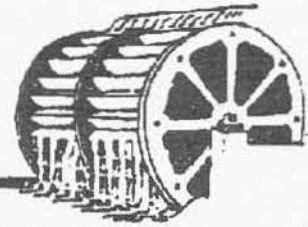


# MILLWORK



Spring, 2001

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Vol. 15 - No. 1

## What's News?

### Returning to Hanford Mills Museum

*Editor's Note: Hanford Mills Museum's former Executive Director, Jane McCone, left the museum for the Director's position at the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton, Virginia. We hope you will welcome our new Executive Director, Liz Callahan.*

My first visit to Hanford Mills Museum was on a rainy and muddy spring day about nine years ago. I returned the following February for a brisk and bustling ice harvest. Later that spring, I became the museum's education and programming coordinator. Since then, I've visited the Mill many times, introducing friends and family to its treasures.

When Hanford Mills Museum opened its search, my wonderful experiences as a visitor and an employee drew me to the opportunity to rejoin the Mill's staff. Nine years after my first soggy visit, I return to the Mill as its Director. I am looking forward to working with the dedicated staff and volunteers who make the Mill a truly wonderful place.

I hope that you will volunteer or visit again soon and bring friends and family to our special place in history. I look forward to seeing you then.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Callahan  
Executive Director

*Liz has been the Director of the Delaware County Historical Association (only 15 miles down the road from Hanford Mills Museum) since 1994. She is a native of Buffalo, New York, a graduate of LeMoyne College in Syracuse and has a Masters in History Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program. Liz lives in Mount Vision with her husband, Bill Francis, and their children Daniel and Matilda.*



### A Gift

The Hanford Mills Museum site is expanding, just a little, thanks to the Kelso family. Jean Kelso, widow of mill founder Ken Kelso, and her son and daughter-in-law, Tim and Maria Kelso, have donated over a mile of old Ulster and Delaware Railroad right-of-way to the museum. The 5.3 acres of land extends east of the museum and will provide a walking trail along what used to be railroad track in the woods. Trees and brush have to be cut back and an old railroad bridge repaired, but plan in the future to explore a little bit more of the old U&D.



## Collection Donations

Hanford Mills Museum would like to thank the following people for donating artifacts and documents to the Museum's historic collection in 1999:

Cleneth Barkman  
Ben Beams  
Betty Bergleitner  
Russ Blodgett  
Harry Callahan  
Erna Chichester  
Judith Coburn  
Don Conklin  
John L. Davidson  
Harrison & Audrey Dickson  
Verna Engstom-Heg  
Marvin Glass  
Bonnie Greer  
Ken Kellerhouse  
Grace Kent  
Maitland (FL) Historical Society  
Margaret McArthur  
Monmouth (NJ) Co. Park Sys.  
William O'Dell, Jr.  
Roy Palmer  
Wanda R. Perry  
Gordon Roberts  
Donald Scheetz

*Con't. on page 12*

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## In Memoriam

We are sad to report the death of William O'Dell, Jr. on January 1, 2001 at the age of 56. We will all miss Bill a great deal. He was one of the best volunteers Hanford Mills Museum has ever had. Most members of the museum support us in one way or another, but Bill supported us every way he could. He not only volunteered his time for nearly every special event, but he also supported the museum with donations of funds, artifacts and special event supplies.

We wanted to be sure that Bill

was not forgotten at Hanford Mills Museum. A few years ago, the museum started its "Volunteer of the Year" award.

The first year there was no voting, no question - Bill was the unanimous choice to receive the first award.



Now, again, there was no need for a vote. There were not doubts - we renamed the award the "Bill O'Dell, Jr. Volunteer of the Year" award in his honor.

We hope that you will continue Bill's tradition of volunteer work for Hanford Mills Museum so you will be able to join us next November for our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to honor Bill and his work.



## Local Students Display History Projects

by Sara Sikes

Once again this year, Hanford Mills Museum was the Catskill Regional Coordinator for the National History Day Contest. Despite an initial postponement due to inclement weather, the contest was held on Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at the Cooperstown Elementary School. Area middle and high school students demonstrated their knowledge of history with a selection of exhibits, research papers, documentaries and performances.

Students prepare for the contest by working on projects related to a chosen topic. This year's theme is "Frontiers in History." The initial research for the contest usually begins in October, and the participants are required to base their

projects on both primary and secondary documents. The information can be presented in a variety of formats, including tabletop exhibits, historical papers, documentaries and original performances. Teams of judges then evaluate the entries and award prizes based on historic accuracy, interpretation, presentation and use of available resources.

Highlights from this year's projects include the following:

- a tabletop exhibit on Title IX and women's changing role in sports, which incorporated information gathered from a survey of local school children;
- an individual performance, which developed the character of William Cooper based on his original correspondence, land books and business papers;
- a historical paper on the uses and evolution of the helicopter that included a personal interview with a U.S. Marine helicopter pilot.

The regional competition represents the first step in a series of History Day events, which are held at the state level in May and the national level in June. Of the 112 students involved, 17 individual and groups entries were selected to advance to the New York state competition. We wish them the best of luck in this next phase of the contest!

