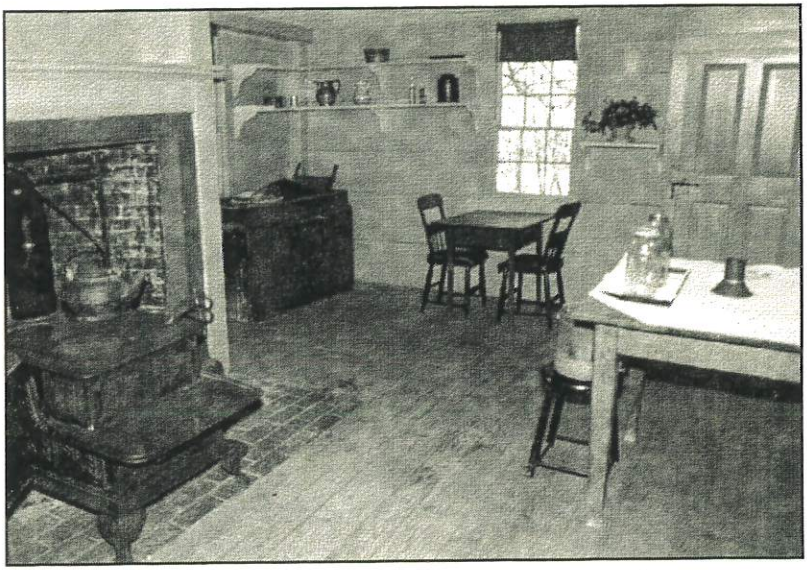
"Pure and Sweet"



Receipts &c. for Domestic Economy and Gracious Living

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Edited by Frances Lord, Academic Advisor

Preface

As the academic advisor to the 1992 Elizabeth Perkins Fellowship Program, I worked with an extraordinarily experienced and motivated group of Fellows. This summer marked the fifth year of the Elizabeth Perkins Fellowship program and the second year of focus on the Emerson-Wilcox House. In developing the interpretive plan worked out by two of the 1991 Fellows, this year's group concentrated on the reinstallation of the kitchen, buttery, and tavern rooms. Their research, which combined examination of the physical and documentary evidence of each room as well as the gathering of oral histories from persons who visited or worked on the house in the mid-twentieth century, provided the substantiation for dramatic changes in each room. Following in the best tradition of the program, the 1992 Fellows all brought outstanding scholarship plus unique interests and skills to their projects. This year's group was distinguished, however, by the comprehensiveness of their work. Each Fellow not only researched a particular aspect of the installation and saw it through (from assembling appropriate artifacts, to suggesting changes in paint and woodwork treatments to arranging the actual room exhibits), but also prepared and delivered the essays condensed in this volume.

Tracey Aldighieri used the expertise gained from her study of architecture and historic preservation to unravel the architectural puzzle of the house. She also analyzed the paint colors for the rooms scheduled for reinstallation.

Employing her interest in women's history, Lauren Goldberg examined the female domestic sphere in relation to the kitchen. Antoinette van Zelm complemented Lauren's work with her study of the cultural mores of food production and consumption. Together they reinstalled the former eighteenth-century kitchen as a mid-to late-nineteenth century kitchen complete with wood-fired stove.

Henry Amick brought his knowledge in nineteenth-century home dairies and dairying to the study of the buttery and the identification of the cellar below as a milk cellar. His installation transformed these spaces into a late nineteenth-century "back room" and cold storage cellar.

Fran Davey capitalized on her previous interpretive experience at Deerfield and Norlands as well as her skill in oral history to develop the interpretive plan for the former tavern room. Now installed as the 1930-era "colonial revival" dining room as used by the last occupants of the house.

With the assistance of the staff, the inspiration of guest lecturers and scholars, the aid of regional museum staff, and the continued support of Old York's Board of Trustees, the Fellows' work has advanced the mission and long range plan of Old York Historical Society. Because of the highly professional work of the Fellows over the past five years, the Elizabeth Perkins Fellowship Program is now recognized as a model program in preparing students for museum-related careers.

Frances Lord

250 YEARS OF CHANGE: The Architectural Evolution of the Emerson-Wilcox House

Tracey S. Aldighieri

INTRODUCTION

The architectural evolution of the Emerson-Wilcox House is both complex and continuous. Complex refers to the fact that the building we see today is not the result of one definitive period of construction, nor do the interior spaces indicate definitive functions. Rather, the building reflects many different periods of construction spanning approximately 250 years, during which time the appearance and spacial functions have changed. By continuous, I am referring to the kinetic nature of buildings and spaces, which incur physical modification as functional and technological change dictates.

All of the owners and occupants of the Emerson-Wilcox House have left their mark on the building, reflecting their personal needs and means. For example, Edward Emerson probably expanded the size of the house to accommodate his family of eleven as well as his tavern clientele. A prosperous merchant, he was able to fund such alterations. Technological advancement also played a major role in the changing face of the house. The earliest inhabitants cooked at the hearth; later inhabitants had the luxury of a mid-19th-century cook stove, which was replaced by the 20th-century electric range. Geographic location further defined the growth and appearance of the house. Unlike places such as Portland, Maine where the population doubled every ten years, York developed at a gradual pace. Thus the "twenty known architect-builders" who dotted the Portland landscape with large Georgian and Federal-style mansions, left no mark on York.[1] Instead, York residents who had the need and means to expand their homes, such as the occupants of the Emerson-Wilcox House, expanded the existing building with ells, "lean-tos" and wings. Such functional and technological advancements, combined with economic means, stimulated the physical evolution of this building from a typical colonial period New England homestead, consisting of four or five rooms, to a twentieth- century fifteen-room museum building.

This transition is addressed in the following survey, where a series of hypotheses relating to the architectural evolution of the Emerson-Wilcox House are posed, followed by the evidence collected to support these hypotheses. This required the analysis of the existing fabric of the building (construction patterns, nails, wood treatment, mortar), as well as legal documents (deeds, wills, dower rights), historical maps and drawings, and restoration drawings and correspondence (primarily 1950s & 1980s). Because the evidence listed above is sometimes vague and incomplete, and architectural change is sometimes gradual and haphazard, it is impossible to prepare a conclusive report of the architectural evolution of the Emerson-Wilcox House. Instead, the following is a working document which is intended to accompany, as well as challenge, previously written historical accounts of the house. This document was also prepared as a framework for further architectural analysis.

Each of the following sections presents one of the four main building phases that reflects the major architectural changes which parallel change in ownership. For each phase, one or more hypotheses is presented accompanied by supporting evidence, organized into two categories: (A) Documentary Evidence and (B) Physical Evidence.

PHASE I. c. 1740

George Ingraham erected his house on land which had been granted to the First Parish Church in York, Maine. This parcel of land was situated along Lindsay Road, at the corner of the First Parish Church burying yard. The house, Building I, followed a typical colonial period New England house plan: two-stories, three-bays wide by one bay deep with a central hall and central chimney (fig. 1).[2] The cooking hearth for this home was located in the room now referred to as the parlor, Room 1. This room originally extended approximately three feet into what is now the dining room, Room 7. The cooking hearth was approximately 5-6 feet wide by 32 inches deep, but has since been made smaller and more shallow, for better heat efficiency.

The possibility that a "lean-to" or kitchen ell extended from the west elevation of the house in Section B is addressed below, and in greater detail in Phase III.

A. Documentary Evidence

A deed legalizing the transfer of the property from Samuel Moody to Edward Emerson in 1756 describes the house as "being the same which George Ingraham formerly Erected"; thus, it is clear that Ingraham erected the building.[3] He completed the building at least by May 20, 1740, which is when he sold the house to Jeremiah and Daniel Moulton.[4] Six months later, on Nov. 15, 1740, George's wife, Bethiah purchased this house, where she had continued to live, back from the Moultons.[5] By August 27, 1741, Bethiah sold the house to Benjamin Stone.[6] It seems evident that the Ingrahams were having financial problems during this period.[7]

B. Physical Evidence

The materials visible in the attic and cellar of Building I link this structure to the 18th century. The timbers used in this post and beam construction were hand hewn; other members, such as floor boards, were prepared with an up-and-down or pit saw. A majority of the nails visible in the floor boards and roofing material were hand-wrought. Some machine-cut nails were found in the floor boards. Although timber continued to be hand-hewn and cut with an up and down saw into the 19th century, machine-cut nails were available by the 1790s and commonly used in the early 1800s. Because Building I was erected using hand-wrought nails, it can be assumed that it was erected in the 18th century, making it feasible that George Ingraham built this house around 1740.

The roof, framework and cellar of George Ingraham's house can be discerned from subsequent additions. In the attic is evidence of the roof that topped Ingraham's house. The west eave side of this wood-shingled roof remains partially intact, "enclosed" within a later roof addition (fig. 2). Rafters and the rear girt are also visible in the attic.

The posts that originally marked the west bounds of Building I can be seen in the upper-story rooms. The corner post of Building I is located in the dining room, Room 7, rather than in the parlor, Room 1, which was a part of the original house. This is because the west wall of Room 1 was shifted to the east. The footprint of this house distinguishes the perimeters of George Ingraham's cellar from subsequent extensions.

The width of the chimney base in the cellar indicates that a fireplace larger than the current fireplace was used as the kitchen hearth in Building I. The chimney base is 8 feet 9 inches wide; which suggests that the width of the original hearth was the same, extending from the right corner of the present hearth floor to the left face of the dining room closet. Evidence of the west, or left fireplace side, can be found in the parlor closet. The floor of the parlor closet is brick, and brick also exists behind a layer of particle board on the left and rear face of the lower portion of the closet. This brickwork defines the c. 1740 fireplace floor, left wall, and fireback. The distance from the fireback (rear face of closet) to the front of the hearth floor is 32 inches, a reasonable size for an 18th-century hearth.[8]

A common method of creating angled jambs, which was employed in the construction of this fireplace, is visible in the northwest corner of the parlor closet. After the fireplace was erected with 90 degree jambs, additional bricks were laid at an angle to a height just above the height of the fireplace opening, in an effort to more efficiently reflect heat. Although both lintels are now plastered over, the height and size of the fireplace lintel, which can also be seen in the parlor closet, match those dimensions of the lintel evident in the dining room closet. In addition, the floor of this closet is brick, further suggesting that the hearth, or its bake-oven, extended this far west.[9]

It is difficult to assess the existence of a "lean-to" addition on the west elevation of the house as the fireplace opening has been plastered over in the present dining room, making examination impossible. Such additions were very common in New England during the colonial period.[10] There is a possible relationship between the brick floor in the dining room closet, the dining room fireplace and a "lean-to" addition. The west sill of Building I shows little weathering, which is unusual for an exterior sill. This suggests the presence of either a "lean-to" or wing which would have shielded the existing sill. Another possibility is that the sill was subsequently replaced, possibly when the present dining room was erected. This is investigated further, when addressing physical evidence in the cellar, in Phase III.

PHASE II. 1755-1803

Edward Emerson purchased the house in 1756, expanded this building, and added other buildings to the site. He increased the size of his house by attaching a two-story, three-bay-wide by one-bay-deep structure to the north section of the west facade, which extended along the King's Highway (York Street). This building, Building II, may have been removed from one of the many properties that Emerson acquired from people who owed him money and transferred to this site along rollers. A brick-floored kitchen ell was then erected, extending south from the rear elevation of Building II. A fireplace and

bake-oven defined the south elevation of the ell and mortared bricks covered the floor. The house provided shelter for up to ten Emerson children; in the house or in another building on the property, Emerson ran a store and tavern.

A. Documentary Evidence

A deed was prepared on 31 December 1756, which transferred the property from Samuel Moody to Edward Emerson, who was already living in the house.[11] He may have been living in the house as early as 1754, when he was first listed in Dr. John Swett's account book. In addition to providing the family with medical advice and medication, Dr. Swett of York also supplied the Emersons with clapboards on 26 October 1758 and lath on 21 August 1767.[12] Perhaps these entries indicate periods of construction at the Emerson house. It is likely that Emerson directed, or even completed much of his own construction, as there is documentation of his knowledge of the building crafts. For example, the Parish Church Records for 1787 note that Edward Emerson was voted onto the First Parish Committee to "compleat the repairs on the meeting house." He was again elected to this committee in 1800.[13]

The parish records further indicate there was more than one building on the Emerson property. In 1766, Emerson signed a 999-year lease for "that part of the Ministerial Lands in this Parish which the said Edwards Dwelling House and Buildings there stand upon...."[14] The inventory of Emerson's estate, prepared in 1807, provides more detail about these buildings. Under the heading "Real Estate" are listed "the mansion house, 2 old stores & barn, with the land on which they stand."[15]

Emerson was involved in the mercantile business as early as 1759, when an advertisement for his store appeared in the *New Hampshire Gazette*. He advertised "A Great Variety of Englifh and Weft India Goods," which included coffee, chocolate, flour, indigo, rice pepper, allspice, nutmegs, cinnamon, raisons, ginger, pewter and tinware, 20d, 10d and 4d nails, flax, sheep's wool, bibles, [and] psalters."[16] By 1780, he had a tavern license and probably served his guests in the house.

An 1807 map of the Village center, displayed in the Colonial Relics Room in the Old Gaol Museum, includes Emerson's property. Emerson's son, Bulkley, inhabited the house in 1807, thus the Emerson named "B. Emerson" in the drawing must have been Bulkley. The drawing shows both the three-bay east elevation of the house and the three-bay north elevation of the addition. Although the perspective is distorted, the drawing clearly depicts the two major components of the building: the c. 1740 house erected by George Ingraham and the house that Edward Emerson transferred to this location.

The wording in Emerson's will offers a small glimpse into the interior of the house. In his will, Emerson left his "mansion house...other buildings and pasture land" to his son, Bulkley, while designating certain spaces within his house for his unmarried daughters, Lucy and Ruth. He left his daughters "the lower north room of his mansion house, the Northeast chamber, & the middle chamber, together with half the garret, kitchen, cellar & stores"[17] The two chambers can be interpreted as Room 14 and Room 13, respectively. Clearly the addition of another house had already been made by this

time, as Room 13 is a part of Building II. Because the will listed a kitchen in the singular suggests that there was either only one kitchen in the house or only one kitchen *associated* with the house. In the latter case, this kitchen would be used for domestic meal preparation while the kitchen ell would be used to prepare tavern meals.

The assumption that Building II had been added along York Street by the time Edward Emerson prepared his will confuses the interpretation of the "lower north room." In the original building, this space would have to mean the exhibit gallery, Room 3; with the addition of another building to the site, however, there were more than one "lower north room(s)." The deed transferring the property from Jonathan Barrell to David Wilcox in 1817 clarifies the interpretation of this space. Because Lucy and Ruth Emerson retained their rights in the house, the deed includes the following description of the spaces reserved for their use: "the use of N.W. corner room on the lower floor, and the N.E. and middle chambers, with half the cellar and half the garret, with a privilege in the kitchen and outhouses"[18] In this later document, the lower room is described as being located in the northwest corner, rather than simply to the north. It seems either that they were given the right to a different space, or, more likely, that the space was simply described in greater detail in the 1877 document.

Here again, a kitchen is mentioned in the singular tense, even though a document that postdates Emerson's will and predates Wilcox's deed describes two kitchens. This document is Hannah Emerson's 1816 Dower in the Real Estate of Bulkley Emerson, which is addressed further in Phase III. It can be assumed that although the number of kitchens did, in fact, increase the wording used in Edward Emerson's will was simply carried over into the later document.

B. Physical Evidence

The clapboarding on the east gable-end of Building II is visible in the attic (see fig. 2). The fact that the clapboarding is intact supports the assumption that the building was transferred to its present location along rollers, as opposed to having been dismantled and rebuilt. The roof rafters of Building II remain intact in the attic, although the purlins were subsequently raised. The roof of Building II was extended toward the east to enclose the gap in the roofline that was created when the two buildings came together. The presence of this completed roof -- now "enclosed" in another roof-- provides evidence that when Building II was added, there was not a second story over the present dining room, Room 7, or kitchen, Room 6. If there had been a second story, this roof would never have been extended; it would have been raised immediately to accommodate a second story over the kitchen and dining room. Building materials show up-and-down saw marks and hand- hewn treatment, as well as hand-wrought and some machine cut nails, suggesting 18th- century construction and 19th-century renovation.

