him till the night before he was three months the next day and then he screamed and cried dreadfully and I was obliged to get up and go down stairs with him and draw him in his carriage for the remainder of the night and the next day. He was not washed or dressed but remained in his carriage nearly all day. I was very much frightened for fear he would die but God saw fit to spare the little fellow for which I felt very thankful - what could I do without by own little one. I am afraid I should die too - but he got well and strong again - when he was 16 weeks old, Mary Bickford came running in with him to me for me to hear him sing and certainly it was wonderful - he would chime in with his little voice and it did sound so cunning how good and true I ought to be to God for giving me such a beautiful ( ) to love and care for and I mean to try and be a Christian to live in such a way that I'll be capable of bringing up my darling properly - I would give him to the Lord and ask strength and wisdom from Him to do any duty - always by any little one - that I might feel that he is a little flower from the garden of God sent here to me to care for and cherish till he sees fit to transfer to the Kingdom of Heaven- how much Grace we need to do as we ought"

... to be continued in the next issue



**Town Meeting**  
by Joan Kracke

Years ago, maybe in the late 1920's or early '30's, the Mason School on the Mooney Hill Road to Eaton was still flourishing, with our Bea Harmon as teacher (only she wasn't yet "Mrs. Harmon" - I have forgotten her maiden name). Sometimes on our hill, we could hear Bea's little hand bell signaling the end of play and back to school work. The pupils were Bickfords and Pearsons. Sumner and Evy Bickford's son, Edgar, was already graduated, I think. But the Frank Bickfords' younger daughters, along with the Theo Pearsons' younger ones, made up the seven or so students still attending. Lincoln Pearson was maybe the youngest.

The event I remember vividly was Town Meeting, after I had just turned voting age. (This is a maturing moment in one's life.) One topic at this Town Meeting was a discussion about whether to keep open, or close, some of the small outlying schools, considering the expense. Mason School was one of the schools being considered. (This was my first experience of democracy at work.) Mrs. Theo Pearson - a marvelous person - was given her opportunity to speak to the whole town about keeping the little school open. She spoke of the twice-a-day amply long walk from their farm to the Mason School for the little Pearsons, but the far longer walks to and fro to the Madison School at the Madison Corner. The Pearsons felt strongly about education for every one of their thirteen (I think) children, even though each one had to drop out of school for one or two years between grade school and high school to help on the farm. (So Rhonda and Edith Pearson, who were in high school when I was, were two years older than their classmates.)

I was very moved by Mrs. Pearson's talk and what it meant for her to have this opportunity to speak to all the voting folk in town. But though she had a fair hearing, she didn't win. The school closed. That is the way democracy works in a small town - as it should.

**Books for Sale**

The Society is fortunate to have a number of local authors represented. Among the titles is Helen Prince's **Early Houses of Madison and Eaton**, a 1976 publication of representative homes built from 1775 to 1850. Photographs, floor plans, and structural diagrams are included with the text. Price: \$8.00. A percentage of each sale goes to the Madison Historical Society.

The Freedom Historical Society offers for sale a valuable historical work of New Hampshire. **Reminiscences of the French War and Life of Major General John Stark** by Major Rogers. This was originally published in 1831. The cost is \$20.00 plus \$2 for postage and handling.

Contact Nelson Works,  
Curator  
Freedom Historical  
Society  
Box 330  
Freedom, NH 03836  
(603) 539-6621