Hanford Mills Museum would like to thank all of the students who participated in the contest, as well as the teachers who encouraged their students to become involved. A special thanks also goes to the judges who volunteered their time to evaluate the projects. For more information on becoming involved in History Day, contact Sara Sikes at 607-278-5744 or visit the New York State History Day website at <[www.nysha.org/historyday](http://www.nysha.org/historyday)>.



# "A Man Takes a Journey, A Stranger Comes to Town"

by Bernice Graham Telian, Town of Meredith Historian

The words of Tolstoy, "A man takes a journey, a stranger comes to town, the only two stories in all of literature" embody the early history of the Town of Meredith. You can learn about the town's history in Meredith's Bicentennial book *Two Hundred Years of Rolling Suns, Town of Meredith 1800-2000*. Over a year has passed since the book became available on March 14, 2000. The book is unique with its beautiful colored cover painted by artist, Barbara Santora. Inside are four Agnes Palmer paintings reproduced in color.

The New York State Library Cultural Education Center sent this letter upon receiving a copy: "December 27, 2000 - Dear Ms. Telian: This is to acknowledge receipt of your charming *Two Hundred Years of Rolling Suns*, which was donated ... This history is a wonderful addition to the collection. It will be added to the catalog and be available for researchers as soon as it is processed."

The 450 pages of the book cover in depth the 200 years of history in the Town of Meredith, beginning with the chapter "Before Meredith." This chapter gives you a glimpse of the vast vegetation and dense forests that sprawled over our land. I then discuss genealogical data of Reese Meredith, who married Margaret Carpenter in 1738 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and explain how our Township was named for him.

The chapter "Old, Old Meredith" has copies of advertisements for the sale of land "a few miles beyond Harpersfield and Kortright." My conclusion that the first thirty-four men who came to

Meredith, and appear in the 1800 census, were all men of prodigious strength of character, led to the title of the article about these men and their families. I diligently pursued research for two years and my correspondence with researchers brought forth an astonishing amount of information.

Chapters on "East Meredith," "West Meredith," "Meridale" and "Meredith Square" Communities reveal old photographs and articles on social groups, stores, post offices, the Meredith Inn, Meridale Farms, Hanford Mills and memories of days gone past.

"Agriculture and 4-H" have always been an integral part of Meredith and wonderful old farming photographs are plentiful. Articles and old documents take you through this part of our history from Samuel A. Law's 1814 cures for animals, our milk cans and

creameries, the 1941 milk strike to the Dairy Compact of 1997.

"Our Cemeteries," "Our Churches," and "Our Schools" are chapters that fulfill a genealogist's desire for lists. Photographs of these buildings (most long gone) take you back to a time "Gone With the Wind."

"Our Folks" tells many family stories. It is in this chapter, the first compilation of names of the men from Meredith who served in our Armed Forces is given.

This book may still be purchased for \$30.00 plus \$6.25 for shipping and handling. Send checks to:

Bernice Graham Telian  
10413 County Highway 14  
Delhi, NY 13753

The book is also available in the Briar Street Gift Shop at Hanford Mills Museum and at the Meredith Town Hall.



*Rev. John Osterhout and Mrs. Lucinda Brydon on March 14, 2000 at the Bicentennial Commemorative Program, portrayed the Rev. Lyman Stilson and his wife Lucretia Brownson Stilson who sailed on a ship in 1837 to Burma as missionaries. Their story and letters are included in the book.*

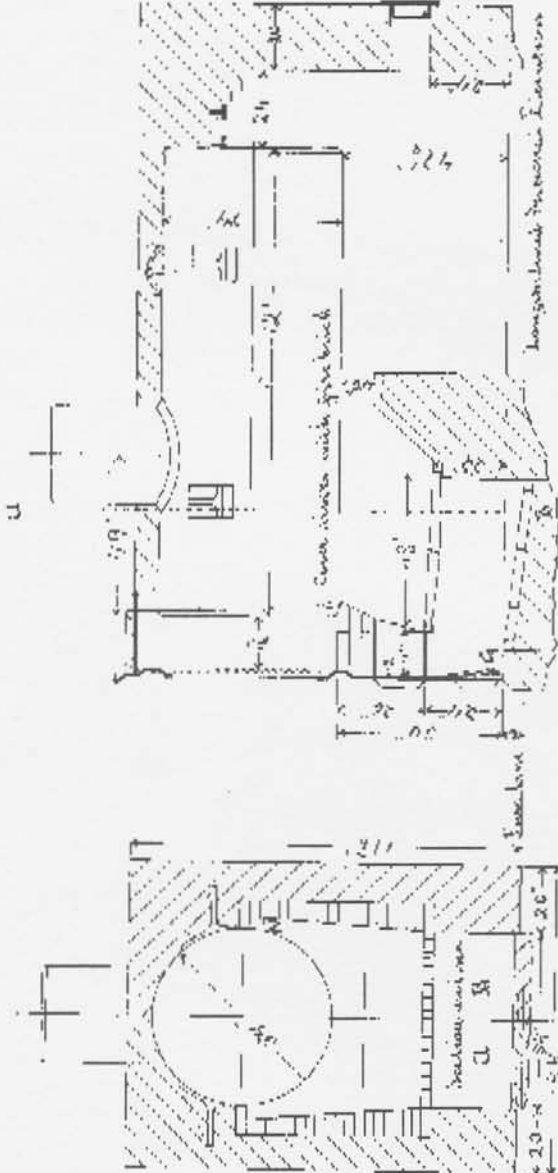
# From the Collections - Steam

*Editor's Note: In honor of the steam boiler that the Museum is working to have built and installed in the mill, we thought we would show you the original plans sent to the Hanfords in 1895. This plan helped them prepare the brickwork for the boiler they ordered from the Erie City Iron Works. This is a computer scan of an original document in Hanford Mills Museum's Archives.*

