

# **RECOLLECTIONS**



**by**

**William Adams Ide**

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**- Some Memories**

**- The Mill**

**- Associates**

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## Some Words About These Recollections

William Adams Ide served as President of E.T. & H.K. Ide, Inc., for thirty-four years, 1923 - 1957. During that time, he served both the Company and the Ide family faithfully and well. He led the business through the Great Depression with acumen, and he left it soundly positioned, physically and financially, for future growth and success. He wrote, "If any word of praise is given to me (for my service), 'He built well,' will be sufficient." It is said.

In 1951, his seventieth year and his fiftieth anniversary of service in the Company, William Adams Ide wrote down some thoughts and memories. They have been collected, and, with but the most minor editing, appear here. His stated purpose was to pass on family heritage and Company history "to future generations," and he did a quite remarkable job of it.

But, very importantly, these reminiscences are most revealing. They were written with obvious love, concern, humor, joy and quiet pride.....both in those he knew and for those to whom he wanted to pass on a share of his life. Since some in my generation may recall differently, it seems vital we all carefully read his testimony. It may far more accurately portray the real Will Ide than did the protective facade his own living brother and sisters claimed he erected and hid behind following some deep-hurting family losses.

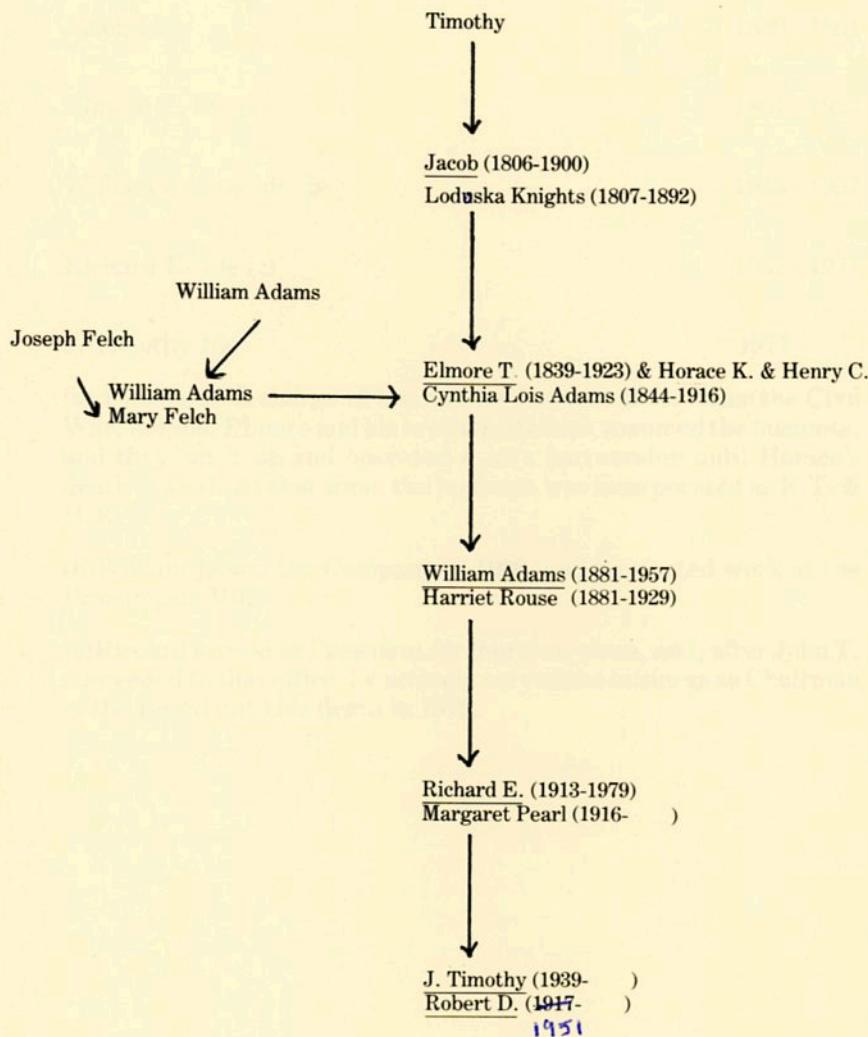
So, in charity, thoroughly peruse, savor, weigh and understand. Appreciate Will Ide's

- spirit as evidenced in what he wrote,
- insight on our ancestors,
- view of Company history,
- tribute to those who lived their lives for and contributed much to the Company, and
- precepts and values cited as basic for living and doing business.

But, especially and above all, feel his desire to communicate and to share with you, and give him credit for it.

Thoughtfully prepared by Donald G. Powell, Secretary, E.T. & H.K. Ide, Inc., and William A. Ide's great nephew.