Eppingham Falls



Willfore

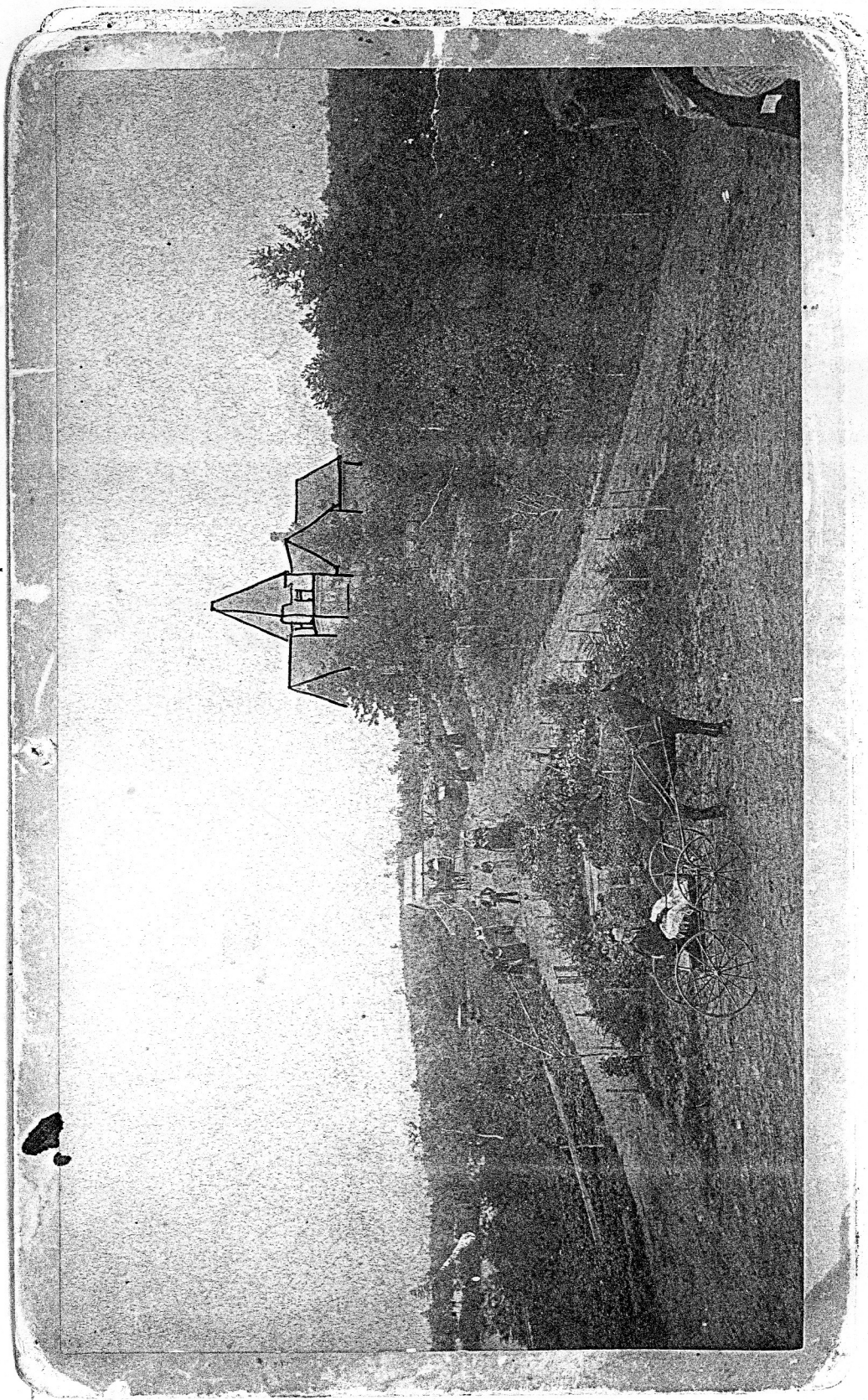
S. M. Morse

CIRCA 1860

David Spawles, Jr.

