

Carlos William Smith & Mertie May Loomis

Homes in Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire & New York



Dorene Hancock Smith

Preface

Carl William Smith was born in West Fairlee, Vermont in 1852. He met Mertie May Loomis, who was born in Rupert, Vermont in 1861, and they married in 1895. Together they had two children. Carl was a farmer and he bought rundown farms, fixed them up and sold them to make a profit. They moved often and lived in Vermont, New Hampshire, several places in Massachusetts, and New York.

This is the life story of the paternal grandfather and grandmother of my husband. Their life story was prepared using the original diaries of their son, Monroe, as well as actual birth, marriage, and death records, town records, land records, old maps, newspapers and old photos. We were fortunate to find many photos of them. In addition, in 1981, 1988, 2007 and 2015, we visited West Fairlee, Vermont, and took pictures of the prior home and property where Carlos, was born. We also visited Rupert and Pawlet, Vermont where Mertie was born and lived, and saw their tombstone in Pawlet. In 2015, we visited their prior residences in Sunderland, Massachusetts and Glen Falls, New York.

Carl and Mertie shall ever be remembered as good people who loved the Lord, their children and treated those they met with kindness and love. It has been an exciting adventure learning about their lives, and being able to share this with our children and grandchildren.

I have tried to present accurate information from the various sources, but recommend independent verification before accepting the material as fact. This PDF may be printed for family history purposes and non-commercial uses. I only request that you reference me as the writer.

*Written by Dorene Hancock Smith
Draft August 2015, Final July 2020*

Life Story of Carl William Smith & Mertie May Loomis 1852-1928 * 1861-1925

Carl's Childhood

The humid summer was coming to a close, when Mary Wilds, wife of Nathan A. Smith, gave birth to their first baby boy and second child. He was born on August 18, 1852 in West Fairlee, Vermont.¹ They named him Carlos William. He became known as Carl. His sister Lydia was five years old and it is certain that she was pleased to have a new baby brother.

Carl was likely born in the home that was previously owned by his grandfather, Daniel B. Smith. He never knew his grandfather because he died before Carl was born. His father Nathan, bought the farm from his grandfather. He was the third generation to live in the Smith home, which was located in the beautiful woodlands and fertile countryside surrounding West Fairlee.

Being the only son of Nathan and Mary, Carl received individual training from his father. His father was an energetic farmer and taught him the importance of hard work and honesty. On their thirty-seven-acre farm they were self-supporting, and planted crops, raised cattle, sheep and baby lambs, as well as hay for the livestock.



Carl was born in this home on August 18, 1852. (1981 photo)

¹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/92163865>.

Carl likely attended the one-room schoolhouse, located behind the West Fairlee Center Congregational Church, where he learned to read and write.² Lydia was five years older than Carl, but both would have been in the same one-room school for some years. Perhaps she helped teach her brother. Lydia later obtained further education and became a school teacher for many years.



This red brick one-room schoolhouse in West Fairlee, built in 1804, was likely the school Carl attended.

When Carl was twelve years old, his father gave him a colt, which he broke without ever whipping it! He would race the colt by placing the whip on the beginning of the horses' tail, which relayed a message to the horse to run.³ While young, Carl developed this special trait, which trait he continued throughout his life, always being kind toward his family, friends and animals.

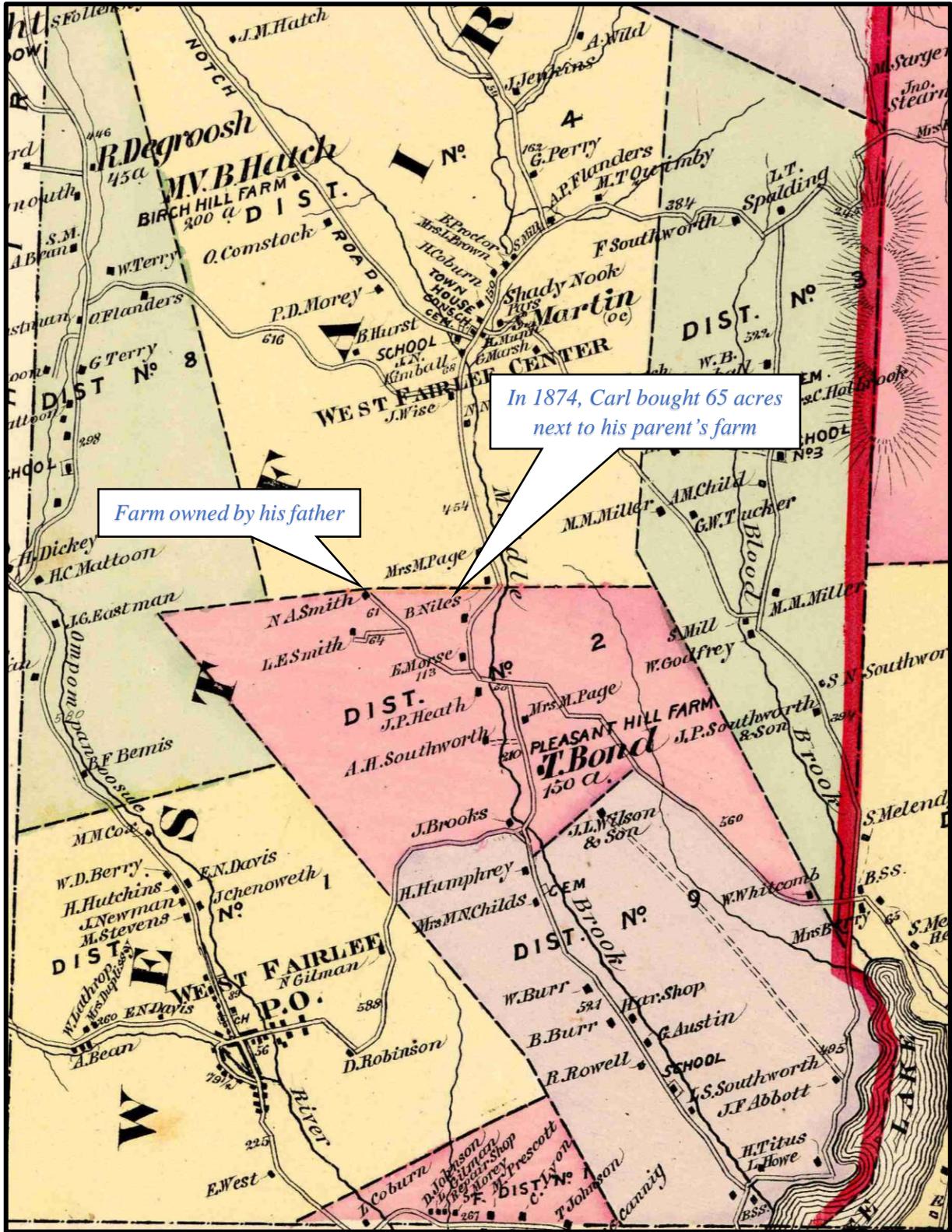
Carl buys farm next to parents

On April 14, 1874, when Carl was twenty-one years old, he purchased 65 acres of land located next to his parent's farm. He bought the farm from Benjamin Niles for \$1,350, with a mortgage to pay \$150 each year for seven years. His father helped by undersigning for the first two payments.⁴ Carl continued to live with his parents during this time.

² 1860 and 1870 US Census for West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont.

³ Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 23, 1939.

⁴ West Fairlee, Vermont Land Deeds; Vol 8, p. 122.



