



# The SHIRETOWN CONSERVER

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society  
Volume 21, Number 3      Autumn 2018

---

**‘Extra, Extra, Read All About it’**

## **My Days as Bangor Daily News Paperboy**

**By David R. Anderson**



### **Inside This Issue**

<b>Extra, Extra, Extra, David Anderson</b>	<b>1</b>
Poetry – <i>Piscataquis Farmer</i>	2
On the Homefront, Mary Annis.	5
Letter from Richard Morgrage	8
Letter from Clyde E. Oakes	9
A Cement Sidewalk in Union Square	10
Message from Mary	10
Our Sponsors	11
Items Available	11

The Andersons began our three years in Dover-Foxcroft at a summer camp on Sebec Lake in the late summer of 1944. Those early autumn days and end of season quiet brought out a small herd of deer in the field of the lodge across the way. We played hearts by kerosene lamp light in the evenings. Dad (Hayden), the new Superintendent of Schools, and Mom, (Louise), were busy looking for our permanent quarters in town. Joan, my sister, a third grader, and I, a sixth grader, started school at North Street Elementary; Dad, began working at his office in Central Hall, and the family moved into Mel Blethen's house at the corner of North and Winter Streets. It was just uphill from Bonsey's Brook and what became my favorite fishing hole.

Fast forward to my eighth grade school year, 1946-47. WW II had ended, the town's servicemen were returning. Five gallons of gas sold for a dollar at the Esso station that Memorial day; comic books were 10 cents at Perin's Drug store. My allowance covered the cost of a ticket for the Saturday afternoon double feature at Center Theater. For extra pocket money, I sometimes set pins at the bowling alley for fifteen cents a string or signed up to distribute flyers in Greenville and Monson for the Judkins' Market weekend specials. Then I hit it big I landed the Bangor Daily News paper route on the Foxcroft side of town.

Continued on Page 3

### The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society

President	Mary I. Annis
Vice President	Dennis Lyford
Secretary	Priscilla Higgins
Treasurer	Jim Annis
Membership Sec.	Chris Maas
Directors	Sylvia Dean
	Andy MacDougall
	Chris Maas
	Dennis Lyford
	David Lockwood
	Sean Letarte
	Irene Thomas
Curator, Blacksmith	David Lockwood
Curator, Obs. Bldg.	Dennis Lyford
Editor, Conserver	Chris Maas
Webmaster	Chris Maas
Historic Advisor	Chris Maas

The Society's legal address is 28 Orchard Road, Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426. The *Shiretown Conserver* is published quarterly. Contact the editor at 874 West Main Street, Dover-Foxcroft, Me 04426 or e-mail [chrism@roadrunner.com](mailto:chrism@roadrunner.com), or by phone at 207-924-4553

Visit us on-line on Facebook

### Please Bear in Mind

A HOUSE WITHOUT ELECTRIC LIGHTS IS NOT CONSIDERED UP-TO-DATE.

Electricity is not a luxury, it is a necessity and at present prices is well within the means of everyone.

Your house wired at cost plus 10 %. Estimates of cost free.

Dover and Foxcroft  
Light and Heat Co.

21

(1913)



### From the *Piscataquis Farmer*

"ON FRIENDSHIP."

— MAR 21 1844 —

Friendship thou charmer of the mind,  
Thou sweet deluding ill,  
The brightest minutes mortals find,  
And sharpest hour we feel.  
Fate has divided all our shares,  
Of pleasure and of pain;  
In love, the comforts and the cares  
Are mixed and joined again.  
But while in floods, our sorrows rolls  
And drops of joy are few,  
This dear delight of mingling souls  
Serve but to swell our woe.  
O why should bliss depart in haste,  
And friendship's stay to mourn,  
Why the fond passion cling so fast,  
When every joy is gone.  
Yet never let our hearts divide,  
Nor death dissolve the chain,  
For love and joy were once allied,  
And must be joined again.

