

A Visit to the New Orchard Road in the Year 1892. - G.H. Yeaton

It is now the winter of 1963 and I am living in the village of Gossville, but in memory my thoughts take me back to seventy or more years ago, when as a boy of nine, I was living on the New Orchard road and of the families who lived on the road at that time.



Commencing at the turnpike, at the southerly end of the New Orchard road, on its westerly corner lived, Maurice C. and his wife Mary P. (Cass) Philbrick.

They had been married September 22, 1890, and moved to this house the following February 1891. At this time M. Philbrick was serving as Town Clerk of Epsom and in later years served continuously as Town Clerk for more than forty years.

On the opposite corner lived Mrs. Emily A. Hoyt, Mrs. Hoyt was the grandmother of Charles E. Cilley of Locke's Hill.

The next place was the farm of James O. Fiske, this farm was on the east side of the highway at the foot of the long hill. "Fiske's Hill"

The Fiske family, at this time, consisted of James O. Fiske, his wife Augusta A., a son Kidder C., and a son George V. Fiske who later became a medical doctor and practiced his profession in the city of Manchester for many years.



Joseph P. Locke and his wife Lydia (Thompson) Locke, lived on the road at the junction of the New Orchard and the Range roads. The Locke buildings being on the west side of the New Orchard Road. Joseph P. and Lydia Locke did not have any children, but a nephew of Mrs. Locke, Arthur O. Friel, stayed with them at various times, when he was a boy. Mr. and Mrs. Locke made shoes by hand did some farming besides.

Henry W. Bickford lived a short distance beyond the Locke home and on the same side of the road, their home was in the "Hollow" opposite the Old Tannery Pond. Mrs. Bickford was a sister to Joseph P. Locke, her name was Orilla H. (Locke) Bickford.



Mr. and Mrs. Bickford had a family of four children but at this time, their oldest son, James H., Bickford had married Elma D. Fiske (the daughter of James O. Fiske) and were living out of town. An older daughter of Henry and Orilla Bickford, Alice who married Fred Giles and was living in Northwood Narrows. Their daughter Annie B. and their youngest son, Charles S. Bickford, were living at the Bickford home at this time. (picturd left - Stanley's Poultry farm with the Henry Bickford house in foreground)

Then next beyond the Bickford home was the Samuel B. Stanley place, this was at the top of the hill and on the same side of the road as the Bickford and Locke places. Mrs. Stanley was another sister of Joseph P. Locke, name, Mandana C. (Locke) Stanley. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley made shoes by hand, they also had quite a lot of land and did some farming.

Their son Herbert S. Stanley *Bert*, as he was usually called, was at home with his parents, not married at this date.

Next we come to the Perly C. Giles place but on the opposite side of the road, here lived, Perley C. Giles his wife Clarissa S. (Grant) Giles, their daughter Viola A., son Herbert P., daughter Nettie and Ella M. Giles. Perley C. and his wife Clarissa S. Giles made shoes by hand. This made three families where the husband and wife were shoemakers, all within a radius of one-fourth of a mile.



I can close my eyes, think of the old days and seem to hear the sound of the mallets and broad-faced hammers that the men were using on the sole leather, before they were sewed and again after sewing and turning the shoes. In the warm weather, when the windows at the shoemakers homes were open, the sound of these hammers would carry a long distance through the air and I can recall hearing them when quite some distance from the homes of the shoemakers.

In memory I can see the large fat hogs that Perly Giles had every fall, they would be in a small yard on the south side of his barn. They would be so fat that they could hardly waddle up to the feed trough when Mr. Giles came with their feed, and their eyes; there was so much fat around their eyes that all one could see were slits, in the rolls of fat where their eyes were supposed to be.

I guess the Giles family like *fat* pork. My home was a short distance beyond the Perly Giles place, but on the west side of the road, it was the original Cate farm. Deacon John Cate settled on this farm about the year 1776. It was at this house where I was born, on a Friday morning at one o'clock, A.M. December 21, 1883. I do not remember about it, all I know is what I was told in later years.