Edward Emerson's kitchen floor is located below a section of the floor of the kitchen, Room 6. The beams, floor joists, floor boards, and mortared bricks covering the floor boards extend from the south sill of Building II to the chimney base, and are visible from the cellar. The foundation line, which is 2-3 inches beyond the west extension of the kitchen hearth, and the beam between the kitchen and dining room

delineate the east and west boundaries of this floor (see fig. 1). The presence of a brick-floored kitchen indicates extensive food preparation, such as that which may have occurred in taverns like Edward Emerson's. Early taverns typically had a brick-floored "prep kitchen" and a separate room to serve food.[19]

The overall design of the kitchen hearth suggests that it was constructed during the late 1700's. It is possible, however, that Edward Emerson built his kitchen hearth earlier, and in a fashion that pre-dated other hearth construction in the Piscataqua River region. Both Steve Roy and Robert Herne, masons, suggest that the combination of details that characterize the hearth, such as the location of the bake-oven, the presence of an ash chute, the shape of the fireback, and the materials used in construction, could link this hearth to construction in the late 18th century Piscataqua River region. Through his experience in the Merrimack River region, Steve Roy has learned that the combination of these elements evolved about twenty years earlier in this area. Emerson could have known about this advanced hearth design because of his family ties in Newbury, NH, which is situated in the Merrimack River region. He therefore could have erected his kitchen hearth as early as 1760. The fine distinctions that characterize the hearth, which has subsequently been rebuilt and restored, are difficult to assess. Because Emerson was operating a tavern by 1780, which may have necessitated a large fireplace and extended hearth, it can be estimated that the kitchen hearth and the brick floor were erected by 1780, possibly sooner.[20]

PHASE III. 1806-1815

Bulkley Emerson, the son of Edward, inherited the house, outbuildings and property when his father died in 1806. During this time, an addition was made to the house: Room 7, essentially filling in the small dooryard behind the parlor, Room 1. The west wall of Room 1 was moved approximately three feet to the east, leaving a larger space for Room 7. In addition, the kitchen was expanded to the west, to its present boundary, and to the south to include a back kitchen with boilers, Room 8. Rooms 15,16 and 17 were erected above the dining room and kitchen. The addition of upper level room required that the roof be raised and extended toward the south. The expansion of the physical size of the house corresponded with the expansion of the functional use of the house. Bulkley received an Innholders license in 1813, 1814 and 1815. In 1814 and 1815, he continued the tradition begun on the property by his father, by receiving a Retailer's license.[21]

A. Documentary Evidence

In his will, dated 1803, Edward Emerson gave to his son, Bulkley, "the mansion house...all (his) other buildings and pasture land."[22] In Edward's inventory, taken after his death in 1806, the other buildings are listed as "2 old stores & barn" situated on the land that he leased from the church for 999 years, or that which is located at the northeast corner of the burying yard.[23] Six years later, in 1813, the First Parish Church recognized that Bulkley's buildings were encroaching on the Parsonage land "where his store, shed & hogs-sty stand, adjoining the burying ground, containing about four

square rods, and also where his stables and garden is, containing about 85 square rods."[24] It is difficult to distinguish between the buildings erected by Edward Emerson and those erected by his son, Bulkley. Either the church overlooked the fact that Edward's buildings encroached on Parish lands, or Bulkley erected some or all of the buildings between 1806, when he inherited the house, and 1813.

A First Parish Church map of York Village shows the house at the corner of the burying yard, three other buildings along the "High Way," and one building to the south of the house (fig. 3). The map was probably drawn between the 1790s and 1810s, which is the period when Madam Lyman, who is mentioned under "Western Upper Field," was living as a widow in York. "B. Emerson" is also mentioned, further defining the date of the map to the period that Bulkley inhabited the house: 1806-1815. It is logical to assume that any of the three larger buildings could have been stores, based on their relative sizes and their location along the two streets.

The most informative piece of documentary evidence for the period of eight years that Bulkley inhabited the house, is Hannah's dower rights to the real estate of her husband, Bulkley. This document described the third of the house that Hannah retained the right to live in, following her husband's death in 1815. Hannah received as her thirds in the house...the southerly front room in the dwelling house near the Court house in York, the small kitchen back of it, the southerly front chamber and the small chamber back of it and adjoining the same with a privilege of using the front entry and front stairs and also a privilege of passing through the back kitchen and a privilege of using the boilers in the back kitchen for washing and cooking. Also a privilege in the cellar, of putting in sauce and other things usually kept in cellars and she is to have free access to the same thro' the outer and inner passages as she may have occasion to make use of the cellar.[25]

It can be interpreted that the "southerly front room" is the parlor (Room 1); the "small kitchen back of it" is the present kitchen (Room 6); the "southerly front chamber" is the Bulman bedchamber (Room 10); the "small chamber back of it and adjoining the same" is the storage room (Room 17); and the "back kitchen" is the buttery (Room 8). The manner in which the kitchens were described leaves their arrangement unclear. For example, the "small kitchen back of it" could easily mean that a kitchen was located where the current dining room is located, behind the "southerly front room." However, the document does not specify that the kitchen adjoins the parlor as it does when describing the chambers located directly above. This suggests that the kitchen did not adjoin the parlor. We do know, however, that a room must have existed behind the parlor, because the document describes the chamber located above this room.

According to the dower, the "back kitchen" had boilers, which Hannah had the right to use. The entry "Rumford stoves [boilers] removed from buttery" is noted in a 1982 timeline created by former museum director, Eldredge Pendleton. Thus, we can assume that the back kitchen is the buttery, or Room 8.[26]

It is interesting that Hannah is given the right to use certain entrances and passages. Because she has the right to use "the front entry and front stairs," as well as to pass

"through the back kitchen," it is likely that the curved passageway, which links the front of the house with the rear, did not exist at this time. It also suggests that there was a barrier between "the southerly front room" and "the small kitchen." It is unlikely that two adjoining rooms would not be connected by a door, possibly indicating that someone else had the right to use this room, Room 7.

If a kitchen was located where the present dining room is located (Room 7) it could have been erected as early as c. 1740 in the form of a kitchen ell or "lean-to." In this case, the "back kitchen" refers to the present kitchen and buttery [Rooms 6 and 8] and the "small kitchen" refers to a kitchen ell or "lean-to," located where Room 7 is today.

B. Physical Evidence

Two consecutive roofing systems are visible in the attic (fig. 4). The earlier roof covered Building II, when it was first moved to the site. The extension to the south was erected when the upper level were added to the south elevation. The rafters of the earlier roof remain intact and share the ridge pole with the later addition. Machine-cut nails and up and down sawn lumber were employed in the construction of the extended roof.

It is likely that Bulkley extended the size of the kitchen at the same time that he "modernized" his kitchen with the addition of boilers. The kitchen chimney base in the cellar is situated below the hearth, but not far enough south to have supported the boilers that were once situated along the rear of the kitchen hearth. Had the boilers been a part of the original plan, the chimney base would have been built large enough to accomodate them. The space below the presumed location of the boilers has not been excavated, but it is heaped with debris. According to Steve Roy, it is likely that some of the debris served to provide a base for the boilers; other debris was left by their removal. This further indicates these boilers were added following the original construction of the fireplace in this space -- that of Edward Emerson's "prep" kitchen. The west foundation wall which corresponds with the west boundary of Edward Emerson's "prep kitchen" also corresponds with the position of the east side of the doorway linking the kitchen to the buttery. Without an extension to the west to accommodate a doorway between the kitchen and buttery, there would be no direct access between these two rooms. It is likely, therefore, that either the kitchen expansion preceded the addition of the buttery, or the two occurred simultaneously. Analysis of paint samples removed from the west kitchen wall shows that this space was painted approximately the same number of times that the buttery was painted. This observation suggests that the buttery and the kitchen addition were constructed simultaneously.[27]

PHASE IV. 1817-1858

David Wilcox purchased the house on May 8, 1817 from Jonathon S. Barrell. He moved into a fairly large house that had been expanded by Bulkley Emerson. He, therefore, did not need to make any substantial additions to the house to accommodate his inn and post office businesses. But he did, however, erect a small, irregularly-shaped wing along the west facade of the house.

A. Documentary Evidence

The York County Records show that David Wilcox was granted a license in April of 1817, to "be an innholder at his dwelling house in York." He did not sign a deed to the house until May of 1817, therefore he was probably living in the house by the time he purchased it. In the York Town Records for the years 1826, 1827, and 1830, David Wilcox is referred to as an Innholder.[28] In 1822, he also became the Postmaster.[29]

In the York Tax Records David Wilcox is listed through 1857, as having a house, barn, 13 acres of land, 2 cows, and in some years, swine.[30] By 1850, William E. Putnam (who married David's daughter, Louise, in 1845) was listed under Wilcox's name. The two names appear together from then on, until 1857, when William E. Putnam was named executor of his father-in-law's estate.

On April 14, 1851, Wilcox added a small building to his barnyard. An entry in the Parish Church Records notes that "the assessors be instructed to remove the small building in rear of the Court House, to the West corner of David Wilcox's Barn Yard."[31] It is not clear where Wilcox's barnyard was situated, which might have been the 13 acres of land mentioned in the tax records.

B. Physical Evidence

Machine-cut nails were used in the construction of Room 9, linking this addition to a period after 1800. Up-and-down saw marks are visible in the roofing system above Room 9. It is difficult to further distinguish the treatment of materials used in the early 1800's; therefore it is difficult to distinguish the construction of this room from earlier additions.[32]

CONCLUSION

Two hundred and fifty years of family growth, as well as occupational, economic, and technological change have contributed to the emergence of the Emerson-Wilcox House from that which George Ingraham built to an Old York Historical Society museum building. In order to trace each change that marked this building, the lives of its inhabitants had to be recreated. This entails balancing the individuals with their surroundings, based on the fragments that have been left behind.

Fortunately, when tracing architectural change, there remains a physical element to read. By combining the information derived from the building patterns, saw marks, and nails with documentary evidence and logic, a story evolves. By adhering to this process, the architectural evolution of the Emerson-Wilcox began to unfold. The four main building phases described in the preceding document, reflect the four major periods of change that defined the architectural evolution of the Emerson-Wilcox House. By drawing parallels between changes in ownership and documentary evidence with physical evidence, a logical pattern of change evolved.

There remains, however, much more to be learned about the Emerson-Wilcox House. Not only is there much to be learned about the four phases discussed above, but subsequent owners, such as the four generations who inhabited the house after David Wilcox, continued to personalize the house. Thus, the house remains a laboratory for further research and learning.

Notes

[1] Richard Candee, "'The Appearance of Enterprise and Improvement': Architecture and the Coastal Elite of Southern Maine," *Agreeable Situations: Society, Commerce, and Art in Southern Maine, 1780-1830*, (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1987), 70-74.

[2] Thomas Hubka labelled this plan the hall-and-parlor house. Thomas Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England*, (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1984), 34.

[3] Deed from Samuel Moody to Edward Emerson, 1756, Book, York County Courthouse, Alfred, ME, 13.

[4] Deed from George Ingraham to Jeremiah and Daniel Moulton, 1740, Book 19, York County Courthouse, 359.

[5] Deed from Jeremiah and Daniel Moulton to Benjamin Stone, 1740, Book 19, York County Courthouse, 384.

[6] Deed from Bethiah Ingraham to Benjamin Stone, 1740, Book 19, York County Courthouse, 384. In fact, George Ingraham was brought to jail for debt. In addition, Bethiah was borrowing money from her parents, perhaps in an effort to pay outstanding debts, such as those accumulated while building the house. It is interesting to note that Jeremiah Moulton held the position of Parish clerk throughout the 1730s, the Parish Treasurer in 1737 and 1738, and a Parish Assessor in 1739.

[7] Parish Records, 1731-1840, First Parish Church, York, ME.

[8] Mr. Steve Roy, Dodge, Adams & Roy, Portsmouth, NH, site visit with author, August, 1992.

[9] Steve Roy's first impression was that the width of the parlor closet, hence brick floor, is too small to have accommodated a bakeoven. He suggests that the bricks might not reflect a conscious design effort, but rather an effort to fill the gap between the fireplace and the west foundation wall. Further analysis and research on colonial bake-ovens might render additional information.

[10] Norman Morrison Isham, Early American Houses and a Glossary of Colonial Architectural Terms, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1967), 4.

[11] Deed from Samuel Moody to Edward Emerson, 1756, Book, York County Courthouse, 13.

[12] Dr. John Swett Physician Ledger, 1776-1825, OYHS, 89.

[13] Parish Records, 1731-1840, First Parish Church, York, Me, 57.

[14] Parish Records, 1731-1840, First Parish Church, York, ME , 158.

[15] Inventory of the Estate of Edward Emerson, 1807, (typescript) Edward Emerson Genealogy File, OYHS.

[16] Charles Edward Banks, *History of Maine in Three Volumes*, vol. 2, (Boston, MA: Calkins Press, 1931), 277-278.

[17] Will of Edward Emerson, 1803, Book 20, 534-536, York County Registry of Probate (YCRP).

[18] Deed from Jonathan S. Barrell to David Wilcox, 1817, Book 110, York County Courthouse, 146-147.

[19] Conversation with Steve Roy who observed a brick floor similar to that in the Emerson-Wilcox House, at the Pitt Tavern in Portsmouth, NH. During the restoration of the Pitt Tavern in the 1960s, this floor was photographed and then destroyed. The restoration photographs are on file at the Strawberry Banke Library.

[20] A tape of Steve Roy's visit, August, 1992, is filed at Old York Historical Society (OYHS). During the visit, he spoke at length about the fireplaces in the house. An extensive mortar analysis might provide additonal information regarding the mortar used to construct the fireplaces, chimneys, floors, and foundation walls.

[21] Juliet Moffard, "Taverns in 18th Century New England Life: Background for Interpretation of Jefferds Tavern and Emerson-Wilcox Taproom," (unpub. typescript, early 1980s), OYHS, 7.

[22] Will of Edward Emerson, 1803, Book 22, YCRP, 534-536.

[23] Inventory of Edward Emerson, 1806 (typescript) Edward Emerson Genealogy File, OYHS, 110-111.

[24] Parish Records, 1731-1840, First Parish Church, York, ME, 158.

[25] Hannah Emerson Dower in the Real Estate of Bulkley Emerson, 1816, Vol. 26, YCRP, 169-170.

[26] Emerson-Wilcox House, Architectural Files, OYHS.

[27] A paint analysis of the Emerson-Wilcox House, prepared by the author, is on file at OYHS. The analysis provides additional information about the evolution of the house, particularly the kitchen (Room 6), the buttery (Room 8), and the dining room (Room 7).

[28] Juliet Moffard, "Taverns in 18th Century New England Life: Background for Interpretation of Jefferds Tavern and Emerson-Wilcox Taproom," (unpub. typescript, early 1980s), OYHS, 7.

[29] Maine Register 1822, (Portland, ME: Tower Publishing Co., 1822), 139.

[30] "Eastern List for the Town of York, List of Polls and estate Taxable in 18—," OYHS. A transcription of the entries David Wilcox and William E. Putnam is located in David Wilcox's Genealogy file at OYHS. The values listed in these tax records might render valuable information if analyzed according to a historical price index, such as *How Much Is That in Real Money? A Historical Price Index for Use as a Deflator of Money Values in the Economy of the United States*, in the OYHS holdings.

[31] Parish Records, 1851, Vol. II, First Parish Church, York, ME. It is interesting that Agricultural Census records of 1840 note there are two people in Wilcox's household employed in agriculture and in 1850, he was listed as a farmer. By this time, Wilcox was 71 years old, and his daughter, Louisa, age 29, was living in the house with her husband, William E. Putnam, age 42. Elizabeth Wilcox, age 9, Louisa's niece, was also a member of the household. Having inherited the house from her father in 1856, Louisa, in turn, left the house to Elizabeth.

[32] There might be much more to learn through close examination of the west wing. The author's work tended to focus on other sections of the house.