### THE FARWELL

Farewell schoolmates and Friends,  
The days we've spent so pleasantly  
Are ended now – while wishes swell  
For once we'll breath so silently.

May every joy and pleasure gay,  
May all your hours roll swift along,  
And life and beauty glide away  
Like the rich cadence of a song.

May Friendship shed its gentle rays,  
To make the path before you bright,  
And love serenely gild your days  
With its more deep and brilliant light.

May virtue be your constant guide,  
Religion grant its cheering beams  
With happiness extending wide,  
And youthful hope be all it seems.

Such wishes from warm hearts gushing,  
Shall we e'er forget each other?  
Joyous mem'ries yet are lasting,  
May each ne'er forget the other.

Foxcroft, March 1844



**The Melvin Blethen Home**

In those days, a subscription to the paper cost 25 cents a week: twenty cents for the publisher, five cents for me plus any tips. With about twenty three or four customers, my route could put as much as \$1.50 cents in my pocket for a week's work. Half of that went for root beer floats and comic books at Perin's or to pay for bowling a string or two myself. The other half went into my savings account. Times were good.

And got better. The newspaper offered an incentive to its carriers to help it increase circulation. For each new customer I earned 40 points toward the purchase of items from an attractive list of sporting goods and other

prizes. The tennis racket I coveted would be mine if I could bring my route up to 45 customers. I planned to use the racket to play on the Foxcroft Academy courts I passed on my route.

It worked. My reputation for leaving the papers where they wouldn't get wet, and for never missing a morning delivery (except on the days the truck from Bangor didn't get my papers to me in time to deliver before school started) brought me enough new customers to win the racket and start playing. It stood me well for years before I handed it down to one of the paperboys in my family.

The day started when my alarm sounded around 5:30 a.m. I dressed quickly, drank a cup of cocoa, mounted my bike, and rode off to pick up my papers from the Post Office loading dock. I stuffed the papers into my Bangor Daily News shoulder bag and off I went. I would fold the paper for my next customer as I rode to the house, fling it up to the porch, and repeat the process as I went along. If I finished the route before seven, I hurried down to my fishing hole at the brook to try to catch a trout. When I did my mother would pan fry it for my breakfast. In winter, I walked the route, with papers in a box on my sled. That took longer but gave me a good look at the goings on along the way including a sight or two that weren't intended for my eyes.

My route began with two deliveries at the Mayo (woolen) Mill at the bridge. That stop provided me a glimpse of a now bygone Maine industry. Next stop, Dr. Noel's home where I took extra care with the paper. I had a crush on the Noel's daughter, Barbara. Then I went to the home across the street. There, my customer, Mrs. Saunders, took a liking to me and hired me from time to time to do chores around the house. My wages were good and I learned that doing house work was okay.

The route went on up Main Street from there, a mile and a half or so out to a point beyond where it became the Guilford Road. The Lyman Lees were among the first customers. The Lees and my parents were friends. I still remember family visits to the Lees' apple orchards in the spring when the trees were in full bloom.

In the days before Red Mountain's, there was a convenience store about half-way along my route. The store opened early, providing a stopping point for me most mornings, particularly in the winter when it provided a chance for me to warm up. In those days the radio broadcasts of the Red Sox away games were telegraphic re-creations. The store keeper and I would joke about the acoustical tricks the game announcers used to imitate a bat striking a ball. And I might let him in on what I had noticed along my way that it was out of the ordinary.

(Continued on page 4)

(Extra, Extra, continued from page 3)

The Leathers' family home marked the western end of my route. It was in a field, a long driveway from the street. One or two of Mrs. Leathers young children would usually come to the door with her on Saturdays mornings when I called to collect for the paper. It struck me that the Leathers were a lively bunch, if not well off.

On the way back, I had customers on Winter Street. The route ended at the Ward family household across the street. The Wards owned and operated the furniture store down town. Margaret Ward was in my class at the Grammar School. Her sister, Lois, was in my sister's class at the Elementary School. Sumner Ward made a skating rink on his lawn each winter. Joan and I were invited to skate with the Ward girls and the other neighborhood children.

