

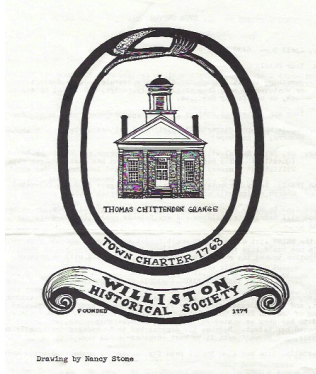


Williston Historical Society  
P.O. Box 995  
Williston, VT 05495

*Exciting Things Happening at WHS - See inside!*

*Newsletter — Fall 2021*





# Williston Historical Society Bulletin

Volume 48, Number 2

November 2021

“Every individual is an historical figure.”

Founded 1974

S. & J. Burroughs, Editors

## WHS Officers

President – Brenda Perkins

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Membership Chair: Peter Callas

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## Renewal/New Membership

The Williston Historical Society is continuing to offer free membership. **We still ask that you renew your membership each year** so we can keep a count and make sure we have current contact information. To renew or become a member of the Williston Historical Society please send an email to [peter.callas@uvm.edu](mailto:peter.callas@uvm.edu) with your preferred contact information. You may also write us at Williston Historical Society, P.O. Box 995, Williston, VT 04595. We are always looking for folks who would like to be a more active member by volunteering for events or projects, so please indicate such on your membership email/letter.

## I Remember...

Please share if you have a memory of growing up or living in Williston. Perhaps this is the time to write down your thoughts about living through a Pandemic!

Send your memory or thoughts to Jeneva Burroughs

[momdad.burroughs@gmail.com](mailto:momdad.burroughs@gmail.com).

or mail to 81 Peterson Lane, Williston, VT 05495

## **Report from the President**

Greetings,

Here we go again – more gatherings postponed, worried watching of the Covid 19 numbers and thoughts of “when is it ever going to end?” When I wrote the spring President’s letter, I was certain we would have plans in place by now to move forward with programming and projects. Alas, we appear to be in the same holding pattern!

Some exciting things have occurred during this past year despite the pandemic.

The Society opened the Stovepipe Corners Schoolhouse on July 4th and welcomed a fair number of “masked” visitors to learn the history of it and other one room schoolhouses in Williston.

We had a successful roll out of our new book “Williston” (a photographic history of Williston). Many people have purchased it and there continues to be interest in acquiring a copy. Our thanks to Dick Allen for all his work authoring this book.

October 17<sup>th</sup>, on a crisp, sunny fall day a very small group gathered outside on the library patio to open the Time Capsule (trunk). Jack Price did a great job presenting a brief history of the project and speaking about some of the contents. The Board decided that the trunk could not continue to hold so many items and continue being opened and added to every ten years. We will be putting together a group of interested folks after the holidays to look through the trunk and make some decisions about how things will be handled going forward. Keep your eyes open for emails from WHS asking for volunteers if you are interested.

On November 6. a small group gathered at the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library to hear Rick McGuire speak. He shared many tales from his professional journey as Town Administrator in several places prior to his long tenure in Williston.

Rick’s talk was preceded by a very short Annual Meeting. Meghan Cope stepped down as Vice President. Aron Merrill ran unopposed for her position as V.P. Peter Callas is serving another three-year term. The slate of officers passed unanimously.

Brenda Perkins, President

**1911 News Excerpts from Williston**  
**From the Burlington Free Press**  
**Compiled by Richard Allen**

February 10.

Elmer Taft of Taft Corners, who went into the business of raising skunks, as a sideline about a year ago, has given up the industry and sold off his stock. The number increased rapidly, and the expense of maintenance was small, but the skins did not bring enough to pay for the trouble. While in captivity they became exceedingly tame and could be handled by any member of the family.

February 13.

Miss Ella Redmond, while assisting in shooting a squirrel in the corn barn, Friday night accidentally got about half a dozen shot in her left arm and in her face.

March 7.