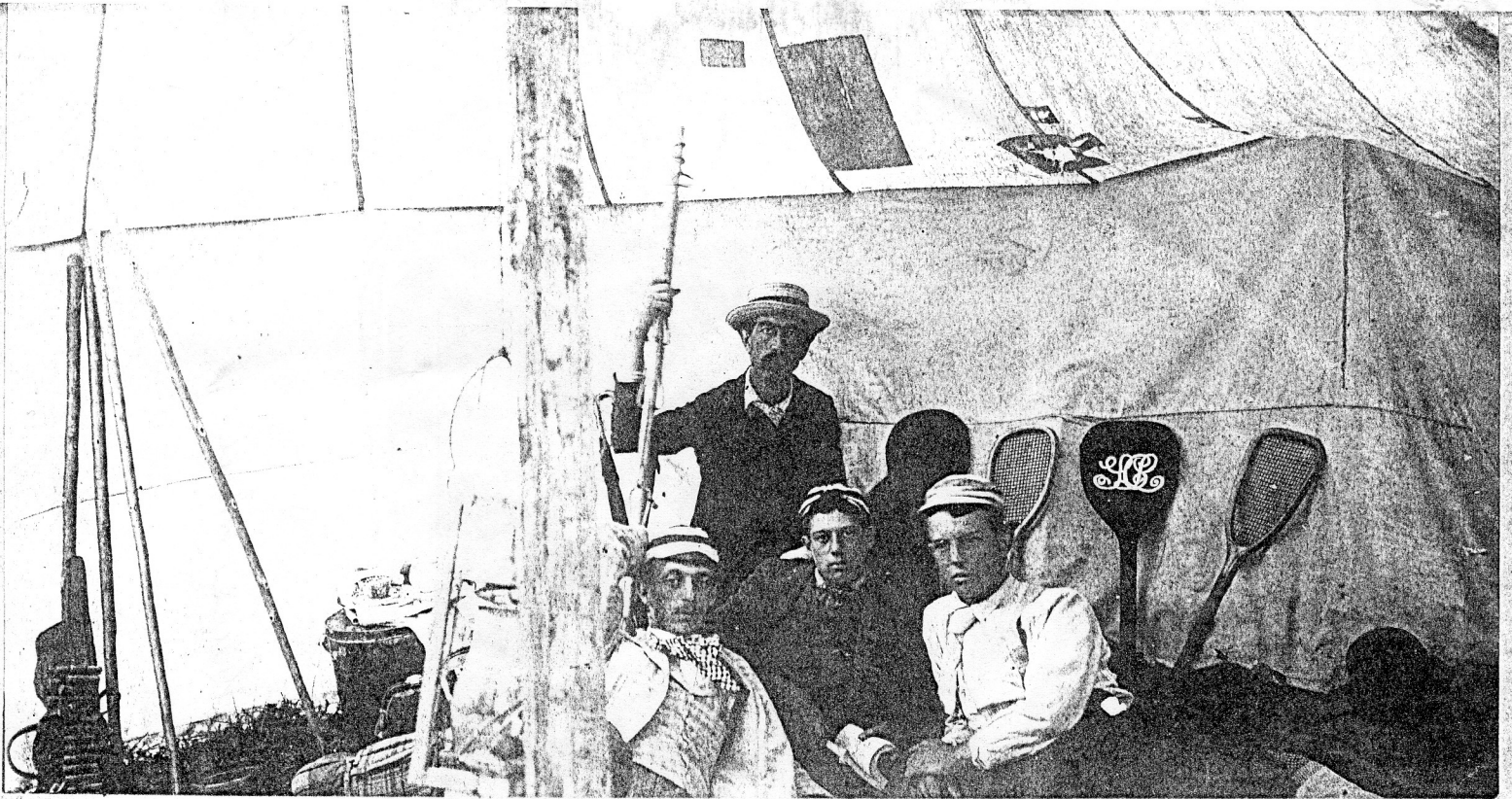
Charlie Miles





Picture of Lakeview Cottage from Hill where  
Walter Warren's house now stands.  
Taken in 1886 or 7. Rev. & Mrs. Blake in Carriage.





*Who is this motley crew ???*

BACK TO THE PAST . . .

READ THE GAZETTE !