Farm owned by his father

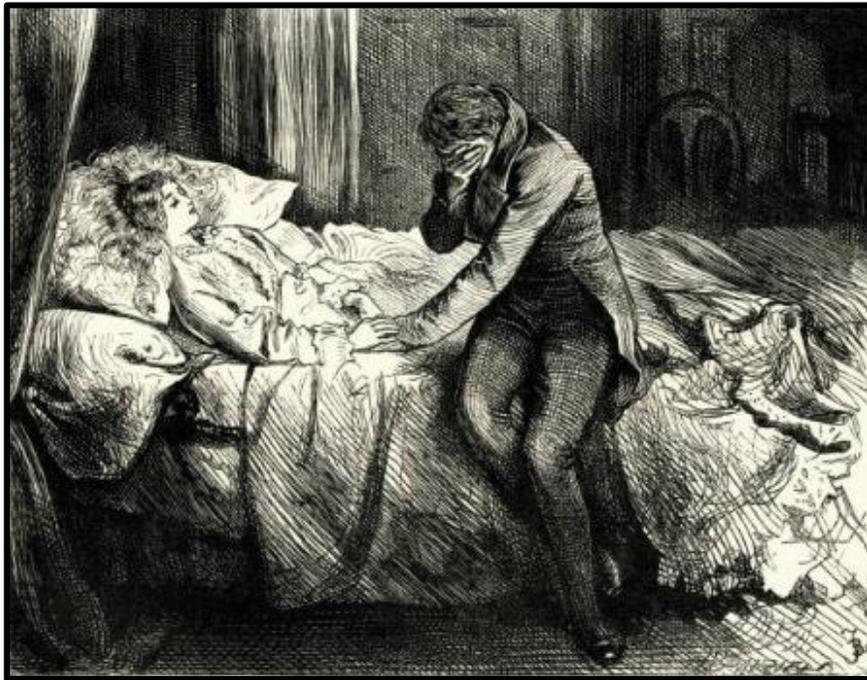
In 1874, Carl bought 65 acres next to his parent's farm

1869 Map of West Fairlee, Vermont

Courtship and Marriage

Carl's maternal grandparents, the Wilds, lived in Topsham, Vermont, which was located about twenty-nine miles north of West Fairlee. It is likely Carl went there to visit them, traveling by wagon or horseback over the lush hillsides and valleys. He may have traveled to Topsham with his father and mother for the funeral of his grandfather, Moses Wilds, who died on November 1, 1879, at eighty-nine years.⁵

On one occasion, while visiting Topsham, he met a young girl named Sarah Clark and began to court her. Each time he returned, he fell more in love with her. Miss Sarah Clark was the daughter of John and Syrena Clark. When Carl was thirty-one years old, he asked her father, John Clark, for Sarah's hand in marriage. She was only twenty when they married on January 24, 1884. The Clergyman, Horace P. James from East Corinth Congregational Church in Vermont, performed the marriage in West Fairlee.⁶ It may be that James was a circuit riding preacher who traveled to different locations in service of rural villages like West Fairlee.



Sarah died from typhoid fever seven months after they married.

Shortly after Carl and Sarah were married, Sarah gradually began to experience headache symptoms and a low fever that increased daily. This brought on muscle aches, sweating, weakness and fatigue. In addition, she likely experienced coughing, a loss of appetite, and weight loss from abdominal pain and diarrhea. All these symptoms presented life threatening complications for Sarah. She had developed typhoid fever, which eventually took her life on September 8, 1884, just seven months after they were married.⁸ Carl was devastated and he did not remarry for many years!

⁵ Death Record(?)

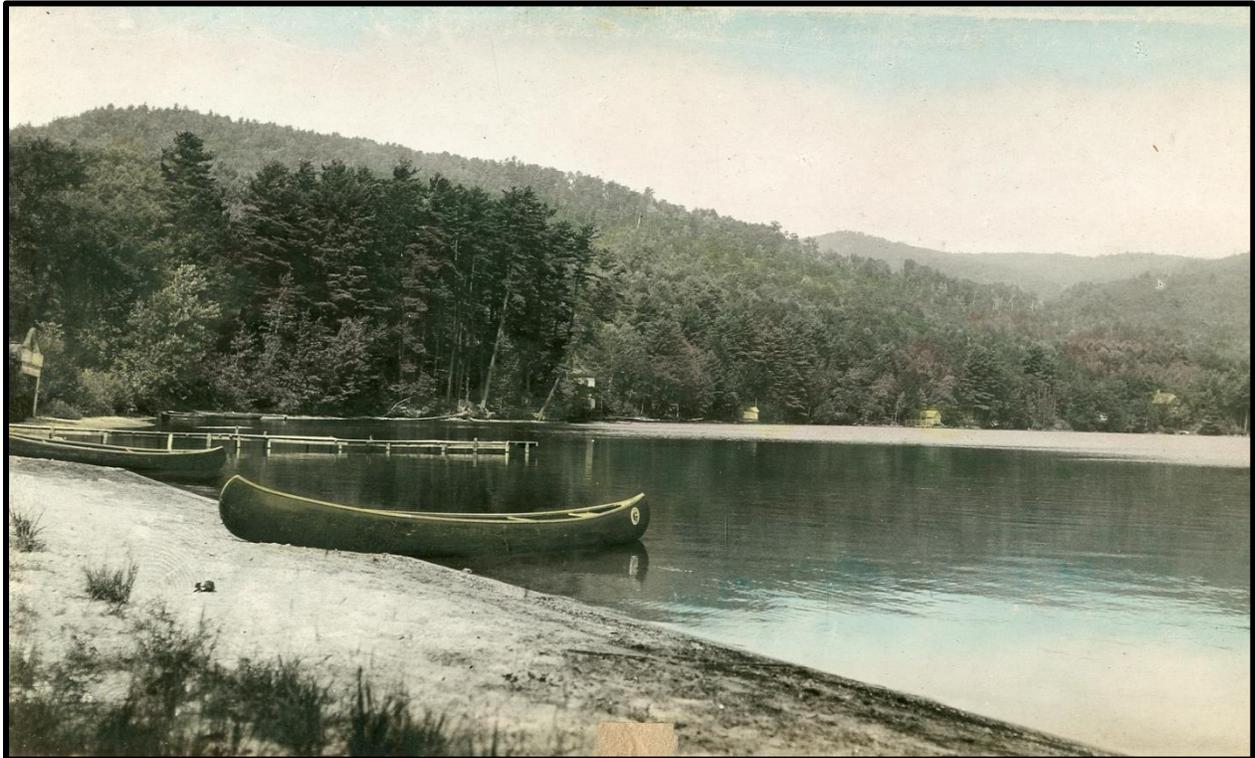
⁶ Vermont Vital Records, 1760-1954, West Fairlee.

⁷ <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/barnard/dc/52.html>.

⁸ Vermont Vital Records, 1760-1954, Topsham.

Carl sells farm and buys more land

On October 17, 1885, just over a year after Carl had lost his wife Sarah, he sold the 65-acre farm in West Fairlee, to William Russ for \$600, and paid off his prior mortgage to Benjamin Niles for the 65-acres. His father Nathan, also sold his 45-acre farm to William Russ for \$800, and in turn purchased 31.5 acres from William Russ, for \$1200.⁹ Thus, William Russ now owned a total of 110 acres. The new farm his father purchased was located on the north side of the crossroad to Fairlee Lake, between the lake and the hills. Because it was flat bottomland it was certainly more fertile for farming.



The new farm his father purchased was located on the north side of the crossroad to Fairlee Lake, between the lake and the hills.

Carl moved in with his aging parents to help care for the new family farm. He did not purchase land of his own until the following year. Cyrus Lyon, the neighbor adjacent to his father, sold a total of 59 acres to Carl on May 26, 1886. This land was more desirable and carried a higher price of \$1200.¹⁰ Eight years later, on May 3, 1894, Carl purchased an additional 25 acres of pastureland from his brother-in-law, George Holbrook, for \$75, located west of his 59 acres.¹¹