About 60 people [from Essex Center] went to Williston to see the fast Williston basketball team go down to defeat by the score of 14 to 12. The Williston line-up: Clark at center, T. O'Gradey at right guard, Francis at left forward, J. O'Gradey at right forward, and Brown at left guard...Time: three 20-minute periods. At the end of the three periods the score was a tie, so they played until there was a basket from the floor.



The Williston Historical Society recently purchased this post card of the 1911 Williston basketball team. On the reverse side it is post marked June 9, 1911, from the North Williston post office and addressed to Mr. Karl Smith in Cambridge, Vermont with the message: "This is what we did last winter for excitement. How is your band? Ours is a good deal better than last year I think." Signed "Chas."

March 15.

One of the largest herds of cattle to be killed in the State because of infection of tuberculosis was slaughtered yesterday at the Burlington rendering plant. The cattle numbered 45 and were from the Frank Talcott farm in Williston. They were of blooded Jersey stock and the disease was in various stages of advancement. The only larger herd killed at the plant because of infection was that from the Whitcomb farm in Essex two years ago.

April 5.

H. S. Isham of Williston remembers an April that exceeded the current month in the amount of snow on the ground. On April 11, 1863, the snow was so deep that it completely covered the fence rails, and the crust was so thick and substantial as to hold people or any team. And the thaw of that year, setting in just two days later, made such quick havoc that by the 23rd people had to abandon runners and go on wheels.

April 11.

Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Warren have issued invitations for the marriage of their daughter, Mildred, to Wright Clark on Wednesday, April 19, at their home.



The Burlington Free Press article that described the April 19, 1911, wedding of Wright Clark and Mildred Warren was filled with details on the gowns of the women and the flowers on display. The wedding took place in the parlor of the Warren house, across from the Federated Church, and the ceremony was performed by Reverend B. M. Kent. The bride received \$1,000 from her father, Charles D. Warren, and \$100 in gold from her mother, Josie Warren. After their wedding trip, the couple would reside at the Clark homestead on Governor Chittenden Road. (Courtesy Cameron Clark.)

April 11.

The road below the union poor farm in Williston has been washed out to the depth of several feet for some distance by the high water and ice from the Winooski River and two brooks [Allen and Muddy], and the road [now River Cove Road] which leads to Burlington will be impassable for some time.

May 11.

Edward H. Frye of Boston, monologist, will present his latest success, "The Man from Home," Monday evening May 22 at the Williston town hall, under the auspices of the Ladies' Union Aide Society.

May 27.

The pre-Memorial exercises by the town schools will be held in the Methodist Church Monday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. The program will consist of songs, recitations, and an address by the Rev. A. B. Potter. The Williston band will be in attendance. It is hoped that the citizens will make an effort to be present. The higher department of the graded school reopened Wednesday after being closed a week on account of the mumps. High school entrance examinations will be held June 1 and 2 at the academy.

September 19, 21, and 23



The E-M-F auto was named using the initials of the three principal owners of the Everitt-Metzger- Flanders Company. Charles D. Warren of Williston, District Deputy Grand Master of Masons, gave testimonial to the value of this auto, "I ran my car all through the season of 1910 and I am very much pleased with it. My garage repair bill was less than ten cents."

### 1911 Auto Reliability Run Included a Williston Leg

In the early days of the automobile age, reliability tours or runs were held to promote safe and trouble-free travel by autos, improved roads, and legislation friendly to the industry. Vermont Highway Commissioner Charles W. Gates promised his support for the three 1911 Burlington Tours slated for September 19, 21, and 23. Gates wanted to know the routes ahead of time so he could inform town road commissioners and encourage them "to clear the roads of rocks, boulders, etc." The Burlington Free Press described the format: "The tours will not be races, and no contestant will try to get to a given point quicker than another. It is planned to have the cars travel about 20 miles an hour and keep this speed throughout the run. Those cars that make the trip without breakdown or mishap will, of course, receive credit for general stability and reliability." Each contestant would have a "running card" to be signed by the checkers at the intermediate stations. The stations were marked by a checkered flag, a device used to this day to mark the finish line of a race. The September 21 route would go from Essex Junction to Barre/Montpelier and return through Williston to include French Hill. "This hill is one of the steepest in the state and should give all the machines a thorough test."