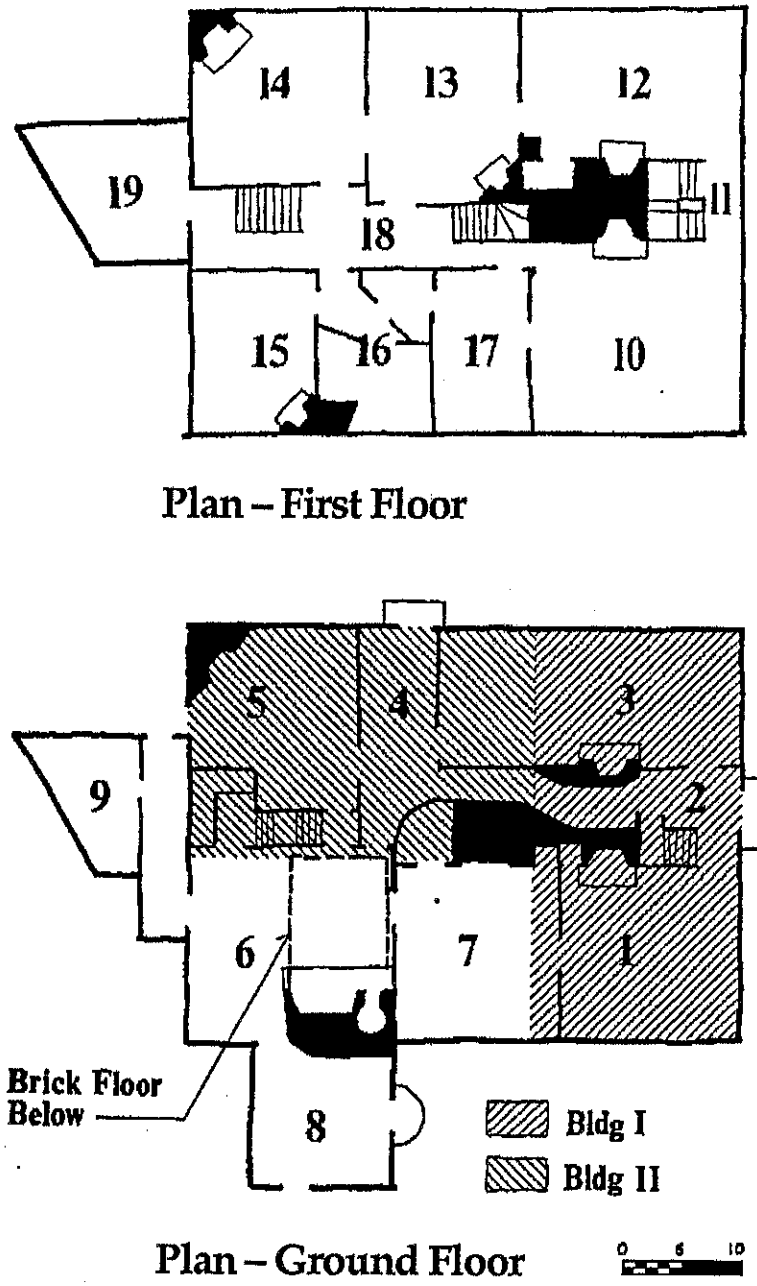


Fig. 1 Plans showing buildings I and II and room numbers.

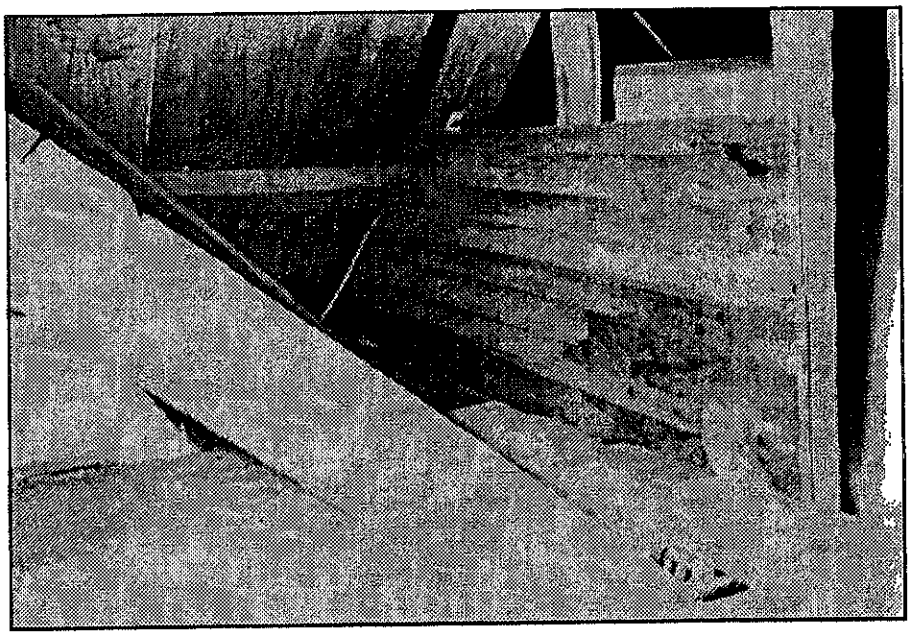


Fig. 2 View in the attic showing Building I roof at left, building II gable-end clapboarding at right, and the underside of the roof erected when building I joined building II. Horace Brandt photograph.

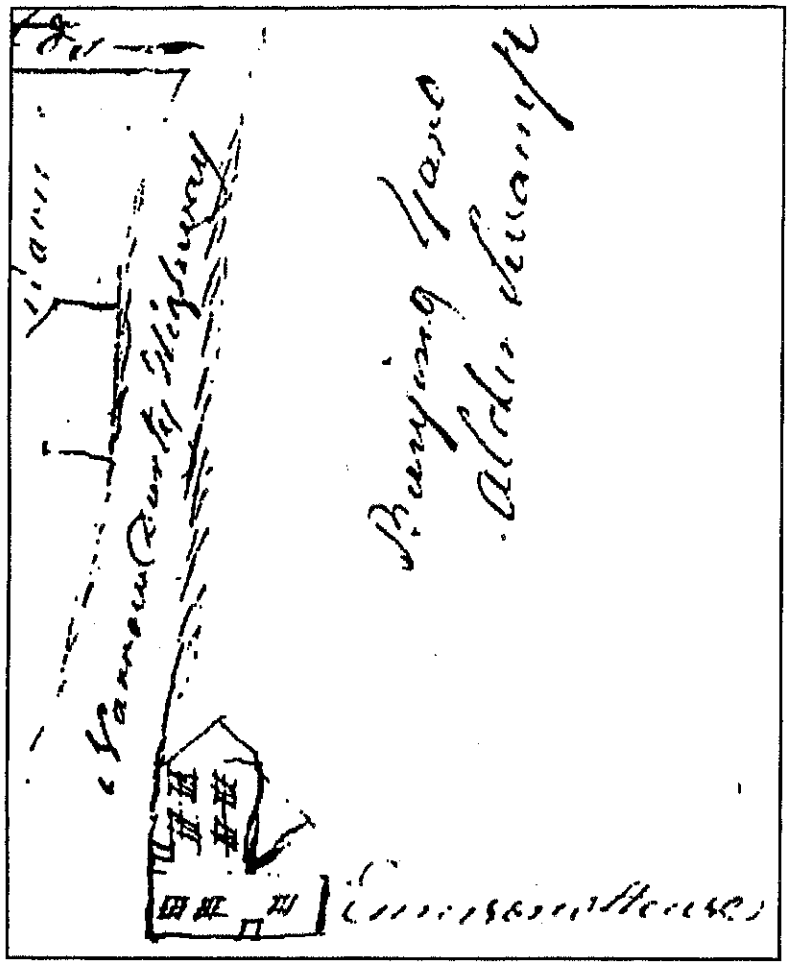


Fig. 3 First Parish Church Map showing the Emerson-Wilcox House and outbuildings at the corner of the burying yard, c. 1806-1815.

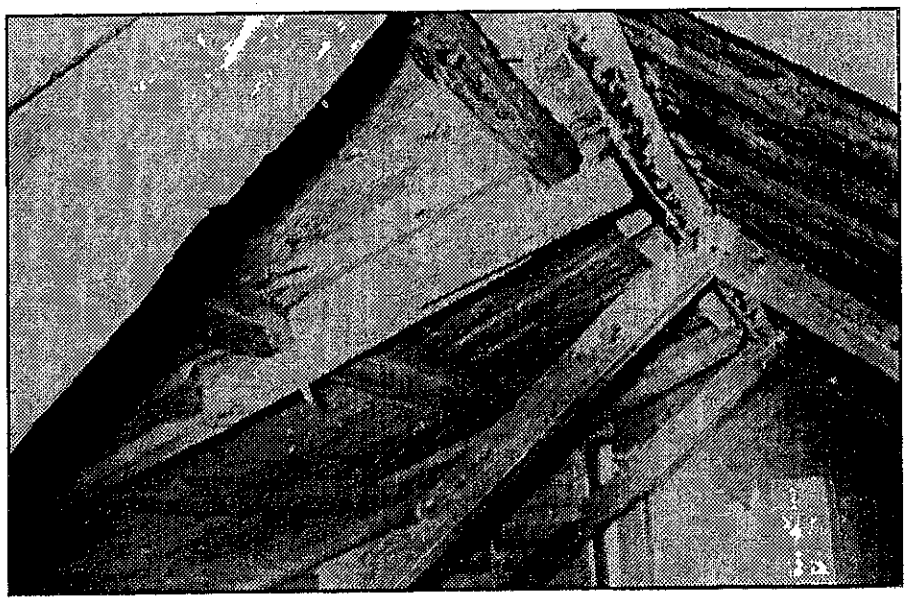


Fig. 4 View in the attic showing building II roof rafters and extension at left. Horace Brandt photograph.

STOVES, SERVANTS, AND SUPERVISION: An Analysis of 19th Century Women's Work in a Middle-Class New England Kitchen

Lauren Goldberg

In 1845 the *Lady's Annual Register* declared, "Many families have owed their prosperity full as much to the propriety of female management as to the knowledge and activity of the father."[1] To a twentieth century reader, the term "female management" might suggest that in the nineteenth century, a middle-class woman merely supervised the activities of her family but did not work herself. In reality, the nineteenth-century woman was responsible for a variety of tasks, many of which she performed daily. The parameters which defined a woman's duties in nineteenth-century New England included: the make-up and size of her household; the size of the family income; the extent of outside resources available to the household; the nature of her husband's work; and whether the household was located in the city or in the still-considerable farmlands of the Northeast."[2]

Although these variables accounted for some of the differences in how women approached their domestic responsibilities, some household tasks were universal. For that reason, it is possible to use the contents of Harriet J. Emerson's diary and letters to create a gendered interpretation of Louisa Wilcox Putnam's kitchen in the Emerson-Wilcox house. In addition, these documents illuminate the lives of other middle-class women living in New England during the late nineteenth century.[3]

An examination of nineteenth-century prescriptive literature as well as an analysis of Harriet's diary and letters shows that nineteenth-century women of all classes, even those who had daughters and/or domestic help, worked very hard. Harriet's sister Margaret inquired of her in 1858, "What are you about that you are allways [*sic*] so busy. Have you not a good girl now, that you need not be quite so much confined to Cookery?"[4] This quote provides a great deal of information about women's work in the nineteenth century. It indicates that Harriet spent much of her time fulfilling domestic obligations; that she devoted a large portion of those hours to food preparation; that women viewed their responsibilities as constraining; and that women commonly hired domestic servants to take some of the burden of housework off themselves.

The "Receipts & Co." sections in the 1870 volume of *Godey's Lady's Book* provide an insight into the number and variety of chores women performed. These included cooking, sewing, and cleaning the house and its contents. Further, these and other period sources indicate that although the selection of goods available for purchase in shops and city markets grew throughout the nineteenth century, most women continued to stock their pantries with foods they produced at home instead of mass-produced foods. For example, Louisa's cookbook contains directions for, among other things, preserved tomatoes, peach pickles, and wine jelly, and Harriet noted in her 1871 diary that she had produced apple jelly, made soap, and churned butter.[5]

While upon first consideration it may seem industrialization changed the nature and extent of a woman's domestic responsibilities, an examination of how technology

affected the home and the work done inside it shows that, if anything, industrialization gave women more to do than ever before. In *More Work for Mother*, Ruth Schwartz Cowan argued no household task is a simple, homogeneous activity but a process. For example, cooking involves procuring food (buying or raising it), preparing it for storage (canning, salting, freezing, refrigerating, etc.), maintaining the energy source to prepare food for storage or a meal (stoking the fire, damping the stove, adding the wood or coal), maintaining and cleaning the utensils used to prepare food, and waste disposal — all in addition to preparing three meals a day. Thus, one must question the boasts of nineteenth century advertisements for appliances which promised women would have less work than ever before and one must ask "did technology really change the nature of women's work?" And if technology did, in fact, make it possible for women to complete a particular task in less time, did it change what was expected of them? Did it change the number of hours women worked per day?[6]

An analysis of women's work shows that technology may have changed how women worked but not how much time they spent working. Instead of minimizing their duties, technology placed new demands on women. Those who had learned to cook on an open hearth were forced to relearn their skills using the new cooking stoves, appliances which, according to Cowan, were labor-saving devices for men, not women. Because stoves used less fuel than open-hearth fires, men had to cut, haul and split less wood than before. Women, on the other hand, took on the challenge of maintaining stove fires while continuing to lift and carry heavy, cast-iron pots and pans. Even though women may have spent less time stooping over a hearth, the stove effectively eliminated what Cowan characterized as "one-pot cooking," and thus probably increased the amount of time women spent preparing food, no doubt while bent over a work table. Shortly after their marriage in 1830, Charles Emerson wrote to his wife Harriet that he had "engaged a Cooking stove, a cheap one, merely to give it the experiment; if any of your friends use them, I hope you will initiate yourself in the art of using them."[7] A letter Harriet's former servant Joanna wrote her in 1847 indicates that to initiate oneself in the art of using a cooking stove was no small feat. Joanna wrote, "I wish you could be here and see me Cook with a Range. You would not think I ever saw any cooking done before. Such coddled messes you never saw. I should rather cook for your family [of seven] than to cook for this family of three."[8] Finally, as women's culinary tasks became more complex, they had less time to engage in other activities. Thus, while cooking could be a source of pride and pleasure, particularly on holidays and for other special gatherings, more often than not it was associated with hard labor. For the most part, cooking was simply the business of preparing the family's food, the chore that was done the most and the one that could never be postponed.[9]

As middle-class women began to spend more time cooking, they frequently employed domestic servants to help with other household duties. Nevertheless, this was neither a universal nor a regular practice. During her tour of the United States in the 1840s, Fredrika Bremer observed that the custom in small, New England homes, even those of the professional class, was for the wife to perform the work inside the house

without the aid of a servant. She attributed this to both economic causes and the scarcity of good servants. A suitable servant was one who was not only trained in the domestic arts, but one whose class and ethnic background did not offend the sensibilities of the upper social strata.[10] On January 13, 1853, Harriet wrote Charles from Portland that "Irish girls are plenty but not much valued," but it was only a week later that she had, in the end, engaged "a strong Irish girl" to go home with her.[11] The data from York's 1850 and 1870 censuses contradict Bremer's findings. Harriet and Louisa both had servants, the number of which was dictated by the size of their respective households. In 1850, Harriet had a household of nine people which included two live-in servants while Louisa who resided with her husband, niece, father, and maiden sister, had none, perhaps because she spent several months each year travelling. Twenty years later, in 1870, Harriet still had two live-in servants as part of her household of seven; Louisa, who had been widowed in 1868 and seen her niece marry, had one servant.[12]

Although, as Bremer claimed, it may have been hard to find a domestic servant, most often it was family finances that determined whether a woman in the Northeast had paid domestic help some or all of the time. The likelihood that a woman employed household help increased proportionally to a family's wealth and the stability of its income. Families who had paid help most frequently hired a cook or washerwoman (sometimes the same person). Families employed additional help as needed (and as able) for special events, such as during a woman's convalescence following childbirth or to have extra help during the much dreaded spring cleaning, a ritual which often lasted several weeks and became even more arduous with the appearance of kerosene lamps and cookstoves which coated the floors, walls and ceilings of homes with a dark, stubborn grime.[13] Yet again, improvements in technology meant more work for women. Once hired, live-in help quickly became an integral part of the household. In fact, when it was necessary for Harriet's servant Mathilda to return home to care for her sick mother, Harriet hired the sister of her other servant to stay a day or two with her.[14]