The Wards and the Andersons neighbored a good deal. Sumner liked to tell us how he inveigled his youngest daughter, Judy, to eat her breakfast eggs. Since they were not her favorites, he tempted her try them anyway by giving them a new name. I'd tell myself I wouldn't let him pull that one on me. A hunter, more than once Sumner came over with a venison steak. A treat we always enjoyed.

My pal Roger Davis was often at his grandparents who lived next door to us on the North Street side. Red, as I called him, and I frequently played together. We loved to explore the old buildings along Bonsey's Brook up to the cider press. We found a hide-away in one of the empty buildings which we used as headquarters for our boys-only club. That's probably where I tried smoking my first cigarette.

One spring Saturday morning, when the maple sap was running, Red and I went over to the Davis Maple grove at Sebec Corners to help collect the sap and to take in the maple syrup operation. Everything was done the old fashioned way. My sister Joan and I wanted to try making our own syrup. She got permission from Mr. Blethan, our landlord, to tap two maple trees in our yard. After Mom boiled the sap into syrup we had genuine Anderson's medium dark maple syrup on our pancakes.

In those days, as now, the BDN weekend edition came out on Saturday. No paper on Sundays. That worked well for me. I started the route later on Saturday mornings at a time when most of my customers were up and about. I took the paper to the door, readied my receipt for the 25 cents I was due for the week, trusting I would find someone at home to pay me and, fingers crossed, perhaps add a five cent tip.



**David (about 12), Joan (9)  
Their dog Shadow and Rocket**

As you might expect, there were always exceptions. Some left the quarter where I could find it. Others would pay me the following week if not before, and some would request leniency if they "didn't have the money just then." The customer relation skills I developed those Saturday morning have served me well ever since. I had one big tipper. Myrtice Oakes matched the weekly fee with a twenty-five cent tip. She was my celebrity customer. Sister of Sir Harry Oakes, reputed to be the richest man in the world at the time, Miss Oakes qualified as larger than life in my book, and something of a character to others. She kept an aging Irish Setter that she tended to overfeed with bones and scraps her hired man purchased by the wheel barrow full at Judkins' Market twice a week. The Oakes, brother and sister, born in Sangerville, are, I learned on Google, buried in the Dover Cemetery.

(Continued on Page 5)



(Extra, Extra, continued from page 4)

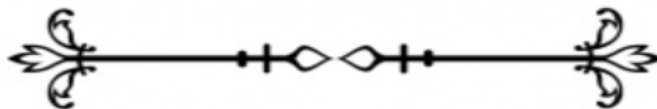
Looking back on it now, I realize that my paper route meant far more to me than the income it provided. My customers were what made it interesting. They were sturdy, decent, in some cases colorful, and as a group, memorable. My sense of what it means to be a Mainer fell into place along Main Street from the Mayo Mill to the Leathers' home and back to corner of North and Winter.

David R. Anderson, a retired lawyer, the author of this article, served his Bangor Daily News paper route for about a year (1946-47). Now 85, he lives in southeastern Massachusetts. Martha G. Rollins, 98, one of Dover-Foxcroft's oldest residents, was the second grade teacher at

the North Street School at that time the Anderson's moved to Dover-Foxcroft. Martha has many a story of her own dating from that period. In fact, based on a recent reading of Louise Anderson's obituary which she had clipped and saved, she reminded the author that his parents had taken flying lessons in Dover. He has a photo of his mother and her instructor standing beside their ski-equipped plane on the ice on the Piscataquis River above the dam. Martha encouraged Anderson to write about his paper route days and helped him with the fact checking, for both of which he thanks her.