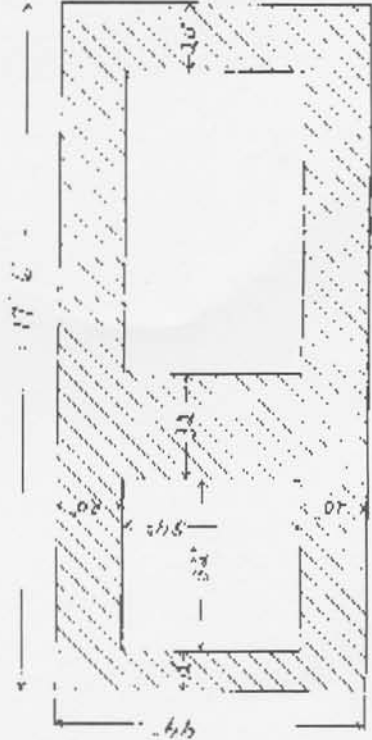
*Note for setting standard boilers  
 the side walls should be so  
 built that the longitudinal  
 seams of the shell will be  
 protected from the fire*

ERIE CITY IRON WORKS.  
 Drawing Office.  
 Erie, Pa., Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> 1895  
 TITLE Drawing for Cold Fuel Furnace  
 CARD NO. 4,725  
 BOOK NO. 4 TUBE NO.  
 SCALE  $\frac{1}{2}'' = 1'$  Feet

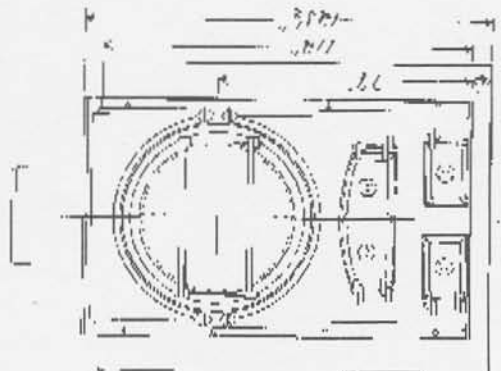
*Note: The grate has been raised  
 to above floor line to give greater  
 depth to ash pit if for any reason  
 it cannot be raised to the grate  
 can be set even with floor line  
 and not raised.*



About { 1,500 common brick  
 1,000 fire brick



Cross Plan



Front Elevation

# Meet "Master Workman" Charles O. Hanford

by Caroline de Marrais

D.J. Hanford, and his sons, Will and Horace, were mill owners, but other Hanfords were also employees. One of these workers was Charles Olmstead Hanford. Charlie, as he was known, was both D.J.'s cousin and brother-in-law, although D.J. was sixteen years older. Besides other jobs, Charlie occasionally worked at the mill in a number of different capacities.

Charlie was born to Levi and Elizabeth (Brownell) Hanford in September, 1850 at the Hanford family farm on Gun House Hill which is about 10 miles east of East Meredith. He was an only child. This was unusual for the families of the time, but we have no records to tell us why this was. Charlie's mother, Elizabeth Hanford, is the source of many of the diary quotes that we use in the *Millwork*.

Unfortunately, only one complete diary exists from Charlie's childhood years. At least it is able to give us an idea of one small part of his childhood. Charlie grew up on the family farm, helping his father with farm chores and perhaps learning the carpentry skills he would use later in life. In the fall, he often went to an uncle's farm for a week at a time to help pick hops. Through the winter months, he attended Stamford Academy which was about eight or ten miles from where they lived. This was too far to travel to school every day, so Charlie often stayed overnight in Stamford through the week. Whenever his father, Levi, was in town he took time to bring Charlie home. He probably did not get much of a chance to get homesick.

Most of Elizabeth's diary entries about Charlie are quite mundane, except this entry from March 22, 1864:



*Charles O. Hanford, c. 1914,  
at about the age of 64.*

Cold weather. Orins Old House burnt this morning. Caught fire by Charlie dressing Flax by the fire.

Orrin was one of Levi's brothers and the house must have been on or near the Hanford Farm. Flax is a plant used to make linen fabric, and it must be beaten to separate the fibers from the rest of the plant. There is no other mention of the fire in the diary. We do not know if his parents punished Charlie for his carelessness or if they were just happy to have their only child safe.

Two years later, Levi sold his farm and moved his little family to East Meredith, where his young nephew D.J. had moved about ten years before. Due to an illness, Levi found it difficult running a farm, so in East Meredith he took up shopkeeping. Charlie was about sixteen. It is likely he started doing some occasional work at the mill, which was running seasonally at the time. As Levi's health improved, he and Charlie eventually started to farm as well as keep store. Charlie also found time to continue his studies and found a way to do it in a social situation. In 1868, he and several other young men and women formed the Alphan Society, a literary and debating club. Some

of their topics included:

- Resolved that the Midland Railway will be a benefit to Delaware County.
- Resolved that Christopher Columbus deserves more praise for the discovery of America.
- Resolved that imagination affords more real pleasure than realization.
- Resolved that city life is preferable to that in the country.
- Resolved that the hope of reward is a greater incentive to act on than the fear of punishment.