The presence of paid domestic labor did not free the mistress of the household from her work. In fact, most women worked alongside their servants to make the household more productive. In addition, although servants would save women hours of physical labor, they saddled women with a new responsibility — to train them, not necessarily in the general aspects of how to do their work, but in the particulars of the individual household's routine, habits, and expectations.[15] Once they had trained their servants, women had to supervise them constantly to ensure that they maintained the household's standards. Even when Harriet was visiting relatives in Portland, she kept herself abreast of the events at home. Charles wrote her that "Almeda has been very busy this week in cleaning cupboards, closets &c., I suspect it cannot be of her own mere Notion, but that you must have given her directions before leaving."[16] On a different trip, Harriet instructed Charles to tell Clara, her servant at the time, that she was thinking of her and that she hoped to receive a "good account of her & not (be) pain'd & grieved by a contrary one."[17]

According to historian Jeanne Boydston, women frequently hired servants not as a

means of relinquishing their own domestic responsibilities, but to do the work that in an earlier time would have been carried out by younger female relatives, either daughters or sisters. These girls and women began to leave the domestic circle when middle-class families started to emphasize the importance of education and refined social skills.[18] Although this may have been true in other homes, once again the Emerson's experience contradicts twentieth-century secondary sources. Even though Harriet's daughter Abbie did go to New York for her formal education, she was also trained in domestic skills. Before Abbie had married and moved out of Harriet's house, Harriet left her in charge when she and Charles traveled. During that time Harriet wrote letters of instruction and encouragement to Abbie who was still learning the skills she would need to run her own household. It appears as if Abbie grew tired of housework early in her domestic career as Harriet wrote "I am sorry dear you find it so difficult to cater for the family... Thank you love for the patience you manifest under your burden of care. Hope you will enjoy all you can."[19] After Abbie married, she returned almost daily to Harriet's home to cook, clean and accompany her mother on shopping trips to Portsmouth. She made particularly noticeable contributions in the kitchen when Harriet was preparing to entertain, during spring cleaning, and when Harriet was ill. Abbie was such an integral part of her mother's life that when she had not been there for two days, Harriet saw fit to note it in her diary.[20]

Although nineteenth-century women spent many hours a day preparing food at home, at the same time they began to spend a greater portion of their days shopping. Harriet went to Portsmouth at least once a week, and her accounts for the W.M. Walker store in York for 1871 indicate she shopped there an average of 16 times a month, or nearly every other day. The ritual of going shopping was not new to the nineteenth century, however. In the eighteenth century, goodwives traded with neighbors, local merchants, and peddlers for goods they did not produce in their own homes. Even though she owned cows and was producing her own milk and butter, Harriet noted on February 21, 1871 that she had paid her milk bill to Mrs. Bragdon and that as of the next day would begin to take two quarts a day "of Mrs. McIntire." Perhaps she was only supplementing what she produced at home, but this indicates that Harriet was doing at least some shopping every day.[21]

A major difference between the exchange of goods in the eighteenth century and the nineteenth was the latter involved a cash-based system, rather than the practice of bartering which was so common in earlier days.[22] Nevertheless, the exchange of goods and services instead of cash had not died entirely. In 1873, whether to supplement her income or because she was not using the land, Harriet granted Mr. Joseph P. Junkins the right to cut and use the grass produced on her mowing land, the use of her barn to store hay, and the use of the Sargent pasture for one or two animals and the fall feed of the fields for the same. He in turn promised to keep all walls and fences on the premises that were rented to him in good repair and to haul several loads of "dressing" to the land under the Elm trees. Although she put a monetary value of $100 per year on the agreement (which she guaranteed for a term of five years, provided Mr. Junkins

fulfilled all of his obligations), Harriet agreed to take her pay "in milk, butter, horse hire, or other commodities that it will be convenient for me to receive ... unless he chooses to pay in money."[23]

It was this kind of arrangement, as well as the many others that a nineteenth century woman made each year that led the *Lady's Annual Register* to recognize the importance of "female management."[24] To learn about the obligations entailed in "female management" is often difficult because those living in the nineteenth century rarely felt there was much that transpired in a domestic circle that was worth recording. As Harriet's brother Edward wrote, "One feels almost as if they were trespassing upon the patience of a reader, when they sit down to pen these little nothings."[25] For historians, those "little nothings" are a goldmine of information. Nevertheless, even the wealth of information the Emerson Family Papers contains does not provide the means to truly recreate a life or livelihood. Yet, by synthesizing anecdotes from the lives of many women, it is possible to construct an idea of how they spent their days, how they felt about their responsibilities, and what they did to accomplish their tasks as efficiently as possible. Thus, the kitchen in the Emerson-Wilcox House, once the center of Louisa Putnam's life, is now a collage of many nineteenth-century women's lives and life experiences and a place to remember in particular Louisa's rituals as she documented them in her cookbook over a century ago.

Notes

[1] *Lady's Annual Register and Housewife's Almanac for 1840*, Caroline Gilman, ed., (Boston: Otis, Broaders and Co., 1840), 57.

[2] Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), 77.

[3] It is problematic to merge two life experiences but there are connections between Louisa and Harriet which make it possible to draw comparisons between their domestic rituals. Beyond their similar socio-economic backgrounds, Louisa and Harriet were connected by the fact that Louisa's father, David Wilcox, purchased the house in which she lived from ancestors of Charles Octavius Emerson, Harriet's husband. Nonetheless, there are a few differences that should be noted. Louisa's husband was William E. Putnam, a China-trade sea captain. She traveled with him frequently, spending many months at a time away from home. Louisa and William's only child died in infancy, but they raised Louisa's niece as if she were their own child. Harriet, in contrast, had four children with her husband Charles, a lawyer. After they married Harriet returned to her native Portland to visit relatives many times, but neither she nor Charles traveled outside of the Northeast or stayed away from York nearly as long as the Putnams did.

[4] Margaret [Phillips?] to Harriet Emerson, 1858, (typescript) Emerson Family Papers (EFP).

[5] *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* Vol. LXXX (Jan.-June 1870); "Louisa Caroline Wilcox [Putnam] Receipt Book, [ca. 1850]," MS 174, Old York Historical Society (OYHS), n.p.; Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 17 February 1871, 28 April 1871, (typescript) EFP.

[6] Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*, (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 12. According to Cowan, industrialization created a new set of expectations of the middle class, particularly in the area of child care.

[7] Charles Emerson to Harriet Emerson, 25 September 1830, (typescript) EFP.
[8] Joanna to Harriet Emerson, 14 November 1847, (typescript) EFP. N.B. At this time Harriet had a household of 9, including 2 live-in servants.
[9] Cowan, 62. All of this is not to say, however, that in the nineteenth century women did nothing but cook. As certain chores disappeared for women, they were replaced by others. For example, candlemaking was replaced by cleaning gas lamps, a task advice literature warned women not to trust to servants or children. Cowan, 65.
[10] Boydston, 79.
[11] Harriet Emerson to Charles Emerson, 13 January 1853, (typescript) EFP. Harriet Emerson to Charles Emerson, 20 January 1853, (typescript) EFP.
[12] USCenInhab, York, Me., 1850, 1870.
[13] Boydston, 79, 86.
[14] Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 23 May 1871, (typescript) EFP.
[15] Boydston, 79.
[16] Charles Emerson to Harriet Emerson, 8 June 1832, (typescript) EFP.
[17] Harriet Emerson to Charles Emerson, 20 January 1853, (typescript) EFP.
[18] Boydston, 80.
[19] Harriet Emerson to Abbie Emerson, 22 October 1856.
[20] Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 12 July 1871, (typescript) EFP.
[21] Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 21 February 1871, (typescript) EFP. For a more complete discussion of the availability of dairy products in York, see Henry Amick, "Dairies after Dairying" in this volume.
[22] Boydston, 84.
[23] "Terms of agreement between H.J. Emerson & J.P. Junkins in regard to the Emerson Place, York, Me.," 20 May 1873, (typescript) EFP.
[24] *Lady's Annual Register*, 57.
[25] Edward Phillips to Harriet Emerson, 25 September 1834, (typescript) EFP.

INSIGHTS INTO INGESTING:
Food in the Late Nineteenth Century

Antoinette van Zelm

On June 12, 1871, Harriet Emerson of York, Maine, had dinner at her son Leonard's house. As she recorded in her diary, the family ate "an admirably cooked turkey with sauces pies nuts and raisins etc" prepared by Leonard's wife, Fannie.[1] Harriet's "etcetera" is telling. Even when diarists described something as mundane as their daily bread, they did not usually elaborate to the point of satisfying modern-day historians. Also, when people recorded the details of mealtime, they often did so to illustrate atypical events or special occasions.[2]

Narrative evidence, however, can be supplemented with store accounts, advertisements, recipe books, and prescriptive domestic literature. All provide insights into the eating habits of late-nineteenth-century Americans who were able to live beyond mere subsistence. Of course, foodways is about more than consumption. It also incorporates preparation, distribution, and, yes, contemplation. The study of food provides an opportunity to investigate cultural beliefs and opinions. Late-nineteenth-century ideas about food reflect the strains of social change that characterized the age in which Americans first ate bananas and drank root beer.

Historian Sarah McMahon asserts that the diet of rural New Englanders changed significantly over the course of the eighteenth century. Put simply, soil exhaustion prompted innovation by farmers, which resulted in a greater variety of foodstuffs. Vegetable and apple production increased, as did storage of both vegetables and dairy products. With these changes came the "deseasonalization" of the New England diet and a new outlook on food preparation. Many women sought to create "well-cooked" and "wholesome" dishes rather than simply to provide enough for their families to eat.[3]

By the mid-nineteenth century, technological developments had further varied the types of foods available in New England. Railroad expansion and refrigeration made possible the importation of foreign and out-of-season fruits. Bananas, apricots, avocado pears, plums, and olives reached the United States from South and Central America. At the same time, processed foods began to proliferate. Improvements in tin can production increased the number of commercial canneries in the United States. Output jumped from five million containers in 1860 to thirty million a decade later.[4]

In a rural area such as York County, Maine, farmers both provided for local consumption and exported some of their crops. Young Rufus Bragdon of Wells recorded in his pocket diary on March 17, 1884 that he sold apples, probably stored since the fall harvest: "Went to town meeting to day and Sold apples all day did not make much."[5] In May, Bragdon sowed onions and planted both corn and potatoes; the next month he worked on his cucumber beds. In July, he spent several days picking berries and sent a crate full of them to Boston on August 6. Two weeks later, he brought in a load of grain. In the fall, he sold apples and made cider. Farm work continued in the face of personal loss that October: "Mother is dead O dear mother what Shal I do Without you at work o[n] apples to day."[6]

York County merchants sold foodstuffs supplied by American farmers from near and far. In 1871, Harriet Emerson frequently bought eggs, cheese, and butter from local merchant Wilson M. Walker, although she purchased fruits and vegetables from him only occasionally. Fellow York resident William W. McIntire shopped locally and in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for fresh foods. On July 19, 1876, he hinted at his meal plans when he recorded that he had "bot 1 box Eggs for dinner."[7] In an 1896 tourism publication aimed at summer residents, Hobson's Market in York Village advertised "fruits and vegetables in their season," in addition to native corn, veal, lamb, and mutton.[8] Hobson's, established in 1881, also sold foods from outside the local area. Kansas dressed beef was available, and game from the Boston market arrived daily.

Merchants also offered imports from abroad, and, as the second half of the century progressed, they increasingly stocked newly available packaged foods. The edibles that Harriet Emerson purchased from Wilson Walker included such typical imported items as tea and coffee. She also bought bottles of lemon extract and olive oil and boxes of mustard and salt.[9] Harriet's friend and neighbor Louisa Wilcox Putnam had a wine jelly recipe that called for "a box of Cox' Gelatine," and one of her raisin cake recipes stipulated that "Burnett's Extract of Lemon" be used.[10] Merchant William F. Moody's 1860 inventory included such items as boxed citron, barrels of flour imported from the Midwest, and "Bakers Cocoa."[11] In 1896, Simpson's Market in York Harbor advertised "the celebrated" S.S. Pierce Company canned goods.[12]

Not everyone acclaimed prepared foods. A table sauce recipe that Louisa Putnam pasted into her cookbook included an introductory text that expressed dissatisfaction with the processed variety: "Who does not dislike the mixed taste of the compounded articles which under various high-sounding names, are in the market and on every hotel or restaurant table?"

Recipe books provide numerous hints about diet. A literate cook had ample resources to consult in the nineteenth century. Increasingly specific, cookbooks were published by temperance organizations, suffrage societies, and churches, as well as by graduates of professional cooking schools. By late in the century, magazines and newspapers were consistently printing recipes and food preparation hints.[13] Farmer's almanacs sometimes included both food and household recipes. For example, the 1873 edition of Leavitt's Farmer's Almanac, published in Concord, New Hampshire, contained instructions for custards, bun cake, graham bread, molasses sponge, and lemon treacle.[14]

Louisa Wilcox Putnam transformed one of her husband's former account books (circa 1853) into a personal recipe book. She incorporated recipes from family members and friends, as well as from newspapers. "Ida Wilcox' Sponge Cake" vied with "Lizzie Putnam's dessert." "Walter's Onion Soup" and "Mrs. Ellsworth Smith's Bl'kberry Cordial" were possibly recipes conveyed to Louisa by her niece Elizabeth, who married Walter Smith in 1860. Putnam made tiny "x's" next to some of the recipes in her book, perhaps to indicate that these concoctions had passed a taste test. A few recipes apparently flopped and were summarily crossed out.

Baked goods predominated in Louisa Putnam's compendium. There were seven different lemon pie recipes, including one that simply read: "1 Lemon, 1 Cup Sugar, 1 Egg." Gingerbread, brown bread, sponge cake, and plain cake also appeared in several variations. Meat dishes included potted beef, chicken pie, baked tongue, and "perdreaux a l'etouffade" (partridge). Living in a coastal community, Louisa had ready access to seafood; she had recipes for lobster pudding, hashed clams, and oyster pie. Any of the above could have been washed down with homemade elderberry, rhubarb, or mulled wine.