**A Wrapper from David's papers  
(saved by him mom)**



### **On the Homefront**

By Mary Annis

August 6, 1914 the following headline appeared in the *Piscataquis Observer* –

### **ALL EUROPE AT WAR**

Liston Evans had written an editorial, the first paragraph reading, "With the declaring of war on Germany by Great Britain Tuesday night, practically the whole of Europe is in arms. U.S. Army officials predict that the war will be the shortest on record and that hostilities will last only a few weeks."

How wrong they were. The United States would not enter the war until 1917 with the war not ending until the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918!

While the population of the United States coped with the war in several ways, our citizens here in Dover and Foxcroft lived life quite normally, however, due to the fact that many of our male citizens were off to war, our ladies had to step up and join the workforce. In 1917 there was some sugar rationing and a shortage of coal but on a day to day basis they experienced little inconvenience.

(Continued on Page 6)

(On the Homefront, Continued from Page 5)

In 1914, there was an appeal to people in neutral nations to help the civilian war victims in Europe and the citizens of Dover and Foxcroft answered by sending clothing and tinned goods to help the Belgian refugees. An organization named the Belgian Relief Society was formed in December and in early 1915, with the help of the Boy Scouts, shipped 330 pounds of clothes to Holland. Those wanting a closer view of the war attended an exhibition of war pictures of European battlefields shown at Central Hall for 25 cents.

More help for the Belgians came in 1916 when the DAR realized \$38 from the sale of Belgian flags. In April of that year, the war began to affect the *Observer*. Editor Evans explained “The *Observer* has been compelled to fall into line with other papers and use unbleached paper, the mills being unable because of the war to obtain the bleach necessary to produce white paper”.

After the United States entered the war in April of 1917, citizens were urged to purchase Liberty Loans, like Savings Bonds later in WWII, and to support the Red Cross in efforts to send large shipments of knit goods such as sweaters, mufflers, and scarves to the troops. Christmas packages were needed for the soldiers too, so a box was placed in the vestibule of each church to collect items.

Folks were urged to increase their wood supply as coal would be difficult to get in the winter of 1917-1918. Everyone was encouraged to sign the Food Conservation card so that more food could be sent to the troops, and the paper printed a number of sugarless recipes because of the shortage. In January of 1918, sugar rationing cards were issued, with each person receiving just a half pound per week. Citizens were encouraged to grow “Victory Gardens” and to help with shortages in other ways, such as, “wheatless Wednesdays”, “Meatless Tuesdays”, “Fuelless Mondays”, and “Gasless Sundays”.

On April 18, the first of many full page ads appeared in the *Observer* asking people to buy Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps. Congressman Frank Guernsey paid for two full pages in one issue. It showed drawings of some children on one page and soldiers on the other with these words in bold print:

**GIVE YOUR LITTLE ONES  
AN INTEREST IN THE FUTURE,  
HE NEEDS GUNS, AMMO, TRUCKS,  
AEROPLANES, CLOTHING, FOOD**

By mid May, Foxcroft residents had purchased \$46,800 in Liberty Bonds, and Dover folks a total of \$70,500. The entire county’s total as \$374,200 – pretty good for Piscataquis County!

Continued on Page 7

(On the Homefront, cont'd from page 6)

A group of citizens, led by Miss Ethel Hughes, felt that a roll of honor containing a list of those in the service should be erected. This was very quickly done in less than a month, and the dedication of the Roll of Honor was held on September 23, 1918, in Monument Square.

A casualty of the war here was the annual fair held each fall at the harness track on Park Street. It was cancelled because the officials of the fair were too busy with the war effort.

In October, another large shipment of clothes totaling 1,540 pounds was sent from here to the Belgian refugees, and Col. E. J. Mayo of the mill and J. F. Hughes of the piano factory sponsored a full-page ad for Liberty Bonds.



**Roll of Honor  
In Front of Foxcroft Academy**

A premature celebration for the end of the war occurred on October 13. The paper said, "The fire alarm, steam whistles, and various bells got the people out about 6:30 Sunday morning on a report that Germany had accepted President Wilson's answer to a peace proposal. Later, the importance of the report was modified, but in spite of that a large crowd assembled in Union Square about 10 when a precession was formed of men, women and children on foot and in automobiles and carriages, marched around the square. In the meantime, guns were fired and bells rung, although few people could really tell what it was all being done for."