I lived at this home for over fifty years, our family at this date (1892) consisted of my father James Yeaton, my mother Annie R. (Crockett) Yeaton, a brother John C., (he was seven years older than I) my sister Helen Elisabeth and my great Aunt Ruth E. Prescott. My much older brother (23 yrs. older) Edwin R. Yeaton who was born on June 25, 1860 had married a sister of Charles Eastman (of Concord) and was living on the turnpike near the Epsom Town Hall.



We had at my home, oxen, steers, cows, young cattle, hogs and hens. Henry E. Dotey was living on the farm next above us, his farm was originally a part of the old Cate homestead.

Mr. Dotey was a Civil War Veteran, his wife's name was Adelia Dotey, they had a daughter named Carrie M., who married Everett B. Edmunds. Carrie M. and her husband Everett B. Edmunds had one daughter who they named Pearl Adelia Edmunds. Henry E. Dotey, at one time lived in Dublin, N.H. (left side of photo)

The Lewis family lived a little ways beyond Mr. Doteys, but on the opposite side of the road, this was a large farm colonial style house, a long shed connecting the two barns (the two barns were end to end.) One of them had been moved from the Cate farm and placed on the east end of the other barn, or the barn on the west end had been built onto the old Cate barn.

The Lewis family consisted of Cyrus A. Lewis, his wife Nellie M. Lewis and their five sons, named: Frank W., Harry D., Stacy A., Ernest E. and Walter C. Lewis.

Ellen J. Holt was the daughter of Samuel Harmon and his wife Eunice Johnson. Ellen J. Holt was born in Hartson Maine in the year 1825.

Franklin D. Holt died suddenly in the year 1885. He was Prudential Committee of the New Orchard Road school. Mr. Holt came from the state of Maine about the year 1878 and bought this farm. (Now the Lewis farm) His widow Ellen J. Holt, married for her second husband, on August 27, 1888 at Windsor Vermont, Hill E. Ober, born in the year 1816, the son of Benjamin Ober and Elvira (Kimball) Ober.



Cyrus A. Lewis sold the farm in the year 1893 and the Lewis family moved to Concord, N.H.

The Franklin D. Holt or Cyrus A. Lewis farm had an acreage of 176 acres in the year 1886.

The new owner of the Lewis farm was: Silas B. Woodbury, who died five years after he bought the farm. His widow, their son and the grandson all went to Pittsfield to live.

The son, Fred Woodbury was an optician in Pittsfield for a long time. Now in memory I am sliding down the long hill (the Lewis Hill) down the hill across the “little brook,” where we got our drinking water for the school, then across the “big brook,” which was the outlet to Odiorne Pond, and I am at the fork of the road. At my left is the New Orchard Road school house, which was built in the year 1884, it replaced the old school house on the Sherburne Road, nearly one-fourth of a mile beyond the new school house.

Yes Mayland Ames is coming down the Locke road with his round tin dinner pail in his hand, there was something about the shape of the pail that made one remember it.

Mayland has on his felt boots this morning, Ernest and Walter were here when I arrived.

There now, Silas B. Paige is bringing, Grace, Myrtie and Eva to school this morning. The other scholars must be in the school house, Charlie Bickford, *Burt* or Herbert Stanley, my brother John, my sister Elizabeth and the others. There: the teacher has just come to the door with the bell in her hand it must be nine o'clock.



Now I am leaving the school house, the scholars, the teacher and old memories.

The next place some distance above the school house on the Sherburne road is the farm of Lucus S. Clark, almost one mile distance. Here lived Lucus S. Clark his wife Olive M. and their two daughters: Lizzie E., Sadie O., and a son John S. Clark.

The Clark home was the former Constantine Woods farm, a large colonial style house on the west side of the road.

The next place, a farm, was where Daniel N. Lewis now lived, this was the original D. Sherburne

place, with the house on the east side of the road and the barn on the west side with land on both sides of the road.

Now we come to the Silas B. Paige farm situated on the west side of the road.

The Paige family at this time consisted of Silas B., his wife Emma A. (Glines) Paige, their four daughters, Grace E., Myrtie H., Eva M. and Bulah Adelaïd, and a son Harry L. Paige.

This farm was formerly known as the J. Paige farm, as shown on a map of Epsom published in the year 1858.

This farm at the date of this writing, is the farm and home of Lloyd E. Kimball and his wife Ruth H. (Yeaton) Kimball, and family.