Putnam's recipe book also contained instructions for preserves, pickles, and jellies. She had directions for making spiced currants, tomatoes, and peach pickles, in addition to cucumber ketchup and piccalilli (a relish made with green tomatoes, peppers, onions, and horseradish).[15] She also could make rhubarb marmalade, plus several kinds of jelly: wine, orange, lemon, sago (a type of starch), gelatine, apple, and peaches in jelly. Jellies were often placed in moulds and then served with custard or cream and sugar. Louisa's friend Harriet Emerson recorded that she had made apple jelly on February 17, 1871.[16]

Louisa Putnam pasted a clipping entitled "Items for the Farmer" into her recipe book. The piece included a section on "Preserving Fruits and Vegetables" that encouraged women to set aside jars of these foods for the winter: "With the self-sealing cans, of varied type and patent, no good housekeeper has an excuse for not laying in a good supply of those fruits and vegetables which in summer and autumn grace the table." A cookbook published by the Royal Baking Powder Company in 1885 devoted a page to preserves, complete with tables indicating the sugar amounts and boiling times for various types of fruits.[17]

Special foods for holidays and other events were sometimes listed in late-nineteenth-century recipe books. Louisa Putnam included two Christmas pudding (one identified as plum) recipes in her book. One contributor to the *Cook Book Compiled by the Ladies of the Baptist Church, Cape Neddick, Maine* in 1903 provided her "Thanksgiving Fruit Cake" recipe in verse, which ended with these lines: "And now I'm sure you know your lesson, But I will add, eat with discretion."[18] Eliza Leslie, who had attended cooking school in Philadelphia, described appropriate Christmas and New Year's dinners in her *New Receipts for Cooking*, published in 1854. She advised roast turkey for Christmas, and roast geese for New Year's; for both meals she recommended winter squash and turnips.[19]

A friend of Harriet Emerson's described her "Tin Wedding," or tenth anniversary party, in the spring of 1865: "We found the table loaded with, [*sic*] bread and butter, meats of various kinds, cheese, pastry, & an abundance of the nicest cake, together with tea & coffee, all furnished by the guests, even to the sugar and cream."[20] On June 27, 1871, Harriet Emerson recorded that the Methodist Society had raised ninety dollars by holding a Strawberry Festival. Rufus Bragdon of Wells "went to picknic all day" on July 4, 1884, but did not record which foods were served.[21]

The display of foods was especially important when entertaining, but many recipe books encouraged attention to appearance at all times. The recipe for "Mrs. Junkins'

Buns" in Louisa Putnam's cookbook ends with these words: "They will look nicer to use only the whites of the Eggs." In 1872, *Scribner's Magazine* included an item on "The Poetry of the Table" in its "Home and Society" section. Advice for the display of foods stressed economy of funds and painstaking labor: "A few pennies' worth of parsley or cress, mingled with small scraps of white paper daintily clipped, will cause a plain dish to assume the air of a French entree," and "a dish of mutton chops is much more impressive with bones stacked as soldiers stack their guns, forming a pyramid in the center,—each bone adorned with a frill of cut paper."[22]

Today's concern with nutrition and proper eating habits is in a sense simply a loud echo of the nineteenth century's preoccupation with health and its ultimate nemesis, death. Dyspepsia, or chronic indigestion, was often described as a national disease in the late 1800s. Doctors blamed the problem on poor eating habits and criticized women's ability to prepare proper food.[23]

Foodways provides a glimpse into the cultural mesh of science and morality that characterized late-nineteenth-century society.[24] A quote from *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* is illustrative. In 1870, this overtly religious publication implicitly invoked the new theory of natural selection by relating the future of American civilization to proper food selection and preparation: "If we are to be a vigorous and enduring race, we must have both well-selected food and good cookery."[25]

The proliferation of processed foods was more than a reflection of technological change. The beginnings of the packaged cereal industry, for example, lay in religious belief. Maine native Ellen Gould, who was married to Seventh Day Adventist minister James White, became an influential spokesperson for healthy eating. Mother White urged people to give up meat, alcohol, tea, and coffee in favor of grains, nuts, and foods of vegetable origin. In 1863, she and other Adventists founded the Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan. Breakfast cereal founders Charles William Post and Harvey Kellogg were both later associated with the Institute's sanitarium; Post as a patient and Kellogg as superintendent. By the 1890s, forty companies were making breakfast foods in Battle Creek.[26]

Food imagery, of course, has long been a part of religious description. Congregationalist Harriet Emerson reflected on afternoon prayers in a letter to her daughter Abigail: "What on earth can supply the food of an immortal soul? Truly naught!"[27] At church one Sunday, Emerson listened as the minister preached on the text: "They that be planted in the courts of the Lord—shall still bring forth fruits in old age."[28] In 1874, a friend wrote to Harriet: "You have settled another minister. May he break unto you the true bread of life."[29]

Prescriptive writers used both religion and science to explain the changes in eating habits that had resulted from an increasing abundance and variety of foods. These advocates invariably advised moderation. In doing so, they often romanticized rural life and expressed anxiety about the effects of urbanization.

Catharine Beecher urged readers of her *Treatise on Domestic Economy* to be wary of overindulgence, always a possibility when eating because "our benevolent Creator, in

this, as in our other duties, has connected enjoyment with the operation needful to sustain our bodies."[30] In a chapter entitled "On Healthful Food," Beecher described animal foods and spices as "stimulating" edibles that could wear out a person's internal organs if consumed in large quantities. She warned cooks that "the fewer mixtures in cooking, the more healthful is the food likely to be."[31] Likewise, temperance supporters warned mothers against giving young children highly seasoned foods, in the belief that these could lead to debauchery later.[32]

Both Beecher and the editors of *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* asserted that environment affected physical activity, which in turn influenced diet. "The healthy active countryman constantly exercised in the open air will do well on a vegetable diet, under which the city artisan or man of business, the delicate woman, the pale, perhaps scrofulous, child would become diseased, or sink and die," *Godey's* contended. For this reason, "as man generally is circumstanced at the present day, he will best consult his own comfort, convenience, and usefulness, by using a mixed diet, the power to use which has been bestowed upon him by his Creator."[33]

Similar prescriptions reached York, Maine. Louisa Wilcox Putnam pasted a clipping entitled "A Second Lesson in Cooking" into her recipe book. The item did more than advise. It criticized overindulgence by elevating rustic simplicity. The piece included recipes for bean porridge and "whitepot" (made with Indian meal) for those "whose appetites are sharpened by their labor in the open air, and who value food in proportion to its satisfying their immediate wants."

In 1874, *Scribner's Monthly* asserted that eating out-of-season foods would lead to "temporary or chronic derangement" of one's health. "The delicacies of the season will not hurt us," the editors wrote, "but the delicacies out of season certainly will, if long continued." The magazine blamed Americans' "luxurious" tastes for the national inclination to eat out-of-season foods.[34] *The New Household Receipt Book*, by Sarah Josepha Hale (an editor of *Godey's Magazine*), claimed: "Fruits are most wholesome in their appropriate season." She also contended that chocolate as a beverage was "more healthy in the winter season than during warm weather."[35]

The association between the body and the spirit was made in countless ways. In *The New Hydropathic Cook-Book*, Dr. Russell T. Trall called for "a thorough and radical reform...in the eating habits of the civilized people" so that human beings might obtain "that harmonious and healthful play of all the bodily and mental functions which constitute 'peace within.'"[36] *Practical Housekeeping*, a cookbook first published in 1884, informed readers that "Bad manners go hand in hand with total depravity; while a properly fed man is already half saved."[37]

On a more practical level, Catharine Beecher recommended that people rest both body and mind after eating dinner, in order to allow digestion to proceed smoothly. *Scribner's* claimed that "excessive drinking of ice-water" was one of the primary causes of dyspepsia. The effects of indigestion on man were made clear: "His deranged stomach will affect his head, and the indulgence of a foolish habit finally result in unhealthy action of the brain, and possible disturbance of his mental and moral faculties."[38]

In 1860, *The Old Farmer's Almanac* printed an item entitled "What the American Children Eat." A reporter from a New York newspaper had visited an international school in Montreal. The American children were pale and nervous, and they missed school often. Their lunch baskets explained everything: Mince pies, pound cake, doughnuts, pickles, and cold sausages prevailed. Children from other countries subsisted healthily on bread accompanied by butter, meat, or apple.[39]

The hand-wringing of the late nineteenth century generated reform activity. The Progressive Movement evolved out of the tensions that characterized the post-bellum United States. In 1890, a public kitchen was established in Boston. "The New England Kitchen" attempted to draw workers away from saloons and show them how to eat "scientifically."[40] Again, the confluence of morality and science is apparent.

Amid the recipes in her slender volume, Louisa Putnam pasted a short poem entitled "Dried Apple Pies." The second and final stanza reads:

> The farmer takes his gnarliest fruit,
> 'Tis wormy, bitter, and hard to boot;
> They leave the hull to make us cough;
> And don't take half the peeling off.
> Then on a dirty cord they're strung,
> And from some chamber window hung;
> And there they serve a roost for flies
> Until they're ready to be made into pies.
> Tread on my corns, or tell me lies,
> But don't pass me dried apple pies.

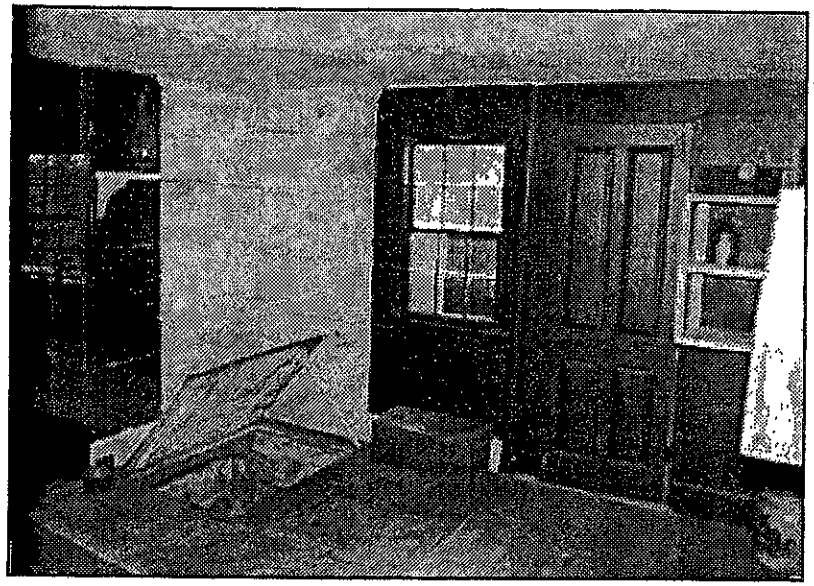
Consumption and contemplation came together easily in these whimsical verses. The poet conveyed a late-nineteenth-century concern with sanitation and expressed ambivalence toward the farmer. Did Louisa Putnam agree? What about the clippings in her recipe book that romanticized the farmer and disparaged packaged foods? Perhaps the most that can be said is that Louisa Putnam was aware of late-nineteenth-century changes in foodways—and that she appreciated a good rhyme.

Notes

[1] Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 12 June 1871, (typescript), Emerson Family Papers (EFP).
[2] Jane C. Nylander, Elizabeth Perkins Fellowship Program Lecture, 30 June 1992.
[3] Sarah F. McMahon, "A Comfortable Subsistence: The Changing Composition of Diet in Rural New England, 1620-1840," *William and Mary Quarterly* XLII (1985): 48, 50.
[4] Kathleen Ann Smallzried, *The Everlasting Pleasure: Influences on America's Kitchens, Cooks and Cookery, from 1565 to the Year 2000* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956), 146, 133-34.
[5] "Pocket Diary of Rufus Bragdon, 1884," 17 March 1884, MS 101, Old York Historical Society (OYHS).
[6] *Ibid.*,17 October 1884.
[7] "W.W. McInt[i]re Pocket Diary," 19 July 1876, MS 103, OYHS.
[8] *York, Maine: Bureau of Information and Illustrated History of the Most Famous Summer Resort on the Atlantic Coast* (1896), n.p.

[9] Harriet Emerson Account with W.M. Walker (1871), (typescript), EFP.
[10] "Louisa Caroline Wilcox [Putnam] Receipt Book," (ca. 1850), MS 174, OYHS, n.p. "Extracts and Essences from Burnett" were readily available at John Laighton's market in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. *York, Maine*, n.p.
[11] "Invoices of Goods Bought by W.F. Moody," (1860-1864), 10 July 1860; 23 August 1860; 11 October 1860; MS 29, OYHS.
[12] *York, Maine*, n.p.
[13] Eleanor T. Fordyce, "Cookbooks of the 1800s," in Kathryn Grover, ed., *Dining in America, 1850-1900* (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1987): 101-2, 106, 111.
[14] "Recipes," *Leavitt's Farmer's Almanac*, 1873 (Concord, N. H. : Edson C. Eastman, 1872), 45.
[15] The recipe for the tomatoes called for this "sweetmeat" to be served on saucers with cream and concluded: "No one on tasting it for the first time, can believe it to be tomatoes. It is often mistaken for a fine West India preserve."
[16] Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 17 February 1871, (typescript), EFP.
[17] G. Rudman, *Royal Baker and Pastry Cook* (New York: Royal Baking Powder Company, 1885), 21. Sugar was expensive throughout the nineteenth century, which probably limited the amount of preserving that women did at home. Susan Strasser, *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 22.
[18] *Cook Book Compiled by the Ladies of the Baptist Church, Cape Neddick, Maine* (York Corner, ME: The York Printing Co., 1903), 69-71.
[19] Eliza Leslie, *New Receipts for Cooking* (Philadelphia, PA: T.B. Peterson, 1854), 377.
[20] S.H. Bourne to Harriet Emerson, 10 March 1865, (typescript), EFP.
[21] "Pocket Diary of Rufus Bragdon," 4 July 1884.
[22] "The Poetry of the Table," *Scribner's Monthly* IV (May 1872-Oct.1872): 375.
[23] Harvey Green, *The Light of the Home: An Intimate View of the Lives of Women in Victorian America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 135-36.
[24] This theme is explicit in the prescriptive literature. Historian Susan Williams also discusses it in her book *Savory Suppers and Fashionable Feasts: Dining in Victorian America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985). See Chapter 4, "The Bountiful Pantry: Fashions in Food and Drink," 93-140.
[25] Green, 60.
[26] Smallzried, 149-50.
[27] Harriet Emerson to [Abigail Emerson], 10 October 1857, (typescript), EFP.
[28] Harriet Emerson Diary (1871), 16 July 1871, (typescript), EFP.
[29] S.H. Bourne to (Harriet Emerson), 8 March 1874, (typescript), EFP.
[30] Catharine E. Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy, for the Use of Young Ladies at Home, and at School* (1841; Reprint, New York: Source Book Press, 1970 and 1869; reprint, Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1975), 71. The same sentiment appears in Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home or, Principles of Domestic Science* 1869, (Reprint Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1975), 126.
[31] Beecher, *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, 79; Beecher and Beecher, *The American Woman's Home*, 133.
[32] Green, 42.
[33] "An Article on Food," *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* LXXX (Jan.-June 1870): 283.
[34] "Seasonable Food," Scribner's Monthly VII (May 1874): 243.
[35] Sarah Josepha Hale, *The New Household Receipt Book* (New York: H. Long and Brother, 1853), 369-70.

[36] R.T. Trall's *The New Hydropathic Cook-Book* was published in 1854. Fordyce, 105.
[37] Smallzried, 167.
[38] "Ice-Water," *Scribner's Monthly* VII (May 1874), 244. *The New Household Receipt Book* warned that hot beverages impaired digestion. Hale, p. 370.
[39] "What the American Children Eat," in Robert B. Thomas, ed., *The Old Farmer's Almanac* (Fitchburg, MA: Shepley & Wallace, 1860), 38.
[40] Fordyce, 111.



Re-installed dairyroom, 1992.

DAIRIES AFTER DAIRYING:
Home Dairying in New England Village Households after Industrialization

Henry E. Amick

As New England urbanized, technological changes caused a transformation of room functions in many homes in the second half of the nineteenth century. No other household space so dramatically lost its economic purpose as the dairy room. Market-oriented domestic businesses such as cheese making left the home in the second half of the nineteenth century, while butter making was in the process of disappearing from the home. Louisa Putnam and her neighbors in York had evolved their strategies of home operation to take advantage of technology. Residents in the village center produced very little amounts of butter, while cheese making had been completely removed from the home by 1870.

In 1875 the editors of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* wrote emphatically in favor of the dramatic changes in dairying.

> There has been no specialty of agriculture that has recently made such marked progress, both in extent of production and in improvement of practice, as the branch which begins with the culture of fragrant grasses in the pasture, gathers this sweetness in the veins of the milk-producing animal, draws it therefrom as one draws the spirit of the grape from the wine-press, tosses it about in carefully arranged temperatures and with ingeniously contrived machinery, stores it in a package, as nature fills an egg, and places it at length in a silver dish upon a city table - bringing to the city-bound Mohammed the very substance and fresh fragrance of the mountain.[1]

Technology, invading the New England household in the second half of the nineteenth century, had seized control of dairying, creating a new function for the home dairy room.

This examination of the decline in home dairying during the nineteenth century will first observe the home operations in the village center of York; then follow the changing role of dairy spaces and of dairying - the processing of milk into butter, cheese, and liquid milk - to its decline by the end of the century; and finally look at the use and furnishings of the back room.