No big headline announced the official end of the war. Instead, there was only this short paragraph: "A mass meeting will be held in Central Hall on Sunday, November 17, to commemorate with gratitude the ending of the war." Another full page ad, sponsored by the stores, banks, and other businesses proclaimed:

### **PEACE AND THANKSGIVING**

There was a large attendance at Central Hall to hear speeches and sing *America* at the close of the program. Another large crowd at the train station in December greeted the soldiers as they returned.

In spite of the war's officially ending, there was still a need for food and clothing for "stricken Europe". In 1919 ten bags were sent from here via the Red Cross. The need to keep purchasing bonds to help pay for the war had the Kineo Trust and the Piscataquis Savings bank urging folks in an ad to buy Liberty Loan Bonds which would be a "pledge that our dead upon the battlefields of France shall not have died in vain".

One of the stores in Dover had a collection of German helmets, gas masks and other war souvenirs in a window, and Dr. C. C. Hall spoke at the Congregational Church about his experiences in France.

In 1919, a group of local servicemen met on August 29 to form a post of the American Legion (now the Chadbourne-Merrill Post), with Charles Norton as Post Commander, George Folsom as Vice-Commander, Malcolm Stoddard as Adjutant, Errol Brawn as Finance Officer, Carl Bailey as Historian, and Omar Bartlett as Chaplain. There were 19 other charter members. The Post requested veterans to stop wearing their uniforms to work and save them as they would be useful later for parades and entertainments to be given by the Post. (Note: our Historical Society has no World War One uniforms. We have a display in the museum with many WWI items but no uniforms. If you have one in the family, please consider a donation.)

I want to thank Lou Stevens for much of this story. His books are such wonderful resources.

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH THE  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE**

St. Gervais. France

Mar. 23. 1919

Dear Katharine:

It has been a long time since I have written, but I have been rather busy and expecting to come home anytime.

For six weeks now we have been waiting for a boat to the United States and we are very anxious to get back, too. I am coming to Sebec and catch some fish and eat a lot, and keep your Mother busy cooking.

We have very good billets, and very good bunks. although they are not as soft as a good bed and mattress. Our food is very good, plentiful and well cooked. The climate is cool but not cold, and we are very comfortable walking in the evening without any overcoat. The roads are very good, no mud and very smooth. France has very good roads. and if it had not been for these roads, the Germans would have won the war. In one battle the French won because they could send troops and ammunition in trucks over the good roads, and so they brought up their extra men just where they were needed. The roads are never soft and muddy even in spring when it rains continuously for days. There are a great many grapes raised here, in fact the French people call this part of France "the vineyard of France", just as the land around Tours is called "the granary of France" because it produces so much wheat and other grains.

The fields around here are all filled with grape vines. At many points we find large underground caves, from which limestone has been taken to build houses. All the buildings are made of stone. even hen-houses and barns. The caves are very large, and some of them have water in them. One afternoon some of the fellows and I walked nearly all the afternoon in a large cave, and when we came out we were in someone's cellar! What do you think of that?

Letter to Katherine Wingate from her uncle Richard Morgrage sent from St. Gervais, France just after World War One. Letter donated by Barbara Lockwood



**Letters from Our Soldiers**  
From Clyde E. Oakes, Foxcroft  
(Printed in the *Observer*, September 5, 1918)

In France  
July 30, 1918

Dear Aunt:

I received your letter of the day we went into the trenches so could not answer it until I got out. Well I am out in a hospital. When we went into the lines this time we had some excitement, take it from me. We were in the Lines about a week. When we get orders to go Over the Top you can imagine the feeling of us boys. The time had come when we could get our revenge on "Old Fritz."