In 1873, Charlie married Caroline Laughren Flower, younger sister of D.J. Hanford's first wife, Analiza. Carrie, as she was known, was about fifteen years younger than her sister, but only a year younger than Charlie. She no doubt met him while visiting her sister's family in East Meredith. Levi and Elizabeth shared their house with the new couple.

Charlie and Carrie's first child, Clara Belle, was born the next year. Clara Belle was the apple of everybody's eye, but unfortunately, she did not live long. On May 5, 1878, Elizabeth Hanford wrote in her diary "Clara Bell cough like the whooping cough." This was the beginning of a long and futile fight with the disease. Clara Belle lingered months, sometimes feeling better, sometime worse. Over that time, the Hanfords called in at least five different doctors, but no one could help.

Charlie and Levi had to continue working to support their family. Throughout this time they were making preparations to move their store up the road closer to their home. On August 17 (about three and a half months after Clara Belle first coughed), Elizabeth wrote "Clara Bell died today at 4

*Con't. on Page 6*

*Workman - con't. from page 5*  
o'clock. Mrs Minto & Mrs Every sits up with the corpse." She was buried the next day on Sunday. Elizabeth recorded the text of the sermon - Revelations 22 "There shall be no night there etc." Still, life had to go on, and they moved the store the next day on rollers to its new location in the center of town. This did not mean that the loss did not devastate the whole family, both parents and grandparents. Elizabeth probably best expressed their sadness a year later in her diary when she wrote on August 18, 1879 "One year since our little Clara Belle was buiried."

Charlie and Carrie went on to have five more children: Maude Augusta in 1879, Mary Elizabeth (Lizzie) in 1881, Fred Levi in 1883, Anna Belle in 1887 and an unnamed baby girl that died at birth in 1894 (when Carrie was 43 years old). Later, their only son, Fred, would also die after a prolonged bout with disease, this time measles. He died at the age of 17. Elizabeth recorded his death in her diary on May 11, 1901:

Fred very bad, flighty. Died about ten o'clock. Dear, dear Boy, how can we spare him? He was very, very dear to us & I think a good Boy.

Fred died of complications caused by measles, pneumonia and peritonitis. All three of his sisters contracted the disease, but survived.

There was more to Charlie's life than the death of three children. We have to assume he had just as many good days as bad. Charlie was very active in the community. He was a charter member of the International Order of Good Templars. He helped start the East Meredith chapter of this

temperance (or prohibition) lodge in 1879. After a large store burned to the ground in 1891, we find Charlie active in the first East Meredith fire department:

The boys perfected their organization Thursday night as the East Meredith Engine Co. No. 1, by electing M.T. Tobey, chief engineer, Wm. Fay, foreman, and Charley (sic) Hanford, Asst. foreman.

*Delaware County Dairyman*  
May 22, 1891

Charlie was also active in the local Presbyterian Church, hosting socials for church fund-raising, he was a member of the Masons and a school trustee.

Charlie had many occupations, but he was known first and foremost as a carpenter. In one article the *Delaware County Dairyman* newspaper calls him the "Master Workman" and in another they write "Chas. Hanford is as always the boss designer and finisher in wood." September 30, 1892. Charlie helped to build many buildings in East Meredith. In 1886, Levi and Charlie put an addition on their own house, dividing it so the two families could have separate living spaces in the same building.

Additionally, Charlie was a farmer, helping his father run their small farm. They kept ten cows

(their wives made butter to sell in New York City) and each year they made hundreds of pounds of maple sugar. He was also a part-time worker at the mill. In that capacity we know that he cut off a finger in 1912. Fourteen years before that, the local paper reported:

C.O. Hanford came very near losing an eye a short time ago. While operating the planer at the Hanfords' mills a sliver flew and struck him, just missing the sight of the eye.

September 30, 1898

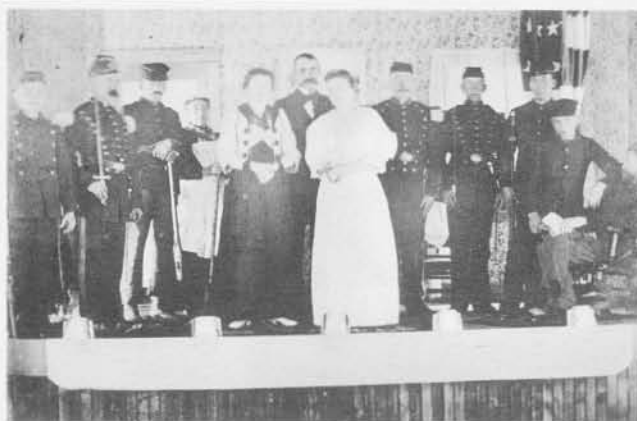
At other times, Charlie was what we would call a "consultant" today. Though he probably did not have much experience with steam engines, D.J. called Charlie in to help with the mill's first engine and boiler installation in 1881. On another project, the *Delaware County Dairyman* newspaper reported on June 24, 1898:

The Hanfords with the usual enterprise in keeping right up with the push, have put in a new Munsey Attrition Iron grinder. This mill is something new in the milling line and can be regulated to grind anything from a ½ pound of paper to a load of corn on the ear. N.L. Green, of Edmeston assisted by millwright C.O.