The farm next beyond the Paige farm was the Ebenezer Barton farm, some of his descendants were living there at this date (1892) or at least they owned it.

Now I am thinking of the Locke Hill road which commenced at the end of the Sherburne road at the school house.

As I started up the Locke Hill road, the first family on the road was the family of Mr. and Mrs. William T. Grant, (a Civil War Veteran) and a brother of Mrs. Perley C. Giles.

Mr. and Mrs. Grant did not have any one living with them at this time.

Mr. Grant had a large fruit orchard and did some farming. In the winter months he would drive a large pair of oxen for his neighbor Albion Locke.

The Grant farm was at the foot of Lockes Hill with the buildings on the east side of the road.

It was a long climb to the Albion Locke homestead, here lived Albion Locke, his wife Mary Anna Locke and their married daughter Ada L. (Locke) Cilley, her husbands name, Charles E. Cilley.



The Locke home was on the west side of the road, large and well kept buildings. There was a large fruit orchard on this farm, one of the largest in Epsom at this time. Albion Locke and his son-in-law Charles E. Cilley did a great deal of farming, shipping their milk on the train each morning from the Epsom Depot.

It was a wonderful view from Locke's Hill (and still is 1963) No children at this home at this time but a daughter, Helen Marie Cilley, was born May 21, 1896.

The next farm was the home of Alden M. Tilton, the grandson of Levi Locke, who was one of the original three brothers to settle Locke's Hill in the years, 1798 to 1800. The Albion Locke farm being another of the Locke Brothers homes.

It was some distance to the home of Henry C. Ames where he, his wife Ella O. and his mother Harriet O. Ames, (the widow of Charles Ames) lived. Charles Ames had died in the year 1887.

It was at this home where Mayland P. Ames, the boy previously mentioned, wearing the felt boots and carrying the round dinner pail lived, being the son of Henry C. and Ella O. Ames.

This farm where the Ames family lived was the original William Odiorne farm.

In later years Mayland P. Ames lived at this farm with his last wife, Ada C. (Wheeler) Ames, and their children.

Mayland P. Ames, died at his old home, July 16, 1950, age 70 yrs. 10 mo. 3d.

Mayland P. and Ada Caroline Wheeler, the daughter of Frank P. and his wife Lillian C. (Hilliard) Wheeler, were married in Chichester September 3, 1932. They were the parents of four children. Three daughters and one son. Mrs. Ada C. Ames, lives in Concord, N.H. (1963)

I am now leaving the Ames farm with its maple sugar orchard, the memory of going fishing at Odiorne Pond with Mayland, seventy years ago, the maple sugar he gave me one day at the New Orchard Rd. school, taking it from his odd shaped dinner pail. But memory takes me back to the home of Joseph P. Locke and the southern end of the Range Road.

THE RANGE ROAD

I will let memory take me up this road, by the "Red Gate," the Jo Marden Place," the "Leaning Rock," the "Devils Den," the "Leaning Birch," the "Old Lamprey farm," the "Lamprey Ledges," the "Spring," Odiorne Pond and the "Darrs Field." Then taking the winter path at the foot of the hill I soon come to the Amos P. Barton farm.

This was the original David Philbrick farm and was the first of the four large farms near the north end of the Range Road.

At this time the Barton family consisted of: Amos P. Barton, his wife Mary E. (Philbrick) Barton and their five children.

Children of Amos P. and Mary E. Barton were:

Ruth M. Barton, who married, True Osgood. children

David Barton, who married Virginia M. Batchelder. No children

Louis M. Barton, who married Harriet Williams.

No children

Mary Barton, who married George Fred Richardson. Children

Albert Barton, who married Mary (Molly) G. Knowles. Children.

The next farm was the farm of Warren E. Hilliard, another of the large farms of Epsom, this was on the west side of the Range Road and to reach the farm buildings one went up quite a long land.

The Hilliard family at this time were: Warren E. Hilliard his wife Sarah A. (Dow) Hilliard and some if not all of their nine children: another (one had died in the year 1890).

Children: Harleon L., Clara, Ada M., Orah L., Frank R., Lillian E., Oscar A., Ralph R., Grover P., and Harold C. Hilliard. Harold C. Hilliard is now the only one left of the Hilliard's ten children, Aug. 20, 1964.