Dairying in the York Village Neighborhood, 1870

Louisa Putnam, of York, Maine, and her seacoast peers, became heads-of-households at mid-century when dairying had been almost completely converted from a highly regarded, female-dominated home industry to a male-managed commercial venture. The rapidly fluctuating conditions of home dairies had caused the evacuation of cheese making from the home with the advent of technologically advanced factories. In York, butter and cheese were available at local stores, such as the one operated by

Caleb Eastman across Lindsay Street from the Putnam house. A neighbor, Mary Grant - recording over 600 pounds of butter in 1870 - supplemented the weakened home dairies of the Putnam neighborhood. Liquid milk was available in York - advertised and supplied by Elm Farm and other newly-commercial farms that had taken on a specialized dairy role in the late nineteenth century - at least by 1896, the year Louisa died.[2]

At the Putnam house, dairying declined rapidly. Between 1815 and 1819 the house had passed from Bulkley Emerson to Louisa's father, David Wilcox, via the Emerson family lawyer. When the house changed hands, so did the amount of effort placed on dairying, as Wilcox's two cows replaced Emerson's herd of six. When Wilcox - whom the 1850 Census listed as a farmer - died in 1858, his daughter Louisa, who had resided with him, inherited the house. Due to industrialization and because Louisa and her "master mariner" husband, Captain William E. Putnam, were often travelling to Asia, the Putnams became a single-cow family.[3]

By 1870 the Putnam household played an integral part in a diversified neighborhood where the pace of industrial transformation varied between households, although dairying had all but vanished. In York, residents in the village center represented many different occupations and economic groups. Louisa's neighbors looked to the land and to the sea - to local and foreign sources - for financial success. Down the street from Captain and Louisa Putnam lived fishermen and fish dealers, farmers and farm laborers, mariners and retired mariners. Craftspersons and merchants, shoemakers and carpenters, also chose this central locale. The census also listed several widows and retired men as heads of household. House values ranged from one hundred to forty-five hundred dollars, with the average being eight hundred and ninety-eight. In the economically-mixed village center, enumerators found Nathan Preble's one hundred dollar structure near Louisa's fifteen hundred dollar house and John B. Fernald's forty-five hundred dollar house (now Coventry Hall) across the street from Harriet Emerson's twenty-five hundred dollar home. The latter were two of the most elaborate properties in York.[4]

Although running a large home kept Harriet Emerson busy in the 1860s and 1870s, she took pride in making her own butter. Fannie Emerson reminded her Aunt Harriet in 1859 of the family's appreciation of Harriet's self-made butter. When Harriet travelled out of town, Fannie temporarily took over the churning duties discovering the fine craftsmanship of her aunt's work. Yet, as agricultural censuses reveal, Harriet was rapidly becoming an exception to the trend of declining home dairy production. Caleb Eastmen and his mid-century counterparts in the merchandizing business already offered butter at their village center shops. By the time the predessor to the Chamber of Commerce published its first tourist information directory in 1896, outlying farms offered butter and liquid milk deliveries.[5]

While butter manufacturing slowly moved from family to factory, the mid-century surge in commercial cheese processing caused complete discontinuation of home production of cheese by 1870. Few village center residents still included cheese making as part of their occupation. As early as 1850, for instance, neither David Wilcox nor Charles O. Emerson were involved in home cheese production. In the 1850 census,

enumerators found one hundred and fifty pounds of cheese at Stephen Grant's farm, while the largest supply in any one house in the neighborhood totaled two hundred pounds. In the next ten years the largest would drop to one hundred and fifty pounds, with significantly fewer households involved in cheese making. By 1860 Caleb Eastman was selling cheese in his village center store. By 1870 no records of cheese making were noted.[6]

The Changing Role of Dairy Spaces

As the century advanced, so did the specialization of dairy spaces; this was reflected in the words used to describe these spaces. The most common term "buttery" carries the longest tradition. Although "buttery" is often confused with "butter," they are derived from very different origins. The metamorphosis of foodways over the centuries transformed the buttery from a "store-room for liquor" to a "store-room for provisions." "*Butta*," the Latin word for bottle or cask, was altered over the years to "*bota*" and later "*botaria*." From "*butta*" also came "*boterie*" in Old French, and eventually the English words "butt" and "buttery."[7]

With the specialization of dairying in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, some households chose to use the buttery for that more narrowly-defined purpose, while others created both new spaces and new names. Noah Webster used the traditional name for the new function when he described the buttery as "An apartment in a house, where butter, milk, provisions, and utensils are kept." Most period publications did not use this term. Frequently, writers used the word dairy alone, or in conjunction with other descriptors. The *New England Farmer* instructed, a "dairy is a place where milk is kept" and added "butter and cheese are likewise made in it" and also advised "[P]ut [butter] down in firkins, keep it in a dairy-room, which is better than a cellar to keep butter through the winter." In the second half of the nineteenth century, authors decreased the use of the word "dairy " as the word "pantry" began to appear more frequently in advice literature, reflecting a shift in room function.[8]

In common usage the word "dairy" still circulated. In 1851 Charles Emerson wrote to Harriet about their own dairy: "The rats have again broke into the Dairy & are very troublesome. I am thankful I was absent & can wash my hands clean of it, & Peggy does not doubt my own word about it." His concern for the room and his choice of space name show the importance he continued to place on dairying.[9]

Progressive writers urged New Englanders to create finished work rooms for making dairy foods. The walls and ceiling of the rooms used for storing milk should be whitewashed, suggested Thomas Fessenden, editor of the the *New England Farmer* in 1833. According to Fessenden, the ideal dairy room should have a floor composed of brick or "stone flags, placed upon cement, and joined with mastic [putty]."[10]

Even small New England dairies became very concerned about the sanitary production of dairy foods. Dairy equipment should be "sweet and clean" wrote *The Country Kitchen, 1850*. The same concern was expressed early in the century in English publications, such as *Rural Recreations*:

> There is nothing which more easily acquires an offensive taste or smell than milk or cream; so that with respect to the dairy-house and utensils, the most unremitting attention to cleanliness is indispensably requisite. The smallest particle of sour milk, left about the vessels, will most unquestionably give a bad taste to the butter or cheese: even milk spilt anywhere in the dairy, and allowed to become putrid, or anything else producing a bad smell, will have the same effect, particularly on butter. In fact the most perfect nicety and cleanliness should be uniformly attended to, throughout the whole concerns of the dairy.[11]

Despite some difficulties with dampness, many New Englanders preferred a cellar space to something more elevated. Repeated suggestions appeared to set the pans of milk on the cold floor of the "dairy cellar." Cream sat on the same floor in stoneware containers until the weekly, or twice-weekly, churning. Cheese, on the other hand, needed to cure above ground in a well-ventilated room, the windows of which were to be left open day and night. First floor dairy rooms were to be shady, yet breezy - preferably with windows on the north side. Some families opted for storing cheese in the garret or, more specifically, the "cheese loft."[12]

Louisa Putnam of York had the fortune of having a milk cellar that complied to prescriptive literature descriptions below her dairy room. This was a well-ventilated space,with a cut granite floor, separate from the vegetable storage room (located under the central chimney of the main house). A cellar window, which would have provided the recommended ventilation to insure purity of flavor, remains on the southwest wall. Remnants of whitewash still hang from the ceiling and stone wall of the milk cellar, while in the dairy above, recent paint analysis has revealed white paint.[13]

The Changing Role of Dairy Food Production

Beginning in the late 1820s, a great portion of the agricultural and domestic literature concentrated on dairying. Thomas Fessenden, Joseph Nowell, and Catherine Beecher, among others, provided a wide-range of articles on the best dairy methods. Although butter-making continued - at least on a small scale - as part of the domestic tasks, it increasingly took on a scientific character. For example, Newell, editor of the *New England Seed Store Catalog*, advocated measuring fat content in a lactomater (a series of glass tubes hung from a wooden rack) as "the only proper instrument" to determine the best dairy cow. Progressive writers and butter premium winners recommended the use of improved churns, such as Gault's Patent Churn and Leavitt's Improved Lever Churn of 1833 for the small dairy.[14]

The difficulties in processing milk into butter and preserving it for long shipments into the cities also received a great deal of attention from the progressive writers. To ensure a pure product, writers suggested salt as a preservative. Six pounds of salt, suggested the journal of the Massachusetts Agricultural Society, should be added to

every hundred pounds of butter, while Fessenden advised creating a brine in which to store butter. Unsanitary conditions in the dairy affected the taste and quality of the butter and cheese produced. Fessenden and many of his peers advocated the scalding of churns after each use. If the literature of the early years of butter manufacture is any indication, many supplements were used to conceal the taste of bad butter. Suggestions from the *New England Farmer* ranged from a touch of honey to mixing one part loaf sugar, one part saltpeter, and two parts salt. As late as 1869 Catherine Beecher complained about the poor quality of butter. "America must have the credit of manufacturing and putting into market more bad butter than all that is made in all the rest of the world together," she wrote.[15]

Adaptation to industrialization proved much more pronounced in regards to cheese. Articles from the 1820s and 30s about cheese proved distinct from those about butter due to the emphasis on profits from cheese making. According to *Harper's*, as early as the 1830s "profits gained from the business enabled the dairymen to improve their facilities," and the resulting profits lead to even larger-scale cheese-making operations. By 1870, as *Harper's* reported: "Under the impulse of the factory system, cheese-making has become one of the leading industries of this country. Capital and labor have been drawn to it, and the growth is still in progress."[16]

Commercial cheese manufacturing began in the 1850s in Oneida County, New York, when farmers began bringing their milk to processing factories to be converted to cheese, as mentioned above. From New York, commercial cheese manufacturing first spread westward to Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Iowa; then southward to Pennsylvania. Eventually it came to New England, and then, by the 1870s, to Maine, the "youngest of the dairy regions." The growing industry caused the creation of a specialized Butter and Cheese Exchange of New York in 1873.[17]

Articles written in the second half of the nineteenth century often encouraged the housewife to be thankful for the removal of cheese production to factories managed by men and commercial interests: "the factory happily released her," as *Harper's* maintained.[37] No longer could the production of dairy goods be considered a simple task, on a scale accomplishable at home. Looking back, *Harper's* remembered the obsolete methods of the nineteenth century's first decades, when "all the operations of the dairy were rude and undeveloped. Everything was done by guess, and there was no order, no system, and no science. The apparatus was simple and rude, and the system of manufacture a family secret, imparted with wise looks and oracular phrase."[18]

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, liquid milk became a product of its own, rather than just a raw material. As with previous steps towards commercialization of dairying, when milk became a commodity, New England's farmers began searching throughout the United States and Europe for a improved methods of handling the product. True's *Maine Farmer*, for instance, reported on English and French milk transportation in 1870. Despite the difficulties involved in transporting, some farmers ventured into the liquid milk business. By the 1890s, a few outlying homesteads had grown into large dairy farms that supplied or supplemented smaller farms and village

center households. An advocate of the one-cow family suggested that by purchasing one quart of liquid milk each day the average family in 1896 would have an adequate supply of milk and butter.[19]

Use and Furnishings of the Back Room

Due to the removal of for-profit dairying from the home after industrialization, the dairy space was absorbed into the household. The relocation of dairy food production greatly altered the use of the home dairy room. With the growth of mass production and marketing, a new emphasis on domesticity appears in advice literature, focusing on the final steps of finishing commercially manufactured products. As the nineteenth century progressed, home management books set a trend by placing more emphasis on pantries, and less on more productive spaces such as dairies. In describing kitchen work as "preparing and dressing the provisions," Sarah Josepha Hale promoted the concept of women as consumers rather than producers. As inventory research confirms, by 1870, the shift in room function meant the former dairy took on a more general-service use - part milk processing, part food storage.[20]

A sampling of York inventories provided a cross-section of the period household furnishings associated with a back room. Although no inventory exists in William E. Putnam's probate file, the extant inventories of four of his mid-century counterparts show that some similarity existed between the households of master mariners. The roving nature of their occupation must have made it difficult to keep dairy cattle. Only half of the master mariners inventoried kept a single cow, which averaged thirty-eight dollars in worth.[21]

The values of non-itemized groupings of crockery holdings ranged from $2 for "crockery in closet" to $30 for "Crockery, Glass ware and Cutlery in closet in Sitting room." Of the four inventories, one specifically mentioned items in a "back room." When Samuel Young, who lived in York Harbor, died in 1885, his probaters valued a "Pantry Table" at twenty-five cents. The assessors listed other items with the table, including "1 Coal Stove," "4 Chests & Tin Wall," and a "chest with Tools." The presence of a stove in the Young's back room echoes local back room design, which often includes a boiler, such as that formerly in Louisa Putnam's dairy.[22]

Around the corner from the Putnam's lived Louisa's close friend, Harriet Emerson. When Harriet died in 1890, the court thoroughly inventoried her house. In a closet off the kitchen she kept three dollars worth of crockery and glassware. The scantiness of Harriet Emerson's room-by-room inventory reflects her age and slightly-removed position from the type of production and demanding tasks associated with the back room.[23]

The examination of the four extant inventories of the twenty-three Town of York residents who died within the twelve months preceding the 1870 census provides an image of a median house interior. All four of the general inventories came from households headed by farmers. These men all kept slightly larger numbers of dairy cattle than did master mariners, about two per farm. The assigned value averaged $36 per animal.[24]

The farmers' inventories also included a larger number of items, which suggest back room use; these were appropriately grouped together. Their inventories, also in contrast to those of master mariners, included more thorough listings of crockery and other containers. Crockery stored in the home was made of earthenware and stoneware, including "Earthen & Stone Pots, jars & jugs", "Crockery ware," "Lot Crochery," and "3 Shelves of... 'Smashed' Crockery Ware." Glassware was listed clearly only once amongst the inventories, although some of the unspecified jars might have been made of glass. Tinware was recorded on a limited basis.[50] Assessors found churns in two of the households, at least one of which was made of wood, rather than stoneware as some later advice books suggested. Dairying, especially cheese-making, had declined significantly.[25]

Probate inventories taken between July 1869 and July 1870 indicate that the making of pressed cheeses was nearly extinct in York. Only one of these houses, that of Stephen Ramsdell, still contained a cheese press. During the height of what had formerly been cheese making season, Ramsdell stored his press with items that might be kept in the barn, such as a copper bolt and two drills, and two barrels, fourteen traces corn, two chests, and one whip. When making these inventories, assessors noted some items which imply dairying, such as "1 Tray" [milk pan], "1 Strainer," and "1 Butter Box." These elderly farmers kept milk and butter production - but not cheese making - alive in York until their deaths in 1869 and 1870.[26]

Upper class households in York County experienced a similar level of industrialization. According to inventories of county residents which shared the Putnam's level of wealth, cheese making equipment was a rare find by about 1870, although a limited amount of milk and butter utensils still commonly appeared. In the back rooms of York County households were funnels, wooden buckets, tin strainers, tin pans and other tinware; earthen pots and other crockery; toasting irons, lanterns, baskets, wooden boxes, firkins, and flour storage containers - such as a bag or meal chest. If the owner, such as John Y. Lucas of York, specifically used the room as a pantry, the furnishings also included tea sets, plates, pitchers, spoons and dust pans. Larger quantities of storage vessels - such as the twenty-three bottles owned by Sarah A. Cole of Saco - were kept in the cellar.[27]

Despite industrialization, some York County households still associated the back room with dairying, implied by the continued use of the word "dairy". For example, in 1885 David Sewall's home in the town of York contained "tin ware in dairy." Churns ranged in value from twenty-five cents to three dollars. Milk pans were worth about twelve cents each, and continued as part of the furnishings of the back room in late nineteenth-century York County. On occasion refrigeration played a role in the back room. Ice-cooled refrigerators sometimes appear near dairy and back room objects, as happened in Cole's inventory, which included "refrigerator 2.50."[28]

Conclusion

As New England industrialized in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, home dairies adapted to the changing technology. Although retaining a focus on dairy foods, actual

production declined from the height of dairying in the 1830s and 1840s. The former dairy rooms expanded in purpose, while maintaining a scaled-down milk-processing function. By 1870 cheese-making had entirely left the home, because now factories controlled the process. Only a small amount of butter and liquid milk production remained. The old dairy room assumed a multifunctional purpose. Crockery, baskets, cooperage, and tinware were stored in the space now known as the back room. Below, in the whitewashed milk cellar, pans of milk were set on the granite floor. Only a fragment of the once-vital milk processing activities continued in the back room after industrialization began to replace the integral functions of the dairy.

Notes

[1] *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 51 (June-November 1875): 813, 827.

[2] Harper's: 813. Caleb Eastman Account Book, Old York Historical Society (OYHS) Ms. Coll., Ms. Collection # 89. U.S. Bureau of Census, Agricultural Schedule, 1870 (hereafter, U.S.Census, Ag. Sch.). *York, Maine: Illustrated History on the Most Famous Summer Resort of the Atlantic Coast*, York Harbor, Maine, Bureau of Information, 1896.

[3] For details of these transactions, see Tracy Aldighieri, "Emerson-Wilcox House Timeline, OYHS" in this volume. "Town of York Tax Evaluation, Eastern District," OYHS. U.S. Census, Ag. Sch. and Schedule of Inhabitants, 1850, 1860.

[4] U.S. Census, 1870.

[5] Fannie Emerson to Harriet Emerson, York, 31 October 1859, (typescript) Emerson Papers, OYHS; "Caleb Eastmen Account Book"; OYHS Collection # 89. *York: Maine: Illustrated History of the Most Famous Summer Resort on the Atlantic Coast*, York, n.p.

[6] U.S. Census, Ag. Sch., 1850, 1860, 1870.