Hanford of this place put it in.

Charlie Hanford led a long, full life. In 1918, his wife Carrie died, but Charlie continued to live in the

house he and his father had enlarged. One of Carrie's sisters, widowed Mate Scudder, acted as his housekeeper. He died in 1926 at the age of 76. Charlie lived to see all three of his daughters marry local men. He was able to try his hand at many different jobs and he was well respected in the community he had helped to build both mentally and physically. Charlie Hanford really was the "Master Workman."



Charlie Hanford liked participating in community events. Here he is (second from left) as part of the cast of the play *The Heroic Dutchman of '76*.



# The Railroad in East Meredith

by Caroline de Marrais

"When this railroad gets itself in working order, I expect to see East Meredith have a boom that ... will put Oneonta in the shade." That is what the East Meredith correspondent wrote in the *Delaware County Dairyman* newspaper on December 28, 1888. Railroads were progress and progress was coming to East Meredith. Once it reached East Meredith it would work miracles, bringing the little village out of obscurity and into the lime light.

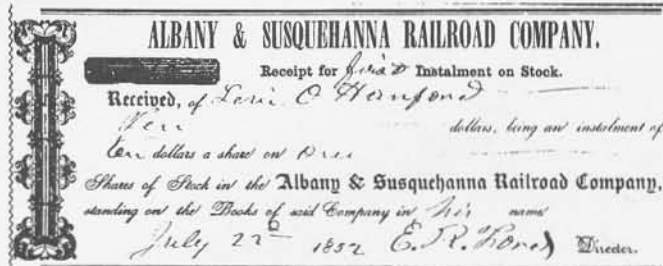
Could a railroad really do that for East Meredith? The correspondent wrote "All East Meredith wants is a chance to get in its

fine work, and it seems as if that time has nearly come." They hoped the railroad would help increase the demand for their products so East Meredith businesses could expand.

Residents were also looking forward to being able to have new products *shipped in*. The cost of delivery by railroad was lower than having items shipped by wagon. Many items were more easily acquired once a railroad came to East Meredith. Then, of course, not only could they ship items on the railroad, but people could easily make their way into and out of East Meredith. The railroad would perform miracles.

The first rumors of railroads came in 1851, when the state of New York granted a charter to the Albany and Susquehanna Railroad. This company planned to join Albany and Binghamton with a rail line that would run through Oneonta, New York. The Albany and Susquehanna would miss East Meredith by fifteen miles, but a

railroad only a couple hours' wagon ride away was better than no railroad at all. Local citizens, like Levi Hanford, supported this new railroad by buying stock in the line. In August of 1865, the Albany and Susquehanna Railroad reached Oneonta. They would later lease the line to the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company and the line



Levi Hanford bought stock early, note the date.

became known as the Delaware and Hudson Railroad.

It did not take long for D.J. Hanford to use the new railroad. By 1868, he was ordering new machinery for his mill. By 1869, he completed the addition of his gristmill and he received regular grain shipments on the Albany and Susquehanna Railroad. He used wagons to pick up his orders at the Oneonta and Cooperstown Junction stations. Picking up grain was probably an all day job, but it must have been worth it for the mill business. D.J. Hanford's gristmill prospered, and the mill continued to add machinery shipped by rail.

The next railroad to build tracks near East Meredith was the Cooperstown and Charlotte Valley Railroad. This was a small line incorporated in 1888 to join the Cooperstown & Susquehanna Valley Railroad, which ran between Cooperstown and Cooperstown Junction, to West Davenport. The rail line reached its goal in 1889. Now East Meredith was only six

miles from a railroad. Although it was a small line, the C & CV Railroad continued its ambitious expansion. In 1891, it incorporated the West Davenport Railroad to connect Stamford, New York to the end of the C & CV line at West Davenport. By early 1893, it had built three more miles of track to Davenport Center, but there it stopped permanently. East Meredith was now only three miles from a rail line.

D.J. Hanford took advantage of this by ordering his largest steam engine and boiler in 1895. The engine weighed two tons and the boiler weighed four tons. Pulling a four-ton

boiler from a railroad depot fifteen, ten or even six miles away would have been an arduous task. Even for three miles, D.J. worried and sent a letter to the man in charge of the local roads:

September 18, 1895

A.J. Benedict, Comm. Highways,  
Dear Sirs -  
Please take notice that we will move a Boiler within the next weeks over the Highway leading from Davenport Centre to East Meredith. Said Boiler weighs about 8000 lbs. We would suggest that you see that all bridges on this route in this town are placed in a safe condition.

Very Truly Yours

D.J. Hanford

These two railroads had an impact on East Meredith, but they never reached the actual borders of the village. Another railroad would eventually reach East Meredith. This line had its beginnings in 1865, when the Rondout & Oswego Railroad was incorporated to build a line from Rondout, near Kingston, New York to Oswego,

Con't. on page 8

*Steam - con't. from page 7*

New York on Lake Ontario. The plan took more than thirty years to complete and had many set backs. At first, they built the railroad swiftly through the highest part of the Catskill Mountains, reaching Stamford, New York in 1872. East Meredith residents must have been excited, though no records from the time exist to tell us. Then, in 1875, the Rondout & Oswego Railroad went bankrupt, stopping all construction on the line. A man named Thomas Cornell of Kingston, New York bought the railroad. Nothing happened for several years, but the Rondout & Oswego did gain a new name. It became the Ulster and Delaware Railroad.