The more than thirty entries included a Buick, a Cadillac, a Hupmobile, and a Winton Six. Dr. W. G. E. Flanders would run his E-M-F auto in the tour. There was one female scheduled to take part, Miss Lula R. Jarvis driving a Ford runabout. National reliability tours have been revived by the Vintage Motor Car Club of America and the Antique Auto Club of America.

November 17.

A wreck train was sent from [Saint Albans]...to clear the track at Williston when train No. 10...met with a slight accident. As the southbound train was pulling in on a siding to allow the northbound train to pass, several freight cars were struck by the train and thrown over on the main line, blocking both the main line and the siding. The track was cleared about 10:30 and both passenger trains were delayed about three hours. Two flat cars were demolished but no other damage was done to the property.



**Antique Rocker from the Jacob Emmert Price Estate, Circa 1870**

Donated to the Williston Historical Society

By Jack Price, great-grandson of Jacob

This tub-styled rocker, often referred to in our family as “the Lincoln rocker”, belonged to my great grandfather, Jacob E. Price, who used it in his later years. Jacob was born in 1836 outside of Chicago, the youngest of three sons to Abraham and Catherine Price. During the Civil War, he was exempted from serving like his older brothers in the Union Army, in order to take care of his elderly parents. As a young man, he embarked on a journeyman’s education in carpentry, although he eventually took a different path, partnering with another man to establish a feather duster company in Chicago. Whether true or not, another piece of family lore portrayed this company as “one of the two largest feather duster manufacturers in the country!” This might seem a silly superlative, but you have to remember that in a post-Civil War America, every household had a few of these implements, along with rug beaters, to maintain a clean homestead, prior to the development of vacuum cleaners.

Richard H. Allen, in his historical book, *North Williston: Down Depot Hill*, cites a market for shipping turkey feathers on a large scale to feather duster producers in the Midwest. One such enterprise was “The Chicago Feather Duster Company”, which may have been Jacob Price’s outfit. The C.F.D.C. advertised their dusters for a multitude of uses, charging from about \$1.50 to \$5.00 apiece, but sold by the dozen. It is fanciful to think that there is a connection between my great grandfather’s business and a supply depot in North Williston, but if it’s possible to make that jump, then the old mahogany rocker, now donated for comfortable use by the Williston Historical Society, has fittingly come home to roost. Jacob Price would be very pleased to hear of it.



## World War II Veterans Remembered, Part II

As described in the Spring 2021 newsletter, the historical society has received an album of photographs of Williston World War II veterans from Cameron Clark. Here are two more examples from the collection: Frank Palady and Ralph Pillsbury.



Frank J. Palady, Jr. was born in Williston in 1920 to Frank and Margaret Palady. He served in the Army in the South Pacific during World War II, and was honorably discharged on September 16, 1944, after being wounded in the battle for the Solomon Islands. He had spent 14 months with Company K of the Vermont National Guard in the Pacific Theater. Later he was the police chief in Bristol and Vergennes.



Ralph W. Pillsbury was born on August 12, 1918, in Williston, to Caleb and Mary Pillsbury. He entered the Army in 1943 and served as an airplane mechanic on a base in England. While there, he married Kathleen Mooney, a local woman. They had six children together.



### **Historical Society's Time Capsule "Unearthed"**

By Jack Price

In 2000, a group of four eighth grade girls at Williston Central School chose to construct a millennial time capsule as their 8th Grade Challenge Project. Under the guidance of teacher Michael Thomas, and with the sponsorship of our historical society, the students produced a beautiful wooden trunk with side handles, hasp, and lock to preserve items depicting Williston's recent notable events for future researchers. The "time capsule" was slated for opening at regular 10-year intervals, its contents re-discovered, and items from the previous decade added before being re-sealed and stowed away in the Vermont Room at the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library. Short-term, periodic openings of time capsules are known as "leapfrogging." This year's ceremony took place on a sunny autumn afternoon, Sunday, October 17th, on the patio of the library. The 20th year ceremony was postponed due to the pandemic. The contributions from 2000 and 2010 were reviewed by the audience, new offerings described and displayed.