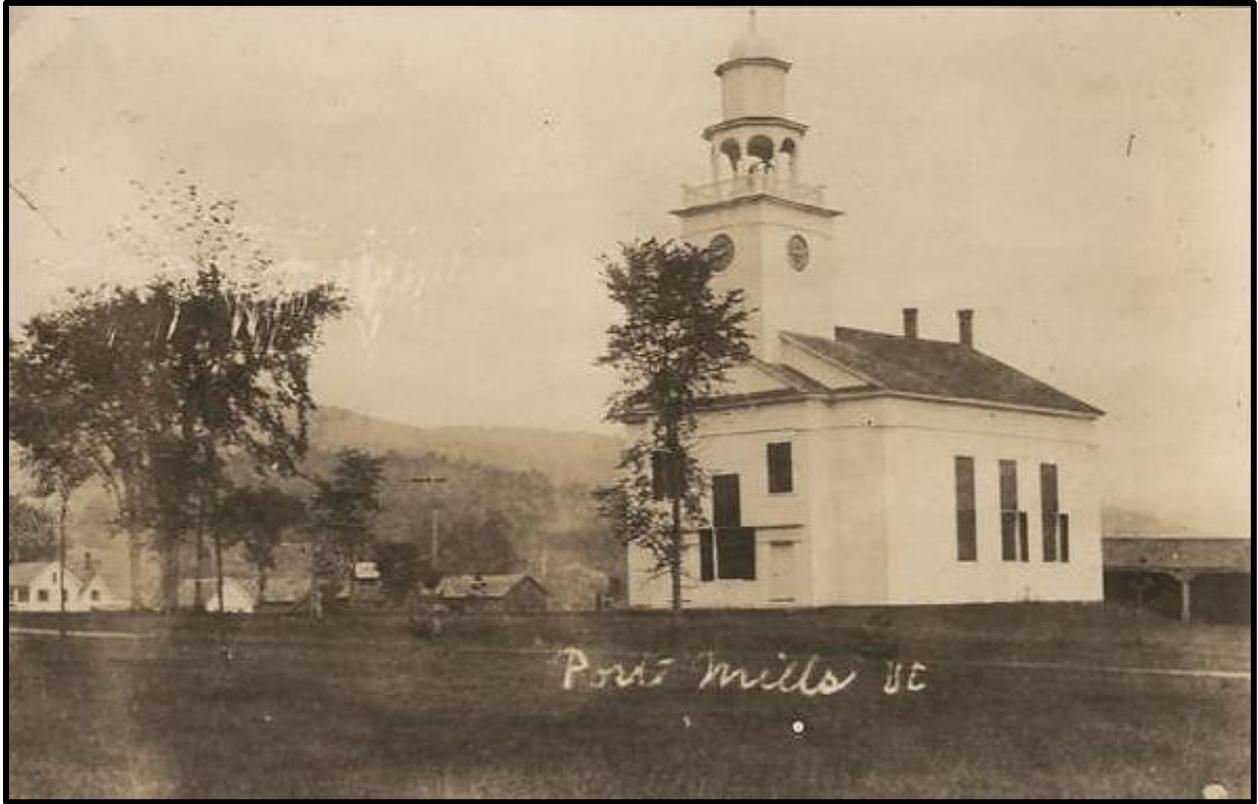
Because of moving near Post Mills in 1885, Carl attended the Congregational church in Post Mills. Like his father, he loved to sing in the choir, attend Sunday school and prayer meetings.¹² Carl also became involved in the town affairs, and was elected to the town committee in 1894.

⁹ Land Records of West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont, Vol. 8 p. 419-420.

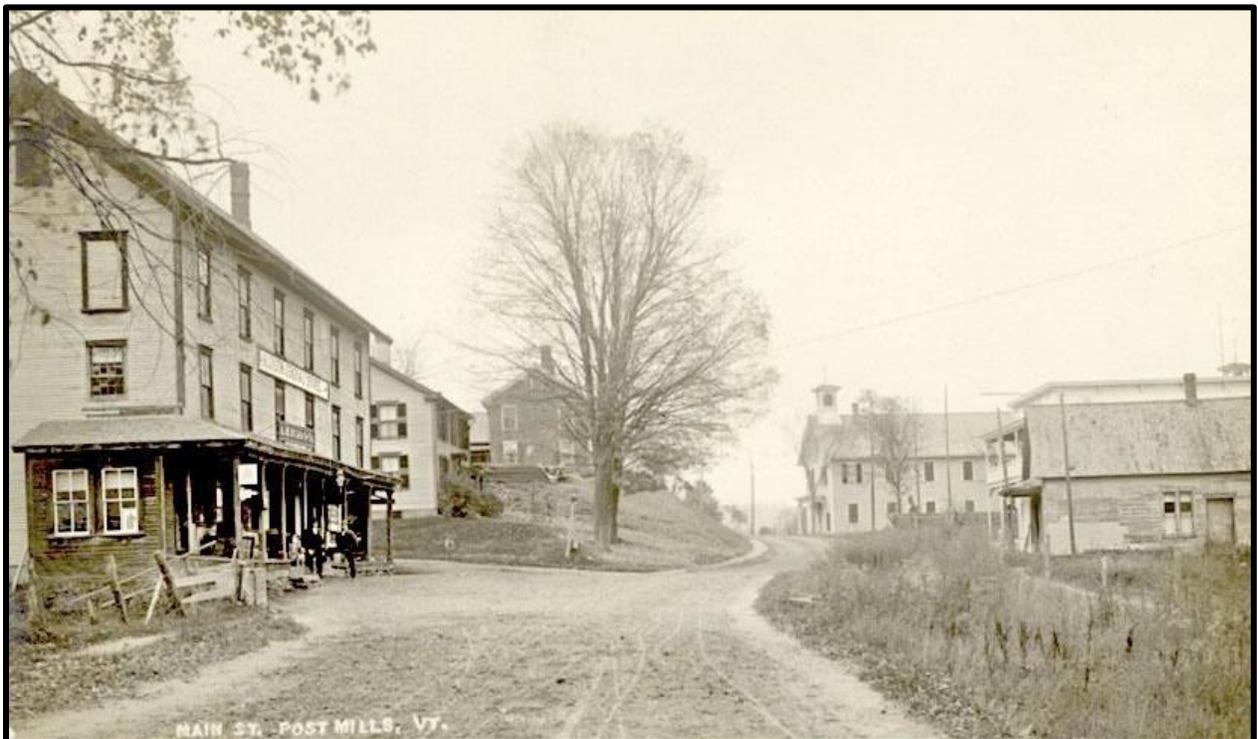
¹⁰ Land Records of West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont, Vol. 8 p. 424.

¹¹ Land Records of West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont, Vol. 10 p.71.

¹² Newspaper clipping regarding wedding, The united opinion, 27 Dec 1895.



Carl attended the Congregational church in Post Mills and loved to sing in the choir.



In 1894, Post Mills elected Carl to the town committee.

Mertie's youth

Mertie May Smith Loomis, the daughter of Edmund Beaman Loomis and Maria Warren Smith, was born on April 11, 1861, in the township of Rupert, Vermont.¹³ Mertie came from a large family, being the fourth child of nine. Mertie's father studied at Castleton, Vermont in his early years, to become a schoolteacher. Her mother also studied at Castleton and taught school while Edmund was courting her. There were many large and productive farms in Rupert, as well as beautiful mountains. After teaching, her father became a farmer in Rupert.



Her father became a farmer in Rupert.

When Mertie was two years old, her father purchased a farm in Pawlet, which was located about eight miles from Rupert. The farm had two existing houses and about 110 acres. Her father moved his wife and four children to the new home. Mertie had five more siblings that were born in that home.

When Mertie was three years old, a new baby sister—Hattie—was born. Mertie loved Hattie, but when her sweet sister was only seventeen months old, she got sick with an infection in her intestines that caused severe, bloody diarrhea, and she died of dysentery. This was extremely difficult for Mertie to lose her closest sister and playmate, a loss she was too young to understand!

For Mertie and her siblings, many sweet and fond memories began at this new home and farm; memories of the streams, the hills and the mountains where they picked delicious berries, and gathered nuts. This is where Mertie would wander through the fields and gardens in her early childhood, and later learned to work on the farm with her family during spring, summer and fall.