[7] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1982.

[8] *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 8th ed., 1831. Thomas G. Fessenden, ed., New England Farmer XII (1834), 193.

[9] Charles O. Emerson to Harriet Emerson, 24 June 1851, Emerson Papers, OYHS.

[10] Fessenden XI (1833), 20.

[11] A. Farmer, *Rural Recreations*, (London: Hodson, 1802), 65.

[12] Fessenden XI (1833): 20. Timothy Pickering, ed. *Essex Agricultural Society Transactions* I (Salem, MA: Thomas Cushing, 1820), 74; II (Salem, MA: Foote & Brown, 1831-1839), 71. Fessenden XIV (1836): 43, VI (1827): 130, XIII (1835): 68.

[13] According to Dorothy Hungerford, the last occupant of Louisa's house, pans of milk were still taken down to the milk cellar as late as her grandfather's generation at the turn of the twentieth century, to allow for the rising of cream. Elizabeth and Mary Louise Cutts interview with Frances Davy, EP Fellow, August 1, 1992.

[14] Pickering I (1820) 74. Joseph R. Newell, ed. *New England Seed Store Catalog*, (Boston: New England Farmer, 1846), 42; Pickering I, (1820), 74; Newell, (1833), 57.

[15] *The Massachusetts Agricultural Repository and Journal*, V-X, (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1819-1832). Fessenden, (1833): 20, (1828): 332, (1830): 350. Beecher, 176.

[16] *Harper's*, 814, 815.

[17] *Harper's*, 827.

[18] *Harper's*, 827, 814.

[19] Orange Judd Co., Editors. *Keeping One Cow*, (New York: Orange Judd, Rev. Ed. 1896), 15. *York, Maine*, n.p.

[20] Sarah Josepha Hale, *The New Household Receipt Book*, (New York: H. Long & Brother, 1853), 251. Catharine Beecher, *American Women's Home*, (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1987), 177.13.

[21] To determine the lifestyle of Louisa and William Putnam, inventories of like households were examined. This was based on occupation of heads of household in 1860 - the last year in which William E. Putnam, Master Mariner, was recorded by U.S. Census enumerators. Of the 24 men listed as Master Mariners, 4 inventories exist. The accuracy of observation made about the furnishings of master mariners' houses, based on an examination of the 4 inventories, appears legitimate due to the similarity of the age of those inventoried with that of those not inventoried. Overall, the average age was 40, while the average age of those inventoried was 42. Putnam was 50 years old in 1860. Joseph M. Mathews, 20 October 1864, docket #12698; Samuel Young, 20 November 1885, docket #20986; Moses C. Young, 1890, docket #20972; Josiah Talpey, 28 February, 1896, docket #18411.

[22] *Ibid.* See Tracy Aldighieri, "Emerson-Wilcox House Timeline," OYHS Collection; also site visits to the Rundlett May House, Portsmouth, July 1992, Coventry Hall, York, August 1992, and Red Wing Farm, Lebanon, Maine, August 1992.

[23] Harriet Emerson had a much larger estate than those of the master mariners inventoried, with land and property worth $4650. and "Goods and Chattels" worth $238. By 1890 hers had become a one-cow household. (York County Probate Records, YCPR, Harriet Emerson). U.S. Bureau of Census, Ag. Sch.

[24] U.S. Census, Ag. Sch., 1870. William Todd, 12 July 1869, YCPR docket #18960; Edgar McIntire, 20 August 1869, YCPR docket #12826; Stephen Ramsdell, 21 August 1869, YCPR docket #15617; John Ramsdell, 5 November 1869, YCPR docket #15608.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Sarah A. Cole, Saco, 1863, YCPR; James Bean, York, 1864, YCPR; Daniel Littlefield, Wells, 1866, YCPR; Edward MCBride, Biddeford, 1873, YCPR; John M. Lucas, York, 1879; Nathaniel G. Marshall, York, 1882, YCPR; Nathaniel Farrin, Kennebunk, 1885, YCPR; David Sewall, York, 1885, YCPR; Sarah A. Littlefield, Elliot, 1888, John B. Fernald, York, 1891.

[28] Objects that show changing technology often occupy the same location over time, as occured at Red Wing Farm. The "pantry" in the the circa 1820 house in Lebanon, Maine has a had a long history of cold food storage devices in the same location. According to Marjorie Lord Blood, descendant of the original owner, an electric refrigerator replaced two consecutive ice boxes, which had replaced a dumb waiter, that was constructed to lower food to the cellar for cold storage. Site visit to Red Wing Farm, Lebanon, Maine, Aug. 1992.

According to a twentieth century descendant of Louisa Wilcox Putnam, who visited the house when occupied by Esther and Dorothy Hungerford, an ice box occupied the west corner of the room. Elizabeth Strong, interview with Frances Davey, Elizabeth Perkins Fellow, 21 July, 1992. Extant wiring - both of the one hundred and ten volt, and the three-prong variety - found in the west corner could have supported an early 20th century refrigerator.

LIVING GRACIOUSLY:
Interpretation and Entertaining in the Hungerford Dining Room

Frances Davey

In the Hungerford dining room, the ideologies of the twentieth century and of a dining room are intertwined. The interpretation of the Hungerford dining room as a space to discuss high-style dining in the early twentieth century attempts to portray Esther and Dorothy Hungerford as members, but not necessarily products of, their social class and time period. It is based on 1930s photographs of the dining room and on oral histories provided by family members and friends of the Hungerfords, as well as period decorating sources.[1]

According to Emily Post, the charm of a 1930s house stemmed not from its architectural structure or the wealth of its owners, but from "the qualities that enchant." Post asked, "How do you live? Simply, or in much style?"[2] According to many authors of domestic science manuals, who are well-represented by Post, the latter question was an important factor in gracious living.

The reasoning behind high-style lifestyles and rituals, whether or not they had to do with dining, stemmed both from an obsession with ancestry and an interest in domestic science. When these old and new rationales overlapped and even combined, they advocated a lifestyle smacking of social Darwinism. James Ford, the Executive Director of Better Homes in America in the early 1930s, lauded ancestry in terms of heredity. Like hearty plant seeds, he maintained, children of good "stock" undoubtedly flowered if not exposed to "undesirable environing conditions."[4]

The basic traits of persons of good background were understood by the readers of domestic science and etiquette manuals. Middle-class to wealthy Anglo-Americans who took pride in their ancestry and who wished to retain a stratified status quo were the targets of such books as *The Better Homes Manual* and Emily Post's *The Personality of a House* and *Etiquette*. According to this literature, middle-class incomes should be stretched to give the impression of upper-class living. These books thus urged a discreet enlargement of the politically powerful and socially acceptable upper class by distancing it from the immigrants and ill-bred people of the lower classes. Post emphasized the elitism of good taste:

> Consider the uncouth millions pouring yearly into this great melting-pot, our United States. Imagine the manners and tastes of the majority, and consider what the charm of living would be, should the majority be the criterion of culture.[4]

Indeed, the theory that an Anglo elite could protect itself from the sullying effects of outside influences was the basis for these manuals. While these books could not tamper with genetics, they could influence the environments in which children grew up and housewives worked. Ford, like Post, believed that an acceptable home environment was of "tremendous sociological importance," as it would eventually "redirect the trends of civilization." He therefore stressed designing a house according to the principles of "elimination, cultivation, or control."[5] In other words, a true homemaker should eliminate those influences that should not be cultivated and could not be controlled. Objects, such as paintings of the "*Voyage en Suisse*," in conjunction with the proper moral environment, shielded a house's inhabitants from bad breeding.

Post would have approved of the Hungerfords. Wealthy Anglo-Americans, their ancestry was apparent through their British accents, inherited from Esther Hungerford's Anglo-American mother, Elizabeth Smith, whose accent belied her York origins. Within York, the social position of the Hungerfords, although described as "right up there at the top," was nebulous. They had descended from "old money" and their ancestors had lived in York since David Wilcox, Elizabeth Smith's grandfather, purchased the house in 1817.[6] But Dorothy Hungerford was born in Stanford, Connecticut, not York, and had lived in Boston prior to the 1920s, although the Hungerfords summered in York before becoming year-round residents.[7] Thus Dorothy was not considered a "native."

The combination of these factors may account for the people with whom the Hungerfords associated. Esther and Dorothy Hungerford were friendly with summer and year-round residents alike. While there was not an unbreakable barrier between York Village and York Harbor residents, they "simply were not in the same group."[8] While the Hungerfords' friends were from different areas, they were still from the same basic cultural background. Elizabeth Perkins, one of the most well-known summer people of York, typified the wealthy seasonal, as well as year-round, residents the Hungerfords welcomed into their home.[9]

Esther and Dorothy Hungerford socialized not only with their friends but also with each other. The Hungerfords entertained jointly, and many townspeople frequently saw them walking or driving through York. Fellow townsperson Lillian Newick described the Hungerfords as "slightly old-fashioned ladies;"[10] a member of the prestigious Old Gaol Committee, of which Mrs. Hungerford was chair for several decades, recalled the Hungerfords as "conservative" and "old school."[11] There were significant differences, however, between mother and daughter. Esther Hungerford struck many as "elegant"[12] and "more socially inclined" than her daughter.[13] Although some townspeople and associates attributed the latter to the fact that Miss Hungerford was unmarried,14 others saw her husband-less state as an indication of her independence.[15]

The Hungerfords probably did not completely subscribe to the elitist domestic science ideology of the 1930s. Dorothy Hungerford, who became fluent in Italian through private study and travels to Italy, did not disdain Italian immigrants so much that she would not practice this language on an Italian-American whose store she patronized.[16] Although Dorothy did not entertain members of York's working class in her home, Thelma Chase, her housekeeper from the mid-1940s until 1954, recalled that the Hungerfords treated her "like family."

The Hungerfords' decorating tastes did run to those popularized in 1930s domestic science manuals. Post divided the decorating of a room into four basic stages: architectural preparation for decorating, application of wall color and selection of light fixtures,

selection of movable furniture, and placement of furniture and decorative accessories.[17] The matters of lighting and ventilation were also major considerations in choosing a wall color, as stressed by *The Better Homes Manual.* An ideal 1930s dining room should have been light and colorful, and thus "cheerful and inspiring." *Everywoman's Complete Guide to Homemaking* suggested a "pale tint," delphinium blue or ivory; however, several other manuals asserted that a pure blue was cool and aloof, and that a cream or yellow tint was more appropriate for a dining room. The "emotional character" of yellow, according to Post, was light.[18]

Appropriately, the Hungerford's 1930s dining room was a calm, flat shade of creamy yellow set off by white painted woodwork.[19] This color was enhanced by the room's northwesterly orientation. Roughly thirteen feet by thirteen feet, the dining room is one of the most well-lit rooms in the house with two windows on the north wall and one on the west. Since this house was constructed in the mid-eighteenth century, the Hungerfords had nothing to do with the positioning of this room. They did, however, choose it as their dining room. While it is impossible to say definitely what influenced this decision, lighting, wall color, and good ventilation may have influenced their reasoning.

Even if the Hungerfords deemed the dining room's color, lighting, and air tasteful and healthy, it is doubtful that they or many other people of their social class ever drew up charts for color values for their dining room as advocated by Emily Post.[20] Indeed, the Hungerfords probably did not alter the architecture and interior paint colors of their house; the last major changes of this nature were reportedly done by Elizabeth Smith, Miss Hungerford's grandmother, relatively soon after she inherited the house. Miss Hungerford's cousins recall that according to family tradition Elizabeth Smith painted the "south rooms" gray and the "north rooms" cream or light yellow to take advantage of the natural light.[21] According to the Hungerfords' housekeeper, the wall color "didn't distract from the rest of the room at all. It just kind of fit in."[22]

According to the prescriptive literature, wall color and the obejects in the room should interact in significant, if subtle, ways. In high-style rooms of this era, balance of the plain and decorated as well as of different styles and periods of furniture was necessary to create harmony. Many contemporary authors, such as Halbert and Harris, advocated mixing furniture styles and periods, a popular colonial revival idea.[23]

Although the Hungerfords were among the ranks of colonial revivalists, they were not generally remembered as obsessive decorators or collectors.[24] Their dining room, as well as other rooms such as the living room (present c. 1765 parlor), were thoroughly colonial revival. Their tastes, however, also ran to Victorian, a style apparent in their sitting room (now the exhibit gallery). While the Hungerfords, especially Mrs. Hungerford, collected antiques until possibly the mid-1940s,[25] they did not greatly alter the appearance of the dining room during their residency.[26] Apparently, Dorothy and Esther Hungerford were more concerned about the presentation and maintenance of the rooms than about assigning the house a common theme. According to Dorothy's

cousins, although the furniture was aged, it was not "crude,"[27] while the objects in the dining room immediately impressed one visitor as "shiny."[28]

Both Esther and Dorothy Hungerford were well-versed in antiques. Undoubtedly, this modish knowledge earned them some respect within their social circle. In addition, they were probably well-prepared to negotiate with dealers. In the 1920s and 1930s, Mrs. Hungerford sold as well as collected antiques, and dealers occasionally visited the Hungerford house.[29] This knowledge and, indeed, interest in antiques was passed down through the family and supplemented by some of the many books owned by the Hungerfords.[30]

The Hungerfords were not among the nouveau riche who were bereft of furniture and a stylish ancestral history. Rather, they had a strong furniture base upon which to build; they possessed several family pieces including Louise Wilcox Putnam's Chinese export furniture.[31] Family objects not only allowed the Hungerfords to eschew fanatical collecting, but also lent credibility to their wealthy ancestry. Because they maintained distinct ancestral lines, they kept Wilcox, Putnam, and Hungerford pieces distinct from each other.[32]

While the family coats-of-arms displayed throughout the house spoke for themselves, other objects provided an opportunity for stories. Mrs. Hungerford "loved anything of George Washington" and hung pictures of Washington throughout the house. One of these pictures, which Mrs. Hungerford possibly put in the dining room, showed a crowd greeting Washington as he disembarked from a ship. Mrs. Hungerford enjoyed pointing out one of their ancestors in the crew.[33]

Staffordshire plates of descending size, pewter porringers, a George Washington print and a mantle clock bearing a reverse painting on glass of Mount Vernon were a few of the objects that filled the Hungerfords' dining room. According to the prescriptive literature, one object or a set of objects should serve as the room's focal point, or "a central object of beauty," as well as relate to the wall color. Architecturally-prominent elements, such as a fireplace or group of windows, also should attract the most attention. In the dining room, the most outstanding feature is the corner fireplace. In the 1930s, a clock was centered on its nondescript mantle; the clock which, ironically, did not work, was thus the focal point of the room. But such objects should not draw too much attention. "A well-decorated room, like a well-dressed woman," stated Harris in *Everywoman's Complete Guide to Homemaking*, "wears no one single object which stands out above the others." Indeed, Post labelled a woman a "vulgarian" if she wore flashy clothes or otherwise flaunted her wealth.[34]

It is likely that the Hungerfords adhered to the tenets of entertaining set up by such writers as Emily Post, although they did not entertain with the great ceremony advocated by Post. To those who understood elegant dining, "congenial" guests and a charming hostess, not the elaborateness of a meal, was the key to social success.[35] As their housekeeper said, the Hungerfords "weren't eating people. They were social."[36]

During the 1930s, meal parties ran the gamut from theme parties to simple breakfasts. Theme parties, though waning in popularity at this time, were still acceptable. A "Buffet Supper for Valentine Dance," for example, featured foods that could be molded into hearts or dyed red: hot currant soup, heart-shaped patties of oyster, crabmeat, or lobster, broccoli and heart-shaped beet and turnip slices surrounding a spatchcock of guinea fowl, "true lovers' knots," jellied tomato salad in heart-moulds, and pink ice-cream sandwiched between heart-shaped sponge cake.[37] But basic meals were also suggested in cookbooks catering to the audience of *Etiquette. The International Cook Book*, for instance, listed simple family meals consisting of roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, buttered carrots, riced potatoes, turned lettuce salad, rolls, chocolate cream tarts and coffee.[38]

The Hungerfords invariably supplied fine-quality food and an air of formality to brief visits as well as to formal calls. The most formal of the Hungerford luncheons or dinners probably involved only small groups including close family or friends. At dinner, Esther Hungerfored took the hostess' place at the head of the table while Miss Hungerford took the host's place at the opposite end. When guests were invited, the man deserving the most respect sat at Mrs. Hungerford's right, while the honored woman sat to the right of Miss Hungerford.[39]

The place settings usually included separate dinner, salad, and bread plates, followed by dessert plates. The usual setting of sterling silver flatware comprised a knife and three forks. If fish were served, the Hungerfords included a fish fork. Wine glasses, usually for sherry, completed each setting. The Hungerfords may have graced a white damask tablecloth with a centerpiece and a pair of double-branched candelabras. According to their housekeeper, Dorothy Hungerford "had things fixed nice. Everything tastes good when it's fixed nice."[40]

In the Hungerford household, it was often Miss Hungerford and not a waitress, maid or butler who prepared and served much of the food; although the Hungerfords had employed two servants, a waitress and a cook, before the Crash of 1929. Miss Hungerford sat closest to the kitchen and could thus easily supervise and help the servants; Mrs. Hungerford, on the other hand, used a small service bell next to her place to summon the servants.[41] But even when the Hungerfords employed these women, Dorothy Hungerford often whipped up a lobster stew, "one of her great dishes" for her guests; turkey and lamb were other favorites. After the Depression, Miss Hungerford expected her part-time housekeeper to assist her in cooking and setting the table, but the only task that was unequivocally the housekeeper's was washing the dishes. Indeed, Miss Hungerford told her housekeeper that she had attended a cooking school; possibly the Boston Cooking School, when she lived in Boston.[42]

In comparison to dinners and luncheons, buffet teas at the Hungerford house adhered closely to the etiquette of the era. Post lauded buffet meals as informal gatherings where guests could arrive, eat, and socialize according to their own tastes. She stated, "No one is made to do anyting he (or she) doesn't want to — and that seems to be the ultimate in present-day hospitality." The hostess was not limited by table size;

she did need to make sure, however, that all guests had at least one person with whom they enjoyed socializing.[43] While Post referred to buffet meals in general and buffet suppers in particular, these statements also applied to teas.