In 1884, the railroad came to life as tracks were laid from Stamford to Hobart, New York. East Meredith finally began to see some action. Twice, railroad surveyors were in East Meredith to mark a route for the tracks. Elizabeth Hanford, in her diary, first mentions the men on August 31, 1885, when she wrote "The Surveyors for a railroad through here are at Will's tonight." Excitement must have been high and many East Meredith men helped to make the surveyor's job easier. Elizabeth Hanford recorded that Terney Silliman, George Dudley and her own son, Charlie, helped. Even Elizabeth's husband helped:

Levi & Terney Silliman went to Kortright Summit to Carry the Surveyors Instruments.

October 12, 1885

By November, the surveyors were gone and life was quiet again, but East Meredith waited patiently.

By 1887, the U & D Railroad hit a snag. It did not wish to run the tracks through Harpersfield as originally planned, but agreements were

already in place. To avoid the problem, the U & D Railroad chartered a new rail line, the Delaware & Otsego, with a new path to avoid Harpersfield. Once this new railroad laid the track, they would lease it to the U & D and all their problems would be solved. The D & O Railroad purchased land from the mill for its tracks and made an agreement for a switch to be built behind the building. Elizabeth Hanford wrote in her diary:

A Party of Officials went over the Anticipated Railroad from Kingston to Oneonta. Delagates from here Met them at Bloomville. Five teams from Oneonta met them here.

July 11, 1890

Competition for the railroad was fierce between villages and, of course, East Meredith supported the new rail line that passed through their own backyard. The D & O Railroad named two of East Meredith's prominent citizens to directors' positions in the company, store owner John H. Thompson and farmer Merritt S. Roberts. By 1891, the D & O had connected Bloomville to Hobart and excitement was running high.

M.S. Roberts and J.H. Thompson ... were notified to attend a meeting of the directors in Kingston Thursday of this week. This fact, coupled with the labor being laid out at Bloomville, and the massing of building supplies, etc., at that point, would indicate that the road is to be completed. 'So mote it be.'

*Delaware County Dairyman*

November 16, 1891



*East Meredith residents were so excited about the railroad they took pictures of the bare grade.*

Hopes were soon crushed, as a depression that year caused financial strain and plans for the railroad were dropped again. East Meredith residents were left to contemplate an empty, trackless railroad grade. It would be eight more years before a train would run over that grade.

Finally, the Delaware County Dairyman newspaper reported on August 18, 1899:

All the indications are that the Ulster and Delaware will be completed to Oneonta this year. The ties are being delivered and rails also. This week officials have been examining the approaches to the depot at Oneonta.

East Meredith began to bustle with railroad men. We can see the village's excitement in Elizabeth Hanford's diary entries:

Men are building a Shanty below Whites for the Itallians to live in while building the railroad which is being built

September 8, 1899

Carrie and Minnie [Silliman] went to see the Bridge Builders drive the spiles for the Bridge on the Railroad

October 13, 1899

We saw the Steam from the Construction train of our Railroad near Peter McAuslins.

November 23, 1899

The Cars went below near the Davenport line, went back to arkville with two Cars. Railroad & cars have come.

November 30, 1899

(note this day was

Thanksgiving).

Most of the Railroad men gone home.

December 15, 1899

And East Meredith was quiet again.

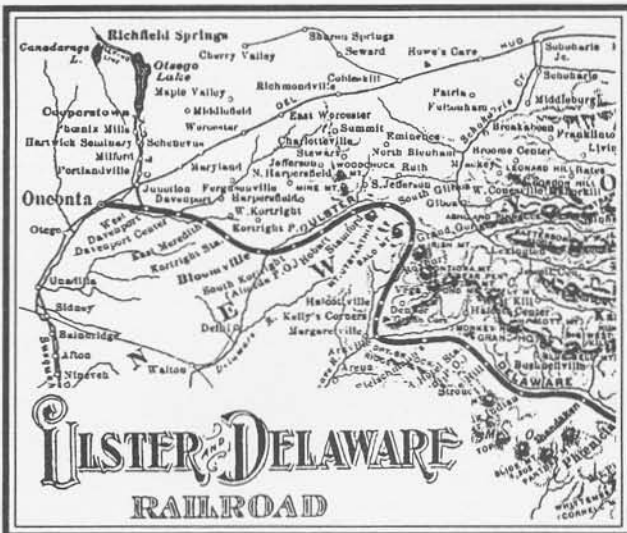
The quiet only lasted seven months. Presumably, they were laying the tracks farther west of the village into Oneonta. Then on July 15, 1900, the Ulster and Delaware Railroad sprang to life as the first official train rumbled through East Meredith. Elizabeth Hanford wrote in her

*Con't. on page 9*



Steam - con't. from page 8

*This map shows the western end of the U&D. The C&CV runs north of West Davenport, & the D&H runs through Oneonta.*



diary "Horace [her husband's brother] came yesterday on the first mail train on the Extension from Bloomville to Oneonta." East Meredith residents remembered that it was engine No. 9 with five coach cars and two baggage cars. Engine No. 9 would later be involved in the U & D's only serious passenger train accident in 1911 in Halcotville, NY. Engine No. 39 collided head on with Engine No. 9 which was hauling the paycar. Only railroad employees were injured or killed, but Engine No. 9 was so badly damaged, it had to be scrapped.