The next place was the Lowell Brown farm, some distance down the hill from the Hilliard farm and around a sharp curve in the road.

The Lowell Brown farm and buildings became the property of Albert Barton in the year 1904 or 1905, as he married Mary Genella Knowles of Epsom August 16, 1905 and moved to this place soon afterwards. Mary G. Knowles was the daughter of Henry S. Knowles (the storekeeper) and his wife Genella (Cate) Knowles.

At the Lowell Brown house there was a sharp turn in the road and to reach the last house on the Range Rd. one went in a southerly direction.

This was the home and large farm of David M. Philbrick and at one time this was probably the largest or one of the largest farms in Epsom.

This farm had an acreage of six hundred acres or approximately, that number of acres.

At the Philbrick home (1892) lived David M. Philbrick, his wife Sarah A. (Stearns) Philbrick and some of their eight children: Clara J., Daniel, David, Mary A., John S., Susan, George H. and Augustus T. Philbrick.

The David M. Philbrick farm home is now owned by his granddaughter, Eunice S. Philbrick, who lives there alone. She is the daughter of George Henry and his wife Amy E. (Lull) Philbrick.

Amey E. Lull came from Concord, N.H.

The children from these four large farms, near the northerly end of the Range Road all went to the school at South Pittsfield (at one time a few went to the North Road school) in the old days.

This school was known as "Union School District Number 6."

In the year 1841 a Pittsfield School District and Epsom School district number 6 were united to form "Republican School District." Merrimack County, State of New Hampshire.

Taken from the records of the New Hampshire General Court.

The Range Road: from its junction with the New Orchard Road to the driveway of the David Barton farm is now closed.

This is all wrong, for if any one wishes to visit the upper end of this road they must go through the town of Pittsfield or if they chose to go by the way of the North Road they still must go through a part of South Pittsfield to reach the Range Road. There are other reasons why this road should not be closed. First: if a fire was raging on the New Orchard or the Locke Hill road, traveling towards the east, there would be no way to get fire trucks and men up the Range Rd. to make a stand and extinguish the fire. A dirt or gravel road makes a wonderful place to stop a fire.

Second: if a fire was being driven by an east wind from the North Road the difficulties would be the same.

Third: now in the case of a house fire at the upper end of the Range Road, as it happened in December 1961, in which three lives were lost in the fire. The fire trucks and men must now go by way of Pittsfield, or down towards Northwood, to the end of the North Road, then up the North Road, through South Pittsfield to reach the northerly end of the Range road, making several miles of extra travel.

The Range Road, being closed for travel, we can only visualize the rustic and scenic beauty of this road, that saw so much travel in the old days.

Today January 1963, among nearly one hundred people who were living on the New Orchard, the Sherburne, Locke Hill and Range roads, back in the year 1892, there are only seven of us left.

One lives in Chichester, one in Epping, one in the State of Florida, two in some western state, one in Concord and one in Epsom. Of the old families only five are represented on these roads, of the original families in the year 1892. Two on the New Orchard road, and three on the Range road. But:

everything is changed, the school on the New Orchard road, and the one at South Pittsfield, have been closed these many years.

The Suncook Valley Rail Road, to which many of the farmers brought their milk to the Epsom Depot to be shipped to Boston, is a thing of the past. The State of New Hampshire has destroyed all of the native fish in Odiorne Pond and stocked it with Bass.

I spent many happy hours fishing at Odiorne Pond, in the days now long gone.

All that is left of the Amos Barton farm buildings is the long barn, all the other buildings are gone, the long sheds connected with the barn have been demolished and the house and large shed connected to it were destroyed by fire in the year 1961.

After reading this memory story over and seeing the mistakes I have made in spelling and in composition, I am wondering: why do I try to put these old memories down in writing, for others to see?

To be sure I find much pleasure in searching the old records and in thinking of the ones who were here in the days now long gone. But: there is a feeling of sadness associated with this pleasure and as I think of the changes in the families, the old homes, the way they lived and the way they did things in the old days, then: when I compare the way we live and do things, in this ever changing world of ours, at this present time, it makes me keep wondering: were the people happier in these old days or are we the happier ones in this modern and high tension way of living.

I was born in the year 1883 and it is now the year 1963.