There were two companies ahead of us that formed in the first wave. When the four companies got out in a wheat field a signal was given to deploy. That wheat field was one mass of men all clad in olive drab. We went over at 7 in the morning without a barrage. After that we went over four times. The last day we went twice, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. When we were in the woods we got gas sent over to us and I got some of it. Not very much and am coming along well.

I am in the southern part of France. It is a pretty spot where the hospital is located, an old summer resort.

One of the boys is gathering up the mail so will close now.

Your friend,  
Pvt. Clyde E. Oakes  
Co. F, 103<sup>rd</sup> Inf.



(1913)

## Annual Dues

Many thanks to all those who have sent in their Historical Society dues for 2018. We really appreciate having you as a member. If you haven't sent in your dues yet, please do so now so you can continue to enjoy all of the benefits of membership in the Historical Society, including receiving copies of the *Conserver*.

---

### The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society – Membership Application Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues are \$10 per person and \$7.00 for senior memberships. Please make checks payable to: Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, 874 West Main Street, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426. Dues cover January to December. If you are giving a gift membership, please include the name and address and we'll gladly notify the recipient of your gift.

---

### A Cement sidewalk in Union Square

(*Observer*, November 1, 1919)

Walter L. Brown has completed a fine cement sidewalk from the corner at Ober & Clark's store [True Value Hardware] to a point a little beyond W.L. Sampson's marble shop [fire station]. It was extended some distance farther than was originally intended as the appropriation was low, Edward E. Whitney, Dr. A.H. Stanhope and Harold F. Norton were seen working on the foundation to reduce the expense to the town. The surfacing of the square which it was planned to do this season will be postponed to next year. The sidewalk has made a great improvement in the appearance of the square.



### Message from Mary

Well, here we are with our fall issue! Where has the summer gone?

The Observer Building was busy with visitors, especially on Whoopie Pie Day and Homecoming (in spite of the rainy day). Lew Dow's East Dover display brought many folks in. They stood beside the display and told stories. A hearty thank you to all who hosted. We couldn't be open without you.

The demos at the Blacksmith Shop went well and we thank the blacksmiths who came to share their craft. The children were focused on the forge and the hammering and asked questions and learned a great deal.

Keep an eye on the papers as we hold a special event at Central Hall in September. It will be guaranteed to spark memories and we hope you can attend to share.

We now start to slow down. The World War 1 display in the back room will come down and we anticipate a display featuring some of the businesses in town. Anyone want to help?

## Our Corporate Sponsors

A grateful thank you to the following businesses whose funds support the Society and its efforts to preserve our history. When you shop or see these folks, please tell them 'thank you' for their support!

Ellen Anderson, D.P.M.  
Family Eyecare  
Green Door Gallery  
Lary Funeral Home  
Maine Highlands Federal C/U  
Mallett Real Estate  
Steinke and Caruso  
Rowell's Garage  
Mark Stitham, M. D  
Sean Stitham, M.D.

**Thank you all!**

## Items Available

We have a wide collection of wonderful Christmas ornaments available at the Historical Society Buildings. They are \$6.00 each (add \$4.00 for shipping)

2008 – Blacksmith Shop  
2009 – Observer Building  
2010 – Central Hall  
2011 – Thompson Free Library  
2012 – Foxcroft Academy  
2013 – The Blethen House  
2014 – Pleasant Street School  
2015 – Mayo's Mill  
2016 – Piscataquis County Court House  
2017 – Brown Mills  
2018 – (Old) Mayo Hospital

DVD's : Glimpses of Dover and Foxcroft - \$10.00 (add \$3.00 for shipping)

Memories of Central Hall/Lou Stevens - \$15.00 (add \$3.00 for shipping)

Dover-Foxcroft throws: \$40.00 (add \$8.00 for shipping)





The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc.  
28 Orchard Road  
Dover-Foxcroft, ME  
04426-3706

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 57  
DOVER\_FOXCROFT  
ME.