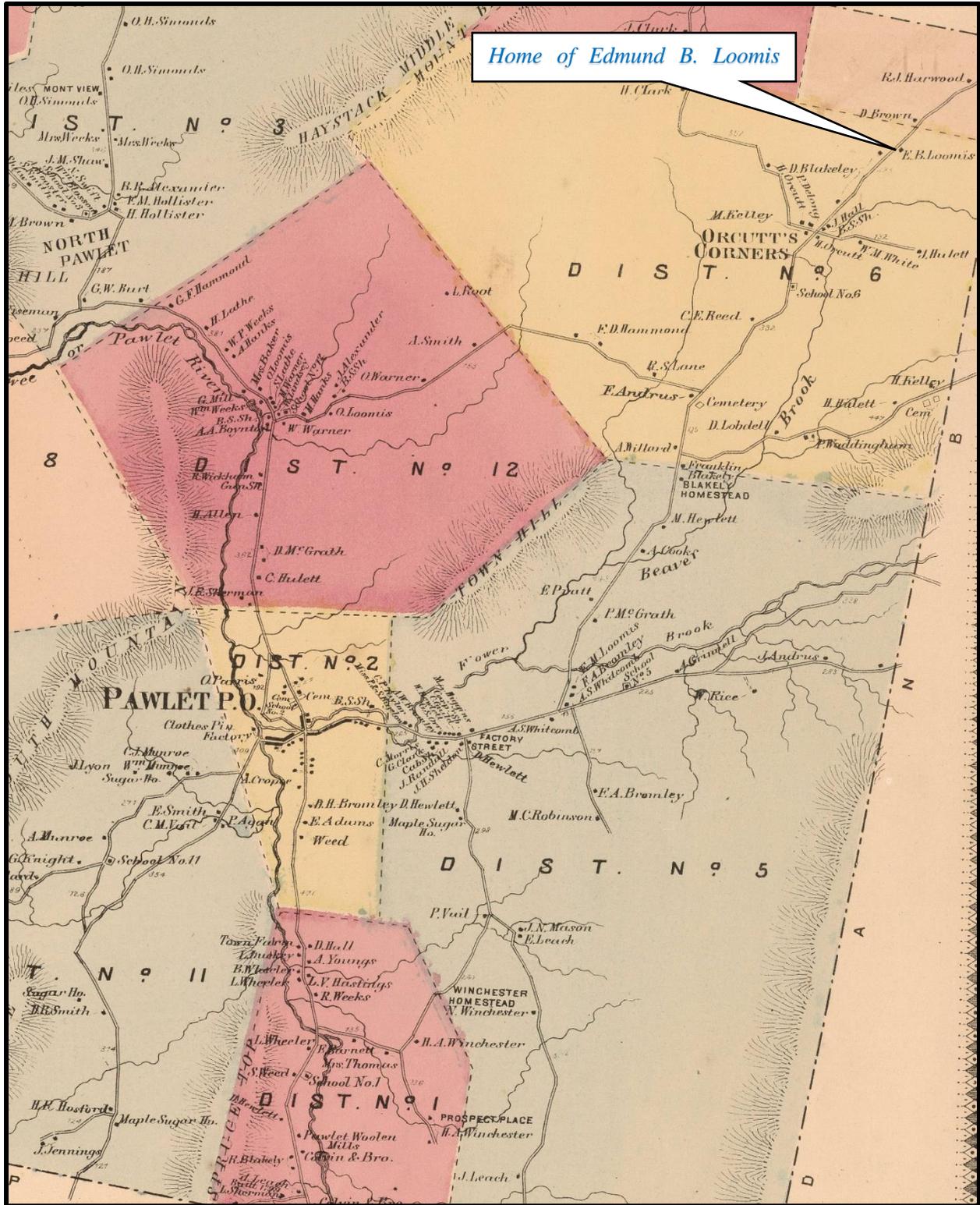
¹³ Vermont Vital Records, 1760-1954, Rupert.



Mertie and her siblings grew up in this home in Pawlet. (1956 photo)



Mertie learned to work on the farm with her family during spring, summer and fall.



1969 Map of Pawlet, where E.B. Loomis and his family lived.



Methodist and Congregational Churches in Pawlet

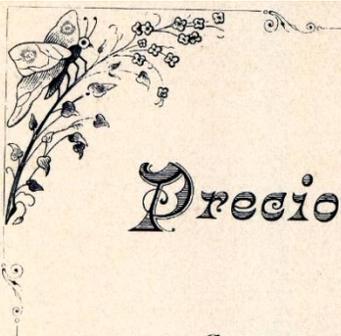
Mertie's Spiritual development and education

During the 19th century nearly every family in Pawlet attended a church regularly, and most of the adults were members. The social life of the community centered largely in the churches. There were two prominent churches in Pawlet Village, the First Congregational Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church. These churches were located next to each other, on the same road.

Mertie was raised in a religious atmosphere in her home, as well as the community. Her parents were likely members of the Methodist congregation, and they were greatly respected by all who knew them. In her family she was taught to strictly observe the Sabbath, and they were always regular attendees at church.¹⁴ In their home they would gather together to read the scriptures and for family prayer.

Mertie would often express her inner spiritual feelings through things she wrote or gave to her family. For example, she created a small, eleven-page booklet called, "Precious Promises." On each page there is a scripture with a promise from the Lord. Then she added her poetic comment about the scripture. The following is a sample of her creation:

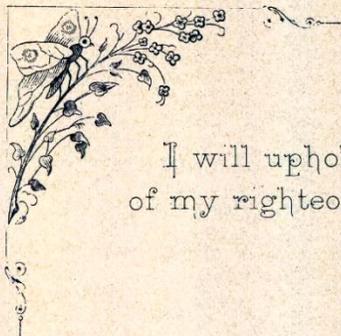
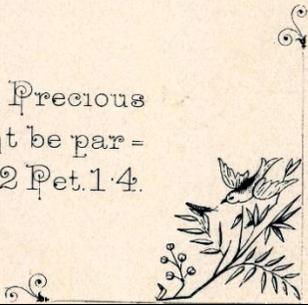
¹⁴ 1924 newspaper clipping after Maria's death.



Precious Promises.

COMPILED BY MERTIE M. LOOMIS.

Whereby are given unto us . Precious
Promises that by these ye might be par-
takers of the divine nature. 2 Pet. 1:4.



I will uphold thee with the right hand
of my righteousness. Isa. 41:10.

*Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur nor repine,
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me!*



In addition, because Mertie had parents who had been teachers, she became well-schooled by her mother. In 1876, at the age of twelve, Mertie left home and found a temporary job in Syracuse, New York. In the first year while she was working, she developed pneumonia. Before she could get well, she returned to work too soon, because she had no money to care for herself any longer. After that incident, it seemed she was never without a headache.¹⁵

¹⁵ Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 26, 1939.



Special memories Mertie gave to others:

- (1) *Precious Promises* booklet, compiled by Mertie M. Loomis.
- (2) A small card embossed with flowers, and "Forget Me Not" around clasping hands.
Lift the flowers to find her name, Mertie M. Loomis, on the white embossed card.
- (3) Red Miniature *Dew-Drops*, "My speech shall distil as the dew." Deut.22:2.
A gift given to her brother Burdette, December 25, 1887.
Contains daily scriptures for each month of the year.

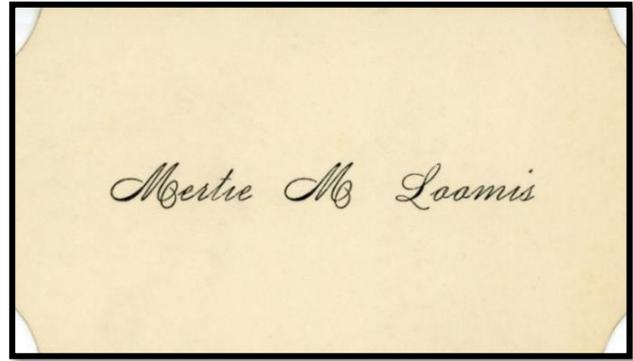


Mertie arrayed in winter attire: a fur cloak, fur hat, tippet covering her neck & fur muff for her hands.



Mertie was raised in a religious atmosphere and became well-schooled by her mother.

We have records that Mertie received an education in grammar school when she was a young scholar, but it is unknown if she received a higher education. We do know that a younger sister, Emily, got a higher education in nursing. In addition, when Mertie was older, she worked as a practical nurse and helped to deliver babies. Thus, it is logical to assume that Mertie was trained to become a nurse, and had many years of experience in working as a nurse in her young adult years.



Carl loses his parents

On April 11, 1888, Carl and Lydia lost their dearly loved father, Nathan, who died of paralysis at the age of sixty-eight.¹⁶ Six years later, at age seventy-six, their cherished mother Mary, contracted pneumonia and died on April 21, 1894.¹⁷ They buried their mother next to their father in the Post Mills Cemetery, near West Fairlee. On the tombstone, Carl and Lydia placed the epitaph, "Our Father and Mother." After the death of their parents, Carl and Lydia became heirs to the 31.5-acre farm owned by their parents, and Carl continued to live there and farm it.¹⁸

Carl meets Mertie

When Carl's mother had departed this life and his responsibility to care for her was gone, he felt alone. Mertie resided in Schenectady, New York and undoubtedly occasionally came to Thetford, Vermont, to visit her two older sisters, Frankie Loomis Young and Jessie Loomis Clough. Carl soon became acquainted with the charming and educated Mertie and began courting her. Because Mertie was thirty-four at the time, she was considered a spinster, and Carl was a bachelor at forty-three. It had been almost twelve years since Carl had first married. He was so happy to finally find someone special to share his life with!