Did the railroad do what the inhabitants of East Meredith expected? Business in East Meredith boomed in 1900, two creameries were built to bottle milk and Hanford Mills began producing various tool handles and milk crates. They shipped the handles to Ohio and New Hampshire on the railroad, while the crates went to New York City and closer. However, East Meredith could not compete and it did not "put Oneonta in the shade." The Hanfords stopped making handles within five years. Their factory was just not big enough. Soon, milk crates were being made of metal,

and later, milk was shipped in bulk tanks and on trucks. East Meredith residents could take a quick train to Oneonta to see a show, visit the

Oneonta fair or go to high school (East Meredith's school only went to ninth grade). Soon, automobiles became popular and people did not need the train. East Meredith resident, Ben Beames even purchased a bus to take East Meredith students to the Oneonta high school.

In the end, the last passenger train ran through East Meredith in 1954, and by the mid- to late-1960s, the U & D Railroad could not pay for itself. The actual Ulster and Delaware Company already had financial difficulties in 1932

during the depression and sold the line to the New York Central Railway. By the late 1960s, the NY Central removed the rails from the U & D line and the railroad in East Meredith was gone for good.

Trains only ran through the village for a little more than sixty years. East Meredith residents would have preferred a rail connection when it was first planned in the 1860s and 1870s, but it would never have "put Oneonta in the shade." East Meredith is not situated in a location where it could compete with the larger and more centrally located Oneonta. Still, the Ulster and Delaware Railroad did provide a useful connection to the outside world. With a donation from the Kelso family, Hanford Mills Museum now owns over a mile of the original railroad bed. Today, a section of it still lives on as the Delaware and Ulster Railride in Arkville, New York. East Meredith still has a connection to it, as tourists visit both the railride and Museum. They make the connection between the two by bus, but people can still ride the railroad and see Hanford Mills in the same day.



*This photograph of Engine No. 9, running behind the Hanford's mill, was taken about 1910 not too long before its fatal accident in 1911.*

# The Edger

by Robert Grassi

In February 2000, the museum purchased an edger to add to our machinery collections in the mill. In operating a sawmill, during the initial sizing process, the log is reduced to a square cant and slabs are produced. Typically, sawmills produce two types of slabs. Slabs containing one sawn side were traditionally cut up and used for firewood. Today, many sawmills chop them up into chips. The two

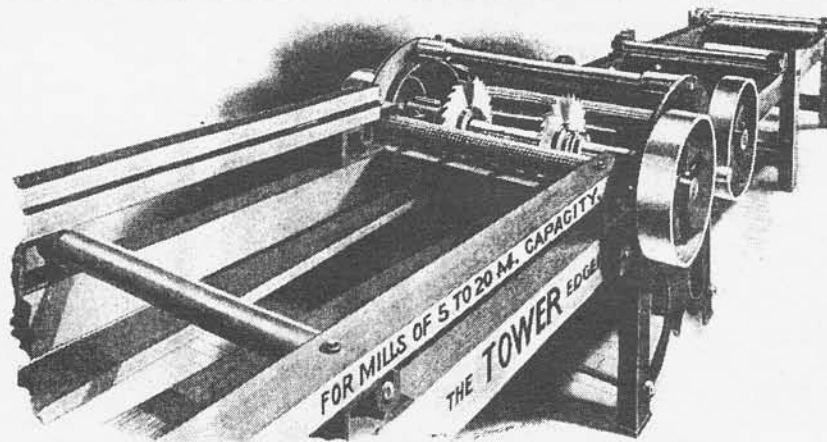
sided sawn slabs, or "flitches" as they are sometimes called, are made more usable and saleable when their waned edges are removed. A waned edge on a board contains the outside edge of the log often including the bark. Many smaller circular

sawmills (and, traditionally, up-and-down and muley sawmills) remove or edge this wane from their slabs on their mill's carriage. We have done this on occasion here at the Museum. The process is time consuming and very wasteful. Only one side can be edged at a time using this method. Each board can be edged individually, but only at a great expense of time and handling. To save time, a group of slabs is edged together. As one might imagine, it is impossible to get the maximum usable board footage out of each and every board edged in this manner. Edgers were designed early on to edge boards far more efficiently. They sawed both edges in one pass. Larger edgers

with multiple saw blades (three or more), are capable of also reducing large boards into several smaller boards. Edgers continue to provide valuable service today in modern sawmills.