It is probable that a few people had tables specifically constructed for tea parties. Many high-style hostesses undoubtedly used lace or linen tablecloths for suck gatherings.[44] According to Post, a hot-water kettle, empty teapot, caddy of tea, tea strainer and slop bowl, cream pitcher and sugar bowl, plate of lemon slices, cups and saucers, plates, and napkins should rest on a large tray.[45] This array facilitated the job of the hostess.

A properly conducted tea party revolved around the pouring of the tea. Post also advised that the hostess or a gracious friend of the hostess poured tea or chocolate for all the guests. This allowed the hostess or deputy hostess not only to acknowledge each guest's presence, but also to exhibit the skill indicative of good breeding. A high-style hostess of the 1930s did not need to produce stellar food at a dinner; mediocre tea, however, could put a damper on the most animated of tea parties. After a guest asked for a cup of tea, the hostess inquired, "Weak or strong?" The reply "weak" was the hostess's cue to add boiling water to already-poured tea. If asked, the hostess then added cream, lemon, or sugar.[46] The author of the New Delineator Recipes was even more specific than Post. In addition to instructing its readers to use earthen or china pots, she listed all possible "tea accompaniments": among others, lemon or orange cut sugar, mint sirup, cordial drops, candied red cherries, and painted sugar.[47]

Tea foods were not as important as the tea itself. Unlike the High Tea cited in the *International Cook Book*, which listed in a sample menu such foods as lobster salad, creamed mushrooms, Parker House rolls, and a potato puff,[48] most teas consisted of sandwiches, cookies, and cakes. *Joy of Cooking* suggested yolk drop cakes, orange marmalade cookies, and macaroon jam tarts as well as nut bread, prune bread, or bran bread de luxe spread with butter or cream cheese. Because guests at teas were often only women, it is not surprising that guests were supposed to find tea foods aesthetically appealing, but not necessarily tasty. The daintiness of the food reflected Post's repeated assertion that, to women, eating was secondary to socializing. Thus, it was more important for women to admire tea foods than actually consume them. The *Joy of Cooking* also suggested "decorative" canapes: "Spread filling between trimmed slices of bread — cut the slices into small attractive shapes or roll them and secure the rolls with toothpicks. Toast them."[49]

While dinners, luncheons, and sit-down teas at the Hungerford house were intimate gatherings of close friends, buffet teas included a large number of people with whom the Hungerfords probably had congenial, but less intimate, relationships. Most of the Hungerfords' guests did not associate exclusively with either Dorothy or Esther Hungerford, but were friends with both. Guests at teas, however, were primarily of Mrs. Hungerford's generation, which may have given an air of formality to these parties.[50] The families of close friends were also invited to these teas; indeed, a member of a family who were friends with the Hungerfords recalled attending a Hungerford tea as a restless, tea-spilling young boy.[51]

The Hungerford's buffet teas employed the classic elements of a 1930s high-style tea. A lace tablecloth or lace runners lay on the table. While serving dishes covered much of the table, a silver tea set, a centerpiece of flowers, and a glass jar filled with mints predominated. The refreshments were "very fancy" and made mostly by Miss Hungerford; lemon cakes and sandwiches filled with melted cheese or watercress were some of the foods of which she was fond.[52]

The table was arranged so that guests could fill their plates, request tea, and chat briefly with their hostess, Esther Hungerford, before retiring to seats scattered throughout the lower floor. In preparing the dining room for such a tea, the Hungerfords or their housekeeper set all of the chairs, save one, against the wall. Mrs. Hungerford's chair remained at the head of the table, where she poured tea and talked with her guests. Mrs. Hungerford weakened the tea and added such flavorings as lemon, ginger, or a teaspoonful of rum from the carafe at her place.[53] Undoubtedly, the Hungerfords' self-assurance enabled them to deviate from, as well as adhere to, domestic advice manuals.

Esther and Dorothy Hungerfords' decorating tastes and entertaining habits set them within the period of the early twentieth century. But the Hungerfords did not live exactly according to the prescriptive literature of the 1930s. This fact alone makes the 1992 version of the Hungerford dining room interesting to interpret. The Hungerford dining room is not a generic 1930s dining room, nor is it an exact replica of the original early-twentieth century room. This room serves, instead, as a starting point for interpreters to talk about high-style dining and decorating trends of the early twentieth century, and how the Hungerfords fit into these trends. In the 1930s, York accepted Esther and Dorothy Hungerford as high-style, respectable women. Over half a century later, the interpretation of the 1930s dining room in the Emerson-Wilcox house strives to present them as such. As Elizabeth Cutts said about her cousin and her aunt, "They lived graciously, and they were real ladies."[54]

Notes

[1] The author interviewed ten relatives and/or acquaintances of the Hungerfords. At times the author played "devil's advocate" in determining the "truth of interpretation" sifted through their 40-to-60-year-old memories. Tapes and transcriptions are available at Old York Historical Society (OYHS).

[2] Emily Post, *The Personality of a House.* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1933) 1, 4.

[3] Blanche Halbert, ed. "Introduction," in *The Better Homes Manual.* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1932) ,ix.

[4] Post, *Personality*, 303.

[5] Halbert, x.

[6] In 1894 Elizabeth Wilcox Smith inherited the house from her aunt, Louisa Wilcox Putnam, with whom she had lived from 1845 until her marriage in 1860 to Herbert Smith of Stanford, CT. Their daughter, Esther Smith Hungerford, inherited the house in the early twentieth century.-Ed.

[7] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts, interview with author, 21 July 1992.

[8] Lillian Newick, townsperson, interview with author, 26 July 1992.

[9] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[10] Lillian Newick.

[11] Polly Marshall, Old Gaol Committee member, telephone conversation with author, August 1992. Bob Cutts, son of Dorothy Hungerford's cousin Robert Cutts, also said that Dorothy Hungerford was "a proper, old-fashioned woman who sat very straight." Interview with author 13 July 1992.

[12] Bob Cutts.

[13] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[14] Lillian Newick. Newick perceived Dorothy Hungerford as distant. "I think that perhaps that is an appearance given off by people who don't have children...Children are great mixers. Maybe she was shy...'Stiff' is too strong a word, but 'relaxed' is too weak."

[15] Mary Davis, interview with author, 30 July 1992.

[16] Mary Davis.

[17] Post, *Personality*, 278.

[18] Mrs. Charles Bradley Sanders, "Wall and Floor Finishes and Coverings," in *The Better Homes Manual*, 403-4.; Post, Personality; Florence LeGanke Harris, *Everywoman's Complete Guide to Homemaking* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1936) 197.

[19] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts; Thelma Chase. Paint analysis done in August 1992 verifies this color.

[20] Post, *Personality*, 163.

[21] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[22] Thelma Chase.

[23] Halbert, Harris.

[24] Elizabeth Strong, only one of the interviewees, spoke of the "avidity" with which Esther Hungerford collected antiques.-Ed.

[25] Thelma Chase. In addition, Chase said that Miss Hungerford mapped out the floor plan in the Lindsay Road house to accomodate her furniture before she moved.

[26] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Bob Cutts.

[29] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[30] Helen Churchill Candee, *Decorative Styles and Periods in the Home*, (Cambridge, MA: The University Press, 1902), 5. Esther Hungerford's signed copy is at OYHS library. Mrs. Strong recalled, for instance, that Esther Hungerford relied upon *Decorative Styles and Periods in the Home* by Helen Churchill Candee who suggested "that the proved styles of the past are best, and the buyer must study them carefully to prevent error...a room decorated and furnished after a recognised style is like a past century compressed into the apartment." In furnishing the diningroom in the "Hepplewhite" style, Mrs. Hungerford was following Candee's advice.

[31] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[32] Elizabeth Strong.

[33] Thelma Chase.

[34] Elsie Richardson, "Important Considerations in Furniture Selection and Arrangement," in *The Better Homes Manual*, 427; Post, *Personality*; Harris; Emily Post, *Etiquette*, (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1927), 611.

[35] Post, *Etiquette*, 328.

[36] Thelma Chase.

[37] "Buffet Supper for Valentine Dance," *American Cookery* (February 1930) 538.

[38] *The International Cook Book*, 37.

[39] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.

[40] Thelma Chase.

[41] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts.
[42] Thelma Chase. Chase also said that Dorothy Hungerford often cooked a dark blueberry cake, made with molasses and cornmeal, as well as a corn pudding. Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts also mentioned lobster stew as one of the dishes most frequently made by Miss Hungerford.
[43] Post, *Etiquette*, 387.
[44] *The International Cook Book*, 53. Many such sources also suggested a lace tablecloth.
[45] Post, *Etiquette*, 129.
[46] *Ibid.*, 127.
[47] New Delineator Recipes, 21.
[48] *The International Cook Book*, 53.
[49] *Joy of Cooking*, 810, 24.
[50] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts. Buffet teas were invariably larger than family dinners.
[51] James Erwin, telephone conversation with the author, August 1992.
[52] Mary Louise and Elizabeth Cutts; Thelma Chase.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid.*

Reinstalled Hungerford Dining Room, 1992.

ADDENDUM
Emerson-Wilcox House Timeline

The following timeline is based on existing legal documents prepared by and/or for past residents of the Emerson-Wilcox House. Dates appearing in boldface indicate change of ownership; names in boldface indicate owners. Notations following each entry refer to York County Registry of Deeds (YCRD) and York County Registry of Probate (YCRP), Alfred, Maine. Copies of the documents referenced are available at OYHS.

May 20, 1740 **George Ingraham** sells to **Jeremiah and Daniel Moulton** "All That Certain Dwelling House in York aforesaid which I now Live Standing at the Corner of the Burying place near the Meeting House in the First Parish in York..." for twenty pounds. (YCRD,19:359)

Nov. 15, 1740 The Moultons sell to **Bethiah Ingraham**, wife of G. Ingraham, the "Dwelling House in York...which the said Bethiah now Lives in Standing at the Corner of the Burying Place near the Meeting House in the first Parish in York aforesaid and which the said George Ingraham Conveyed, to us the said Jer. & Daniel Moulton...." (YCRD, 22:68)

Aug. 27, 1741 **Bethiah Ingraham** sells the house to **Benjamin Stone** of York, for "Twenty Pounds Bills of Credit." (YCRD,19:384)

1741-1756 **Abel Whitney** is in possession of the house at some point during this period and subsequently sells the house to **Samuel Moody** of York.

Dec. 31, 1756 Samuel Moody sells house to **Edward Emerson**, "Taylor." Emerson, "of York," pays 14 pounds for the house described in the Dec. 31, 1756, deed as that "which the (said) Edward now dwells being the same which George Ingraham formerly Erected there and lived in and which I Purchased of Abel Whitney..." The deed was signed on Jan. 11, 1757. (YCRD,33:13)

Mar. 24, 1766 The First Church and Parish of York leased the property (described in part as,"beginning at a Post in the North Eastern Corner of the Burying Yard From which Post is North seventy seven degrees West thirteen feet from the North West Corner of said Emersons Dwelling House....") to Edward Emerson for sixteen shillings per year for a term of 999 years, due to expire on March 18, 2765. (YCRD,39:115-116)

Dec. 21, 1803 Edward Emerson signed his will, leaving the "mansion house...other buildings and pasture land" to his son, Bulkley, except for those portions of the house that he left to his daughters Lucy and Ruth, described as "the lower north room of his mansion house, the Northeast chamber, & the middle chamber, together with half the garret, kitchen, cellar & stores." (YCRD,20:534-536)

Oct. 3, 1806 Edward Emerson, Sr., age 78, dies; **Bulkley Emerson** inherits.
Aug. 14, 1807 Edward Emerson's inventory, totalling $1328.23, was prepared; his household items, valued at $206.23, included "remnant of shop goods" valued at $1.00. Under the heading "Real Estate" are listed "The mansion house, 2 old stores & barn, with the land on which they stand...." valued at $800.00. (YCRP, 20-110-11)

Nov. 15, 1815 Bulkley Emerson dies; his widow **Hannah Emerson** inherits.
Dec. 30, 1815 Bulkley Emerson's inventory, prepared in 1815, shows an extensive list of shop goods valued at an additional $1473.37; and "The barn & stable," "the buildings on the lot near the dwelling house," and "The dwelling house, wood house etc.," and the lease for the property , all valued at $1900.00. (YCRP, 25:373-381)
Aug. 13, 1816 Hannah Emerson's "dower in the real estate of her husband, Bulkley Emerson, Esquire, deceased," was signed. Hannah received, "as her thirds in the house, barn, store and out-buildings of the said Bulkley Emerson deceased the following part of said buildings, namely. The southerly front room in the dwelling house near the Court house in York, the small kitchen back of it, the southerly front chamber and the small chamber back of it and adjoining the same with a privilege of using the front entry and front stairs and also a privilege of passing through the back kitchen and a privilege of using the boilers in the back kitchen for washing and cooking. Also a privilege in the cellar, of putting in sauce and other things usually kept in cellars and she is to have free access to the same thro' the outer and inner passages as she may have occasion to make use of the cellar. Also the use of all the out houses, excepting the store, with a privilege of taking water from the well, also a privilege in the garret of the said dwelling house. All the privileges in the out houses, garret, cellar, etc. mentioned above is to be in common with the other occupants thereof." (YCPR, 26:169-170)

May 5, 1817 Hannah Emmerson sells to **Jonathan S. Barrell.**
Barrell, H. Emerson's lawyer, purchased the house and land at "publick vendue" which was held "to convey so much of the real estate of the said deceased [Bulkley Emerson] for the payment of his debts, and incidental charges." Barrell , the highest bidder, paid $500 for the land and "dwelling house & other buildings on the premises." He also assumed responsibility for the 999 year lease. (YCRD,19:204-205)

May 8, 1817 Jonathan S. Barrell sells to **David Wilcox**, "of York. "
Wilcox purchased the property "with the dwelling house & outhouses on the same standing...excepting therefrom & expressly reserving the right which Lucy Emerson & Ruth Emerson have in said dwelling house, of the use of the N.W. corner room on the lower floor, and the N.E. and middle chambers, with half the cellar & half the garret, with a privilege in the kitchen & outhouses, for and during their lives and the life of the survivor of them, or their remaining unmarried; according to the will of their father, Edward Emerson, the lessee of the said premises. Also reserving from the aforedescribed premises such part thereof as may now be covered by any part of the store, lately occupied by Bulkley Emerson, dec'd." (YCRD,110:146-147)