On the evening of December 18, 1895, a large company of friends and family gathered at the home of Deacon John and Frankie Young in Post Mills village, to witness the marriage of their sister, Miss Mertie M. Loomis to Carl W. Smith of West Fairlee. Reverend L. Harlow, pastor of the Congregational Church in Post Mills and Thetford, officiated with quite an elaborate ceremony. At their wedding party, they received some valuable gifts, which included a silver service, silver spoons, knives and forks, a beautiful table linen, and many other special gifts. One very special present was a bible from Carl's sister Lydia, and her husband George Holbrook.¹⁹

It was announced at the wedding party that Carl and Mertie were planning on moving in the near future, from Post Mills to a new home in Syracuse, New York. Carl would be missed in Post Mills, especially from the choir, Sunday school and prayer meetings.

¹⁶ Vermont Vital Records, 1760-1954, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XF8W-RB8>.

¹⁷ Vermont Vital Records, 1760-1954, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XF8W-P38>.

¹⁸ Land Records of West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont, Vol. 10, p.73.

¹⁹ Newspaper clipping regarding wedding, The united opinion, 27 Dec 1895.

Death of Mertie's father

Shortly after Carl and Mertie were married, Mertie lost her father, Edmund B. Loomis. He died in Danby, Vermont, on April 1, 1896.²⁰ He was sixty-seven years old. Even though her mother was now a widow, she had eight living children to comfort her in her loss.

Marriage brings blessings

Not long after their marriage, Mertie and Carl were expecting their first child. Flora Winifred was born to them on January 16, 1897 in West Fairlee, Vermont.²¹ Mertie was thirty-five years when Flora was born, and Carl finally became a father at forty-four years. After waiting so long for a child, their precious baby girl surely was a blessing to them and filled their lives with love, happiness and new experiences.



Flora Winifred was born to them on January 16, 1897.

²⁰ Vermont Vital Records, 1760-1954, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XF82-G5K>.

²¹ West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont Vital Records

Carl sells Vermont farm

On November 5, 1897, just three short years after his marriage, Carl sold all of his land in West Fairlee, Vermont, to Benjamin Hyde. The 31.5 acres of rich fertile farmland where he lived, which was owned with his sister Lydia, sold for \$500. Additionally, the 59 + 25 acres were sold for \$500. Mr. Hyde paid \$600 down and signed a note for \$400. The day before selling to Benjamin Hyde, Carl bought a half share of spring water from Mira Aldrich for \$75.²² Before Carl's father died, he had purchased a half share of the spring located on the property of his daughter Lydia, so he could have running water to his house.²³ Part of the deal of selling to Mr. Hyde was that Carl would need to disconnect the water from Lydia's spring and reconnect the newly purchased Aldrich spring water into the house located on the 31.5 acres.

On November 23, Carl had an auction in Post Mills, at 12 o'clock noon, to sell much of his personal property, which consisted of six cows, two horses, hay, straw, farming tools, and many other farm and personal items.

After Carl sold the family farm and his personal property, he left his birth town and took his family to visit Mertie's mother and some of her siblings in Pawlet, Vermont. While in Pawlet, Mertie's younger sister, Emily, arranged to have a special photo taken with her three nieces—Flora Smith, and two Loomis sisters, Maud and Nellie.



Carl took his family to visit Mertie's mother and some of her siblings in Pawlet, Vermont.

²² Land records of West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont, Vol. 10, pp. 71, 72, 73, 74, 80.

²³ Land records of West Fairlee, Orange, Vermont, Vol. 8 p. 433.



Aunt Emily Loomis with her three nieces in 1898; Flora Smith, and Maud and Nellie Loomis

For a short time, Carl and Mertie resided in Syracuse, New York. When they heard that Mertie's sister Frankie and her husband Deacon John Young had moved to Sunderland, Massachusetts, this may have encouraged them to move there also. Carl found a homestead in Sunderland, called "Little Meadow," which was bordered on the west by the Connecticut River. "Little Meadow" was the north meadow, one mile north of Sunderland Street. The homestead was divided into three different parcels of land, containing 13 acres, 12 acres and 30 acres, for a total of 55 acres. On November 12, 1898, Carl purchased the land from Abigail P. Rice, for \$2,350.²⁴ The same day, Carl borrowed \$750 from the Greenfield Savings Bank to supplement part of the purchase price. Less than five years later, the loan was completely repaid to the Bank on June 2, 1903.

One of the parcels of land had a two story Federal-style home, which was symmetrical and rectangular, having two stories high, two rooms deep, and a large chimney in the middle of the house, creating a fireplace in each room. The front of the home had a centered front door with a small entry porch, and four sidelights on each side of the front door, as well as two flattened columns. Two twelve-paned windows adorned each side of the door, with five identical windows on the second story.

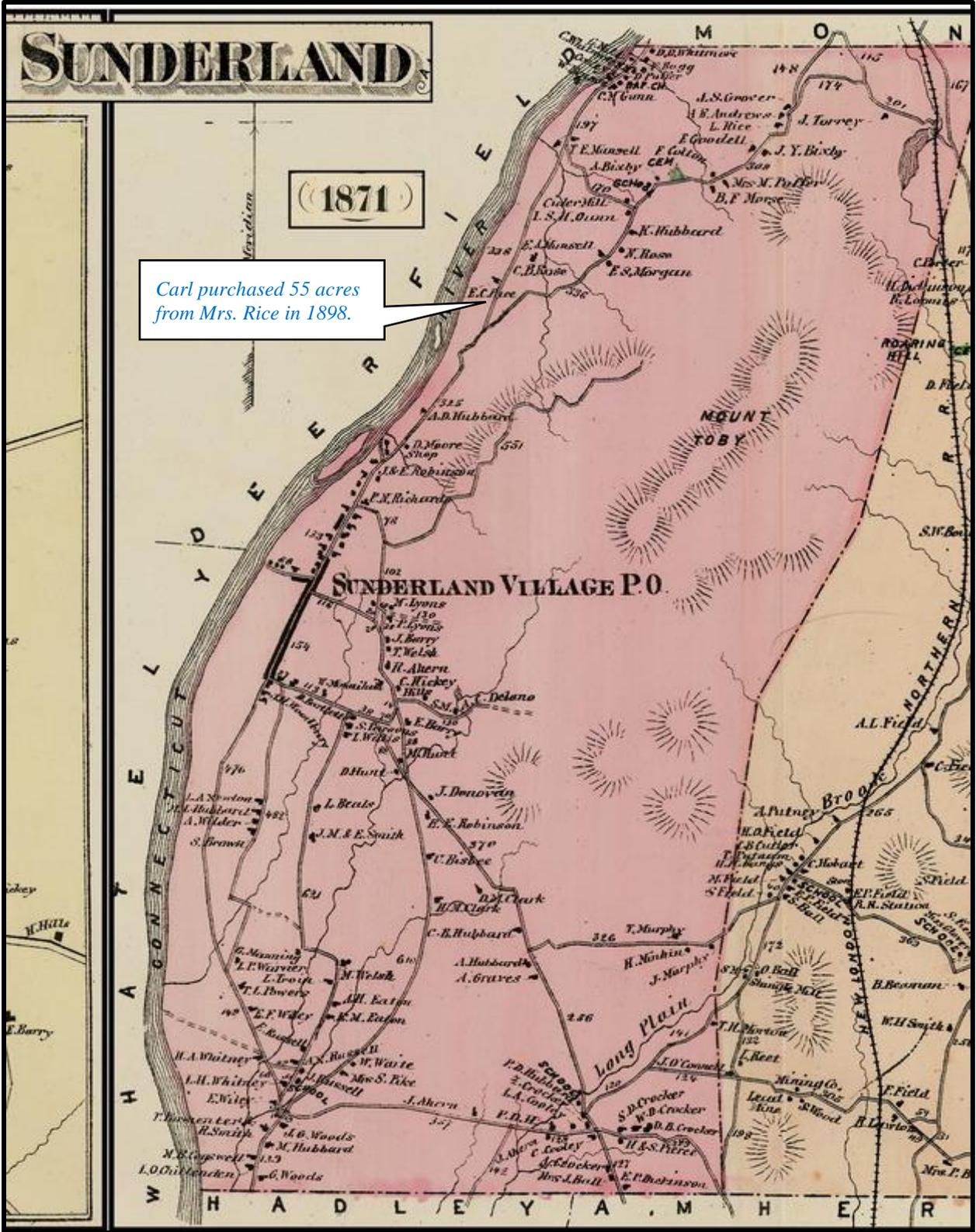
The Smith family began a new beginning in this home, and the small town of about 850 residents. The village of Sunderland extended for about a mile along the margin of the Connecticut River, and had an air of rural quiet and simplicity. They found that their new neighbors were obliging, orderly and philanthropic. They made their home in Sunderland for about nine years.²⁵



"Little Meadow" was the north meadow, one mile north of Sunderland Street.