Our machine dates from the early 1900's and was manufactured by the R. J. Tower Ironworks out of Greenville, Michigan. Well designed and efficient, the Tower machine was one of the more

movable saw. The cast iron framed center section contains the saw mandrel (including blades and drive pulley) and the power feed rollers. The wooden framed out-feed table is 84 inches long and has two rollers. All and all, the entire length of the machine is just less than 18 feet. The color of the Tower edger's iron parts were originally machinery gray and its wooden parts bright red. They



*Two edging saws can be seen in this catalog picture. One stayed stationary, while the other could be moved to cut different board widths.*

popular edgers to find their way into many sawmills in our area. Tower edgers were manufactured from the 1890's to 1955. They produced many models. The smallest had a capacity to handle boards up to 27 inches in width. The largest produced could cut 60 inch boards. The museum's machine is a two bladed, 27 inch model. One 14-inch saw blade is fixed, and the other is movable (while in operation). It is capable of sawing any width from a minimum of 1½ inches to a maximum of 20 inches and up to 4 inches in thickness. The wooden framed in-feed table is 96 inches long and contains three rollers, a guide fence and the controls for setting the

designed edgers to be either right hand or left hand to best use a specific mill's layout and to operate in conjunction with either a left or right-hand sawmill. A left hand set-up has the guide fence and, in our case, the fixed saw blade with the drive pulley on the left as the operator faces the machine. A left-handed edger worked best with a right-hand sawmill, and a right-hand edger with a left-hand sawmill. The reason is quite simple, time and energy efficient material flow.

At this point, very little is known about the Hanford's original edger. We know that they listed an edger among the machinery auctioned from the mill in 1965. We also have evidence of its existence through an interview conducted by former executive director Keith Bott with J. Ralph Hanford (Horace Hanford's son) dated March 13, 1985. In this interview, Ralph even disclosed its original operating position. Unfortunately we know

*Con't. on page 11*

*Edger - con't. from page 10*

little else. What was the make of the original machine? We have no documentation of the manufacturer. We do know Chase Turbine Manufacturing Company of Orange, Massachusetts (the same company from whom D.J. Hanford purchased a sawmill, shingle mill, shingle packer and a 36-inch cutoff saw in the 1880's) was a dealer in Tower edgers for many years. So there is a possibility that the Hanford's edger was a Tower machine purchased through the Chase company.

What was its size, how many saw blades did it have and was it left-hand or right-hand configured? We know where the Hanfords operated the original machine. Close examination of the area revealed flat belt cutouts through the original floorboards. The edger's location in the sawmill would suggest the Hanford's machine was most likely left-hand but we have no absolute way of determining this with the available physical evidence. The size of the cutouts revealed that a flat belt drive no larger than 6 inches powered the machine. This would not be enough supplied horse power to support a large, multiple bladed (three or more) edger. Finally, its location in the sawmill would suggest that it could be no larger than 36 inches without affecting the operation of the sawmill and general materials flow throughout the mill building.

We are very fortunate to have found an edger of this quality and vintage that fits our mill's specific criteria so well. Plans for the future are to return this machine to active service in the location of the Hanford's original edger. Please make a point to come and visit our newest addition to the mill's machinery collection.



## Join us for Hanford Mills Museum's 1st Spring Exploration Festival

*Pick up a free evergreen seedling.*

*Take a walk & learn about edible & medicinal wild plants.*

*Try a fly-tying class.*



*Explore the life of Kortright Creek.*

*Bring your children for the fishing derby.*

Call Hanford Mill Museum at (607) 278-5744 or 1-800-295-4992 for more information

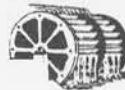


**Saturday, May 5, 2001**

**10:00 am to 5:00 pm**



## Hanford Mills Museum's Briar Creek Gift Shop Announces:



Two miniature replicas by Fernwood of Maine:

- The Mill Building and
  - The John Hanford Farmhouse
- (see below - Both can be purchased at the Museum Store along with other mill related books & products)



*Donations - con't. from page 1*

Sharon Sepulveda  
 Thomas & Susan Sikes  
 Robert Sterchack  
 Jane Tuttle  
 Ron & Irene Zablocki  
 Marvin Zachow

We would also like to thank the following people for making collections donations in the year 2000:

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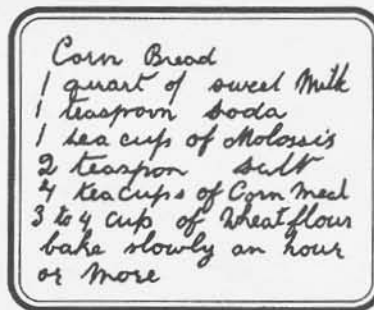
Gift Shop: Amy Bishop Betty Brindle

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## Corn Bread

As you look through the pages of *Millwork*, you might notice we mention Elizabeth Hanford and her diaries a lot. Elizabeth used the space in these often tiny diaries to record daily weather, the work she did and the people she visited or who visited her. For an unknown reason, in the 1866 diary Elizabeth only wrote in January and February. The rest is blank except for nineteen recipes.

Below, we have reproduced one of Elizabeth's 1866 recipes. We also converted it for use in a modern kitchen and speeded up the baking time with a hotter oven. Keep in mind that when Elizabeth says "sweet milk" she means fresh milk rather than sour milk. Some recipes use sour milk (an acid) to help the baking soda make the bread rise, but Elizabeth's recipe uses molasses instead, which is also acidic.



### Elizabeth Hanford's Corn Bread

1 cup cornmeal  
 1 cup wheat flour  
 ¼ teaspoon baking soda  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1 cup milk  
 ¼ cup molasses

Combine the first four ingredients and then stir in the milk and molasses. When the mixture is combined, pat it into a greased 8-in. pan (it will be very thick) and bake at 400°F for 20-25 minutes or until the cornbread bounces back when lightly touched.



# MILLWORK



Spring, 2001

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## Hanford Mills Museum

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