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Maine Writers Correspondence

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December 2015

# Alice Weston Todd Correspondence

Alice Weston Todd 1884-

Maine State Library

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TODD, Alice Weston (Mrs. Henry)

b. Madison, February 23, 1884

# Life On Grandpa's Farm As Told By Madison Woman In Various Details

A story which contains much historical lore of interest to people in this section is that related and published in magazine form by Mrs. Alice Weston Todd which tells of the Weston family in Madison and is entitled "Life on Grandpa's Farm." Described in detail is the big square house of twelve rooms which was built in 1817. Likewise is given most entertaining description of the different channels of amusement which were in vogue in the earlier days such as corn huskings, and corn roasts as well as the games that were popular in the olden times.

The parents of the author were Theodore B. and Annie Bixby Weston, and in the manuscript is fully described the methods employed by Mrs. Weston in the making of butter and cheese for which no electrical devices were used in her time. Also is told Mr. Weston's method of making soft-soap from fats collected for a considerable period and boiled with lye over an open flame in the kitchen fire place, as well as his farming methods and activities.

Mrs. Todd also tells of the plentiful numbers of salmon available previous to the dams being built up and down the Kennebec River, incidents of the berrying times and haying, the episode of a hurricane, a heavy winter rain and flood years when stored vegetables, fruit and canned goods were removed from the farmhouse cellar and carpets and rugs were taken up lest the waters enter the dwelling. The cellar became completely filled and boats were required where walking would ordinarily have prevailed.

One of the incidents most happily recalled was the centennial celebration of the settling of the farm. The place was first settled in 1786 and one hundred years later in 1886 about 400 relatives and friends came to the celebration.

Mrs. Todd with her husband, Henry Todd makes her home during the summer months at the "Homestead," in company with an older sister, Miss Eyie Weston. During the winter months the Todds live in an apartment in Brunswick with their oldest daughter, Miss Eula, who is employed at the Brunswick Air Base. Another daughter, Miss Eunice Todd, a graduate nurse from the C.M.G. Hospital in Lewiston is employed at her profession and makes her home in Brunswick.

The author is a former teacher

Independent Reporter  
Jan. 11, 1955

January 21, 1955

Mrs. Henry Todd  
3 Bowdoin Courts  
Brunswick, Maine

Dear Mrs. Todd:

Recent newspaper mention of your LIFE ON GRANDPA'S FARM leads us to write to you. We are not sure, from the news clipping, whether this story is in a magazine, or is in book form. We are, of course, very much interested in all Maine writing and writers. Will you tell us, please: if it is in a magazine, what magazine, and what issue? If it is in book form, is it privately published; if not, who is the publisher? And what is the price?

It sounds most interesting, and we hope we shall have an opportunity to see the story soon.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY  
By

hmj  
Encl--1

Secretary

K. F. Bowdoin Curtis,  
Brunswick, Maine  
January 25-1955.

JAN 26

Mrs. F. W. Jacob Sec.,  
Maine State Library,  
Augusta, Maine.

Dear Mrs. Jacob:

Life On Grandpa's Farm is  
in booklet form. It was privately printed.

I have copies on hand @ \$2.<sup>00</sup> per copy  
and copies are on sale at same price in  
Skowhegan at Haines' drug store also in the  
drug stores of both Madison and Anson.

I need to sell as many as I can to defray  
cost of publishing, so I'd rather not place  
the book in public libraries just at the  
present time.

Cordially yours,  
Mrs. Alice Weston Todd.

February 15, 1955

Mrs. Alice Weston Todd  
K 3 Bowdoin Courts  
Brunswick, Maine

Dear Mrs. Todd:

When you wrote us last month that you preferred not to sell any copies of your booklet, LIFE ON GRANDPA'S FARM, to libraries, we could see your point of view. Perhaps you have changed it now, or perhaps we can suggest another! The State Library is, and should be, concerned to preserve all items about Maine, especially in printed form. Much material that is completely unavailable in private libraries is here, and has proved of great use and value throughout the years to historians, writers, legislators, and other interested people. Many such items go out of print in a few years, and it is unfortunate to have to tell inquirers that the State Library of Maine does not have an item pertaining to Maine.

Does this seem reasonable to you? We hope that you will relent and make it possible for us to acquire a copy. It is also true that libraries are one means of advertising a book; and very often we have borrowers ask us where they may buy a certain book which they have read.

We hope that the sale is encouraging, and that we may look forward to buying a copy soon.

Very truly

MAINE STATE LIBRARY  
By

hmj

Secretary

February 18, 1955

Mrs. Alice Weston Todd  
K 3 Bowdoin Courts  
Brunswick, Maine

Dear Mrs. Todd:

The copy of LIFE ON GRANDPA'S FARM came today in the snowstorm: old-fashioned weather for an old-fashioned tale. It is an interesting one, and it is well to put these clear and happy memories into permanent print.

We think we should like to put this copy in the Maine Author Collection. Perhaps you know that this is a permanent exhibit of Maine books, most of which are inscribed. It is possible that you will give us the pleasure of a call some day, and at that time you will, we hope, add your autograph to LIFE ON GRANDPA'S FARM. We also try to have as complete biographical information about our authors as possible, and although your story tells us a lot about your childhood, we do need to know your birthplace, and birth date, if you are willing that we have the information on file.

A bill for two dollars is being approved, and you should have payment within a week or so. Good luck to the book, and thank you for letting us have a copy.

Sincerely yours

In Charge of  
Maine Author Collection

hmj

March 8-'55. F. Z. Bowdoin Cts.,  
Brunswick, Maine.

Secretary-State Library,  
Augusta, Maine.

MAR 9

Dear madam:-

Payment of two dollars,  
(\$2.00) was received today from the  
Treasury Department. I thank you for  
your interest in my booklet, "Life  
On Grandpa's Farm."

I was born in Madison at the  
old homestead described in the story,  
February 23, 1884.

Sometime when I am passing  
thru Augusta I will plan to stop off  
and autograph my book. If anyone  
inquires of you where to buy copies,  
please tell them I have them at  
this address also at Madison,  
P. O. Box 55, In care of Miss Eric Weston.

Cardially yours,  
Alice E. W. Todd.