²⁴ Massachusetts Land Records, 1620-1986, Franklin County Deeds, Vol. 467, p. 159.

²⁵ Monroe W. Smith 1938 Journal and Newspaper clipping show they moved, Feb 1908.





Mertie, Carl and Flora in front of Sunderland home in 1900.



1900: Carl, Flora, Mertie



Sunderland home once owned by Carl & Mertie (2015 photo)

Another precious baby

When Mertie was nearly forty years old, Carl and Mertie were blessed with a baby boy. He entered this world and took his first breath in the little town of Sunderland, Massachusetts, on January 22, 1901, the same day that Queen Victoria of Great Britain died. They named him Monroe William.²⁶ Monroe was the first American boy to be born in Sunderland in the twentieth century.



Monroe was the first American boy to be born in Sunderland in the twentieth century.

²⁶ Birth Certificate and Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 22, 1939.



About 1906



Monroe Smith (right) on Sunderland farm in 1906, with friend, Isabel Bullis.

Farm experiences

When Monroe was young and living in Sunderland, he watched his father break a horse named Dick. The horse was from the West and was considered a devil! One farmer after another had owned him, but could not handle or control him. He would begin to kick when anyone would enter the barn. Carl wanted to take on this challenging horse, and one of the farmers gladly sold, or perhaps even gave Carl the horse, just to get rid of him. In one afternoon, Carl was able to break Dick, and he became the family horse for about fifteen years.²⁷



In one afternoon, Carl was able to break Dick, and he became the family horse for about fifteen years.

Of course, farms often have their hazards. On another occasion (likely in Sunderland), while working on the farm, Carl almost lost his life to a Jersey bull. It seems that Jersey bulls often have bad temperaments and are unpredictable. One day while Carl was near the barn, his Jersey bull charged him. In Carl's attempt to escape from the bull, he yelled to Mertie for help. Inside her home she heard Carl's desperate cry for help. By the time she had reached Carl, the bull was goring him! She quickly grabbed a pitchfork and ran to the fence, and with all the force she could muster, she stabbed the pitchfork into the bull! This hardly slowed the bull down. Then, this small 5'2" woman went over the fence, grabbed the pitchfork again and proceeded to stab the bull again and again, until she had killed the bull, this time accomplishing her goal to save her husband!²⁸

²⁷ Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 23, 1939.

²⁸ Family story told to Jonathan Smith from his father, Monroe Smith.

Carl started buying rundown farms

To be able to continue to provide for his family, Carl started buying various rundown farms. Then with his agricultural skills and diligent work, he would rebuild and maintain the house, the barn, the outbuildings and the fences, until the farm was restored so he could sell it for a profit.²⁹ At one time he was also a railroad worker.

During January 1908, Carl bought a farm from Walter H. Farr, in Westminster, Vermont. He sold his farm in Sunderland, and moved his wife and two children from Sunderland to Westminster.³⁰ Then the work to rebuild and maintain the home and farm began. Carl was 6'2" and could do everything on the farm. He always worked long hours, most days from 4 a.m. till 9 p.m. When the job was completed in Westminster—less than four months later—Carl sold the farm to J.M. Miller. An auction was held to dispose of a quantity of personal property. The children were only in school until May, and the grammar school gave Flora a surprise goodbye party at her home.³¹



Grammar school gave Flora Winifred a surprise goodbye party.

Carl continued to move to different locations for several years. Their next move was to Claremont, New Hampshire, where Carl purchased a home at 51 South Street, and they stayed there for several years. At the end of November in 1913, they moved to Newton Center, Massachusetts, where Carl had received a position.³² They lived at 661 Commonwealth Avenue.

²⁹ Tape Recording of Monroe W. Smith, 1972.

³⁰ Newspaper: Brattleboro Reformer, Jan 17, 1908.

³¹ Newspaper: Brattleboro Reformer, May 1 1908.

³² Newspaper: Brattleboro Reformer, Nov 21, 1913.



In 1908 the Smith family prepared a Christmas Greeting with this photo



In two hours, Carl could mow an acre of hay with a scythe.

Scything Competitions

A scythe is an agricultural hand tool used for mowing grass or reaping crops. The mower holds the top handle in the left hand and the central one in the right, with the arms straight, the blade parallel and very close to the ground and the uncut grass to the right. The body is then twisted to the right, the blade hooks the grass and is swung steadily to the left in a long arc ending in front of the mower and depositing the cut grass neatly to the left. The mower takes a small step forward and repeats the motion.³³

In two hours, Carl could mow an acre of hay with a scythe. It is doubtful that ten men in the county could do the same. In fact, in several scything competitions, Carl competed in three states and was undefeated, taking First Place. He cut the hay with the cleanness of a lawn mower. And he would even cut his lawn with a scythe.

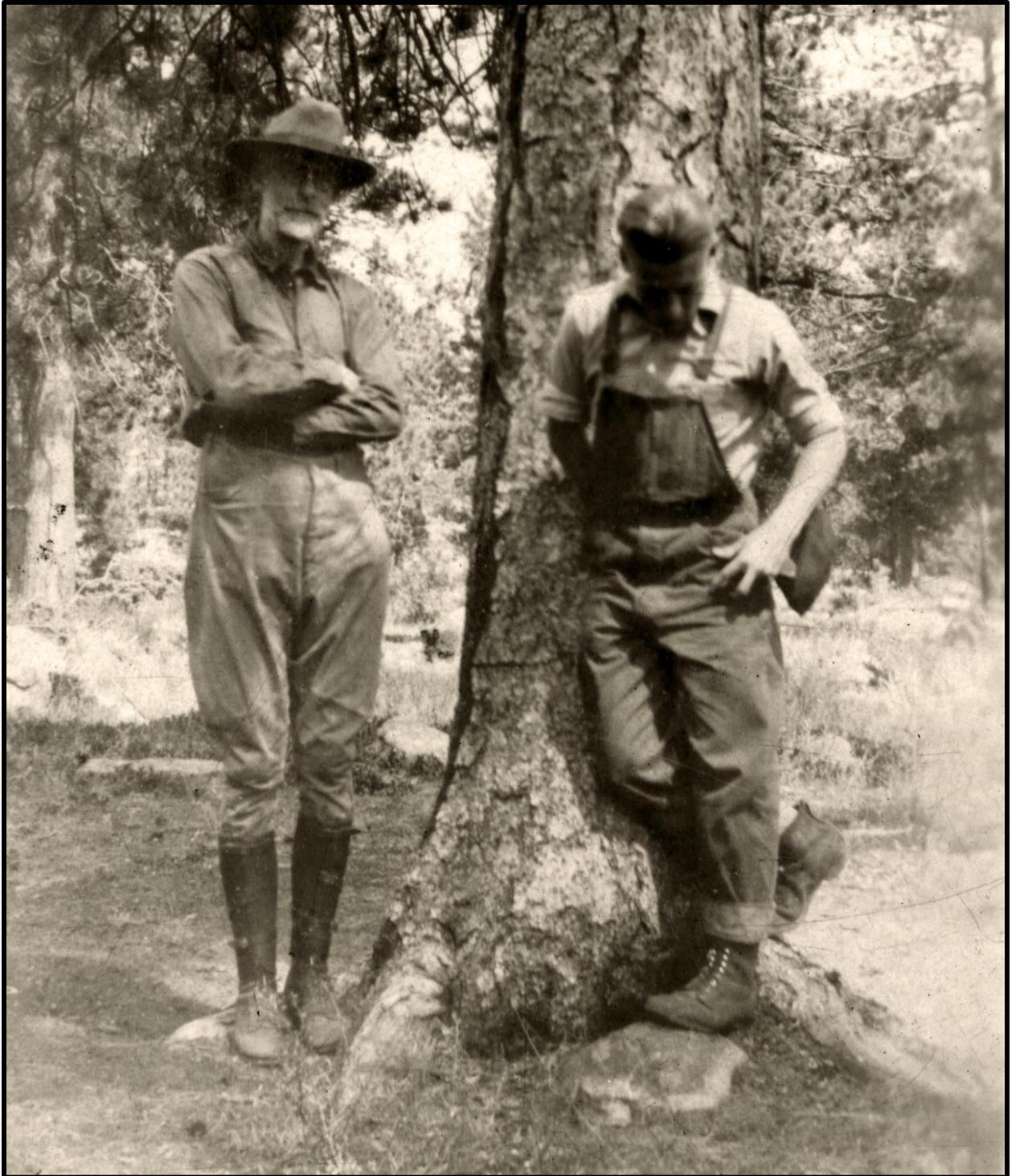
Carl always took beautiful care of his farm tools and animals. At the end of the day, after using a shovel or hoe, he would clean and shine it with sand to make it look like new, before putting it away. He taught Monroe to do the same with the tools and animals.³⁴

³³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scythe>.

³⁴ Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 22, 1939.



Carl taught Monroe to clean and shine the tools before putting them away.



Carl taught Monroe to pay an honest tiithe of ten percent.

Religion and Beliefs

Carl and Mertie mostly attended the Methodist church, wherever they were living. They taught their children to go to church, read the bible, keep the Sabbath day holy, pray, and to be honest and grateful for their blessings.³⁵

Because of the observance of the Sabbath in the Smith family, in 1922 when Monroe got a job, he was fired because he refused to work on Sunday. He told them he had a few principals that he hoped to stand for—that he would not work on Sundays—only if absolutely necessary!

In July 1922, a woman came to speak at the church, from the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which was organized in 1874 by women who were concerned about the problem alcohol was causing their families and society. The members chose total abstinence from all alcohol as their lifestyle. Mertie joined this group wholeheartedly.³⁶ During his youth, Monroe had a job of delivering ice to homes and businesses. When he delivered to homes, he sometimes would have to climb four flights of stairs to deliver to an old lady, but if he delivered ice to a place that sold liquor, he would only drop off the ice at the door, as he was taught to never enter.

Carl taught his children to pay a tithe. When Monroe got a little job from someone, he received a dime in pay. When he got home, his father asked him to return to the man who paid him to ask him to exchange the dime for a nickel and five pennies. When he returned home with the correct change, his father asked if he would like to take one penny and place it in a jar for the Lord. From that time on Monroe was always diligent in paying ten percent of his income for a tithe.³⁷



Carl and Mertie all dressed up, and on their way to church.

³⁵ Application to Mt. Herman School 1918.

³⁶ Monroe W. Smith Journal, July 9 1922.

³⁷ Story related to Jonathan Smith, from his father Monroe.

Education

As Mertie was the more educated in the family, when Flora and Monroe grew older, she began to encourage them to obtain an education. About 1915, Carl moved his family from Newton Center to Northfield, Massachusetts. While living there, Flora attended the Northfield School for girls. Carl became a caretaker at the Northfield School.



Mertie encouraged Monroe & Flora to obtain an education



Carl became a caretaker at the Northfield School for girls.

When Flora graduated in 1918, they moved to Marlborough, Massachusetts, at 334 East Main Street. Because of their meager finances, Mertie encouraged Monroe to apply for a scholarship to Mt. Herman School in Northfield, Massachusetts, and he was awarded one. Monroe attended Mt. Herman during his senior year of high school. He was seventeen at the time, and the dreadful World War could have threatened to change his plans for finishing high school, but he was never called to serve in the war.³⁸



Monroe is off to Mount Herman School.

When the 1920 census was taken, they were renting a house in North Andover, Massachusetts, at 549 Osgood Street. Carl was sixty-seven and the rigors of farming were beginning to slow him down. Because Monroe was now away at school most of the time, it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with the farm work. Therefore, he had five boarders that lived with the family, and five more mouths that Mertie would cook for.³⁹ Their stay in North Andover was short, ending May 1921.

During the summer they returned back to the farm in Marlborough. In September when Monroe had returned from a summer trip to Colorado, he found that his father had purchased a duplex in Glen Falls, New York, the mortgage being only \$1,500. The house was located at 136 Main Street, and one side of the duplex would be rented. The lot was 120 feet by 75 feet, with a barn and garden in the back. Part of the barn was also rented out for \$3 per month.⁴⁰

³⁸ Letter written by Mrs. Carl W. Smith to Mt. Herman in Northfield, Mass.

³⁹ 1920 Federal Census, North Andover, Massachusetts.

⁴⁰ Monroe W. Smith Journal, Sep 7, 1921.



Carl purchased a duplex in Glen Falls, New York, the mortgage being only \$1,500.



Monroe, Mertie and Flora at the southwest view of the Glen Falls house in 1921.



2015 photo of prior home of Carl and Mertie, now a funeral home.



2015 photo of original staircase in prior home.

By the spring of 1922, they had a large garden planted at their Glen Falls home, and the heavy rains in the summer helped the plants to grow, so there was an abundance of fresh vegetables.



Mertie showing her large garden in 1922.

Mother Mertie

Mertie was known for her unlimited charity. Anyone who asked for a meal could count on one in her home. Monroe often thought that the hobos from the railroad had marked their home with some secret mark, so that any hungry hobo knew that if they came knocking at the Smith door, they would surely be invited in for a delicious meal. However, Mertie always required that anyone asking for a meal would first have to work on the farm while she prepared the meal.⁴¹



Mertie put the hungry hobos to work on the farm as she prepared a delicious meal for them.

On one occasion she asked one of the visitors to split wood. She gave him a double-bitted axe, and left him to split the wood. Not being accustomed to splitting wood, and even more unfamiliar with the double-bitted axe head, he was careless how he handled the axe. As he raised the axe to split the wood, the second blade of the axe hit his head and split it open. Mertie ended up getting more than she bargained for, as she took care of the stranger for several weeks, to nurse him back to health.⁴²

⁴¹ Memory of story told to grandson, Jonathan Smith, by his father Monroe.

⁴² Monroe W. Smith 1939 Journal.

Mertie was the mother of only two children, undoubtedly because she married so late in life. She was a constant help to her husband as he tried to make a living as a farmer. In spite of Carl's hard work, the family was poor, and Mertie had to scrimp and save to get by on her husband's \$2 a day income.⁴³

When the children were older, Mertie worked as a practical nurse, helping to deliver babies and taking care of families when the mother was sick. At one time she became a nurse for a man who weighed over two hundred pounds. Every fifteen minutes she would have to turn him over. She took care of him in his home at night from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. At 6 a.m. she would walk two miles back to her home. After arriving home, she would continue her housework and do all the cooking and baking. Then at 5 p.m. daily, she would walk back to her patient for the night. For two weeks she never undressed, or changed her clothing, nor could she lie down. She only dozed at night between the 15-minute breaks. Her patient lived in a sixteen room, beautiful home, and she kept it immaculate. She never complained about the work she had to do, though she always suffered from headaches.⁴⁴



Mertie and Carl read the bible and taught their children to be honest and grateful for their blessings.

⁴³ Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 23, 1939.

⁴⁴ Monroe W. Smith Journal, January 26, 1939.



Mertie was known for her unlimited charity.



Carl standing in front of the United States Flag, showing allegiance to the flag.

Family Life

The Smith family was very close. Flora and Monroe loved their parents and they frequently did things together as a family. One example was when Monroe took his mother swimming for the first time when she was sixty years old. He taught her to swim and float on her back, and he said she liked the water and took it like a duck.⁴⁵

Flora often sent money to her parents to assist with their finances, and also to Monroe for his schooling. Monroe also sent money he earned at school to his parents. On several occasions, he sent them money because his father had to have two operations, which left him incapacitated and unable to work on the farm. In addition, he saved money and helped pay some on the mortgage of the new house they purchased in Glen Falls, New York.

What a joyous day in October 1923, when Mertie and Carl heard that their son Monroe had met a lovely young lady while attending college, and that they had exchanged a ring for a fraternity pin. Monroe proposed to Hilda Melin on December 24 and she promised to be his. Their courtship lasted until they married on June 16, 1924, the very same day that Monroe graduated from Wesleyan University, in Middletown, Connecticut.⁴⁶



Monroe and Hilda on their wedding day.

⁴⁵ Monroe W. Smith Journal, Jul 15, 1922.

⁴⁶ Monroe W. Smith Journal, Jun 16, 1924.

Mertie's Mother

While living in Glen Falls, Mertie lived only about thirty-nine miles from her aging mother, Maria Loomis, who had lived in Pawlet, Vermont. It was fortunate that she lived closer and was able to visit her mother. However, because of her mother's failing health she spent the last nine months of her life with Maria's sister, Frankie, in Enosburgh, Vermont, which was about one hundred seventy miles north of Glen Falls. Her mother died on June 21, 1924, just five days after the day that Monroe had graduated from Wesleyan University, and was married to Hilda Melin. Her mother was ninety-one years old. In just five short days, Mertie was so delighted about life beginning for her son and new daughter-in-law, and then so saddened about life ending for her cherished mother.⁴⁷



Sisters, Mertie, Jessie, Frankie, and Emily, visit their mother, Maria (center), at Frankie's home.

⁴⁷ Death record?

Mertie unexpectedly dies

On Saturday, September 5, 1925, after mowing the lawn, Mertie had a stomach ache. She tried to continue her work, but the pain began to increase. When the pain became almost unbearable, the doctor was summoned in the night, and he immediately came to their home. Not knowing what was causing the pain, he applied hot applications to her stomach. He did not realize it was appendicitis and before he could operate, the appendix had ruptured. Monroe was at Teachers College at Columbia University, New York, but he came home at once. His mother lived for two days after he arrived. Her last breath included the soft singing of “Jesus Lover of My Soul.” She died at Glen Falls, New York, on September 11, 1925, at the age of sixty-four. Monroe was heartbroken, for his mother was the most wonderful person he had known, and his admiration for her was more than for anyone else.⁴⁸

Just twenty-five days after Mertie died, her first granddaughter was born on October 5, 1925, to Monroe and Hilda. Mertie never got to hold her grandbaby or become part of her life and watch her grow up. Monroe and Hilda named their new baby, Mertie Elizabeth, in honor Monroe’s deceased mother.



Baby Mertie Elizabeth with Hilda’s mother, Laura.

⁴⁸ Monroe W. Smith 1939 Journal.

Tragedy Strikes

Mertie Elizabeth (Betty) was a darling grandchild. Carl must have adored her, and wished his wife Mertie would have been able to know baby Betty. Monroe and Hilda lived in Peekskill, New York, where Monroe was teaching at the Military Academy. When Betty was only one year old, on October 14, 1926, Monroe and Hilda went canoeing alone at Lake Mahopac. Monroe canoed to a small island, got out of the canoe and began to explore the island. When he returned to the canoe, his wife had ventured out alone, and had tipped the canoe. As she was screaming and struggling in the water, Monroe tried to swim to her aid, but was unable to find her in the deep water before she drowned.⁴⁹ Monroe was devastated, and one-year old Betty would never remember her mother!

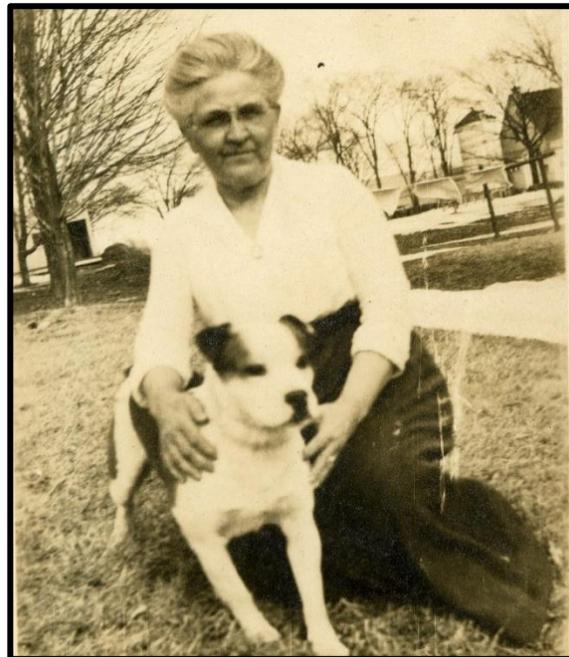


When Monroe returned to the canoe, his wife had ventured out alone, and had tipped the canoe.

⁴⁹ Newspaper article

Mertie's Legacy

Mertie was indefatigable and untiring as a wife, mother and farm worker. She never stopped working. Monroe wrote of his mother, "She had pluck and red blood and never played out." She taught her children to be kind and behave properly, and she put her trust in them and believed in them. She knew the meaning of charity and had all the virtues of a beautiful woman and mother.⁵⁰



Mertie worked as a practical nurse, helping to deliver babies & care for them when the mother was sick.

⁵⁰ Monroe Smith Journal, Jan 23, 1939. Definition of pluck: courage, guts, nerve.



Mrs Carl W. Smith

Carl Dies

Carl was a widower for three years. Even though his wife was nine years younger than him, she passed away before him. The hard work he had done during his life began to take a toll, and he developed a hernia in his abdomen. To reduce the pain, he would often stand on his head and let gravity help the hernia go back in place.⁵¹

Before his wife died, Carl started experiencing fatigue, shortness of breath, palpitations and chest pains. This condition gradually worsened over the next three years. Eventually, on May 2, 1928, he died due to chronic myocarditis, which is caused by inflammation of the muscle in the heart. Although the exact cause for the inflammation is unknown, the most common cause of myocarditis is infection by viruses, which weakens the heart muscle and results in heart failure. Carl was seventy-six years old, eight months and fourteen days, when he passed to the next life.⁵²



Monroe visits resting place of his parents at Mettawee Cemetery, Pawlet, Vermont - 1972.

⁵¹ Memory of story told to grandson, Jonathan Smith, by his father Monroe.

⁵² Vermont Death records, 1909-2008.

Carl's Legacy

Carl was quiet and did not speak a great deal, but he was a good thinker. What he felt, but may not have said, he taught to his children, by setting a good example to them for all of his life. Monroe said he had never seen his father lose his temper. He could find no fault with either his father or his mother. Whatever Carl put his hand to, he did it well. He was a man who hated to slow down. He was a hard-working farmer who believed in giving full measure, pressed down, and running over, whether it was produce or labor he was dealing out. He was 100% honest.⁵³ His definition of honesty was “when the other person understands it as you understand it, then you have been honest.”



Carl was quiet and did not speak a great deal, but he was a good thinker.

⁵³ Monroe W. Smith Journal, Jan 22, 1939.



Carl sitting next to fireplace, with picture of Flora and Monroe on the mantle.

Carl and Mertie shall ever be remembered as good people who loved the Lord, their children and treated those they met with kindness and love.



Flora, Carl, Monroe, Mertie

In just four years, from 1924 to 1928, Flora and Monroe had lost their grandmother, Maria Warren Smith, and their mother and father. In addition, Monroe had tragically lost his precious wife, Hilda. Only their love and memories and what they had learned from them, would help them to be able to continue on without them.

After Carl and Mertie died, Monroe married again and had two more children, Stephen and Jonathan. Flora married and had one child, Lydia, who she named after her Aunt Lydia. Thus, Carl and Mertie had four grandchildren, which included Betty.



Location of tombstone of Carl & Mertie in peaceful Mettawee Cemetery

Timeline and addresses of known homes:

- 1852 Carl born in West Fairlee VT on 75-acre woodland farm – 559 Russ Rd.
- 1861 Mertie born in Rupert VT ~ 2483-3537 Pawlet Mountain Rd.
- 1863 Mertie moved to Pawlet VT farm – 4686 VT-133
- 1897 Carl and Mertie sold West Fairlee VT flatland farm – 644 W Fairlee Rd. (sister)
- 1898 Carl and Mertie bought 55-acre farm in Sunderland MA – 55 Falls Rd.
- 1908 Carl and Mertie bought a farm in Westminster VT.
- 1908 Carl and Mertie bought a home Claremont NH – 51 South St.
- 1913 Carl and Mertie moved to Newton Center MA – 661 Commonwealth Ave.
- 1915 Carl and Mertie moved to Northfield MA.
- 1918 Carl and Mertie moved to home in Marlborough MA – 334 East Main St.
- 1920 Carl and Mertie moved to home in North Andover MA – 549 Osgood St.
- 1921 Carl and Mertie moved to duplex in Glen Falls NY – 136 Main St.