**The Directory**  
**An Abbreviated Ide Family Tree**



## **THE IDE COMPANY PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION**

Timothy Ide	1813 - 1839
Jacob Ide	1839 - 1861
Elmore T. Ide (a)	1861 - 1923
William Adams Ide (b)	1923 - 1957
Richard E. Ide (c)	1957 - 1971
J. Timothy Ide	1971 -

(a) Elmore took charge of the mill for Jacob in 1861. After the Civil War, in 1866, Elmore and his brother, Horace, assumed the business, and they set it up and operated it as a partnership until Horace's death in 1897. At that time, the business was incorporated as E. T. & H.K. Ide.

(b) William joined the Company in 1900, and he started work at the Passumpsic Mill.

(c) Richard served as President for fourteen years, and, after John T. succeeded to that office, he actively served the business as Chairman of the Board until his death in 1979.

## SOME MEMORIES

In the month of July this year (1951) I passed two milestones. I had my 70th birthday, and the 50th anniversary of work in the mill. Either one is really something, but both coming at the same time should make a person take notice. It did!

I will write down some memories in a rambling manner that may be of interest and amusement in future days.

I know very little of my ancestors who were gone before my day. I would like to have those that I do remember be better known to future generations, so I will write some of my recollections of them, and also what little I know of those that I never saw.

JOHN IDE was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. He brought his family here, and settled soon after the war. This region was wilderness at that time, with no roads, only trails. He had bought a small farm, which bordered the Lawrence farm on Crow Hill; payment was due and must be made to hold the property. But progress getting here was slow, and it became evident he could not make it in time with his ox team and load. So, when he was about twenty miles from here, he gave the money to his fourteen year old daughter, and sent her on horseback to carry the payment through the woods alone, which she did, delivering it on time. This is about all that I know of John Ide. I wish that I knew more. I imagine that he was quite some man. He lies now in the old part of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

I have recently come into possession of his powder horn. It is engraved with pictures of animals and a man on horseback labelled "The King." They had a king then instead of a Democrat President. They got rid of the king, so there is hope. Also there is engraved on it: "Know then, - powder horn, - John Ide, - 1768." It is well worn and shows much service. It is entirely reasonable to suppose that he carried it during the war, as well as on many hunting expeditions.

This powder horn will go to my grandson, John Timothy Ide, and I hope it will be preserved and handed down to Ides to come.

TIMOTHY IDE, John Ide's son, moved to another hill farm in Lyndon, but evidently it was not what he wanted, for, in December of 1813, he purchased the water power and mill at Passumpsic and started the wheels that would grind grain every day for five generations so far, and, let us hope, for many more to come.

JACOB IDE, Timothy's son, was my grandfather, and I remember him well. I want to tell enough about him so that others may know him.

Grandfather Jacob was a man of many occupations: school master, miller, storekeeper, station agent and farmer. His farming was mostly sheep and bees, in both of which he excelled. Also, he did some trapping and hunting as a side line. With all of his different interests, he never pursued any very strenuously. If there was anything to do that required effort, someone was always on hand to do it for him. He was not a strong man physically, but he had a good head, and he used it. He lived to be ninety-three, which, perhaps, shows that it is a good plan to do the thinking and let some one else do the heavy work.

He was a quiet thoughtful man and not inclined to any conceit or

boastfulness, but one thing he loved to tell about was that he got Ladoska Knights for his wife. And well he might, for she was a woman to be proud of. Many times he told me that she was the handsomest, smartest and most sought after girl in the area and that he got her!

They had three girls, and they all died with an epidemic that was called membranous croup. They were childless, and very sad, for several years, and then they had three boys, Elmore, Horace and Henry.

They lived in Passumpsic in the white house between the railroad and the river, the old Ide home. I used to go and spend a few days with them. This was a pleasure beyond description. There was the mill just across the road with its great attractions, the river behind the house with plenty of fish, and the railroad within a few feet of the house on the other side. At night, you could hear the train nearer and louder until it seemed that it was coming right into the house. The house would shake and tremble! Then the train had gone by, and you hoped that the next one would come soon.

Grandfather Jacob lived with us during his last years. He and I were companions, and no boy ever had a better one. He always had a smile and kind words for me - never anything else. He took delight in all my pleasures, and, when I went hunting and brought home something to show for it, he was as pleased as I was. We drove around the country together, we played checkers and he told me many things of value to me. He told me that I would live to see many wonderful inventions. He said that I would see the Fifteen Mile Falls "harnessed for power", that I would see horseless carriages and that I would see telephone service everywhere. He said, "There are two things that you will never see, because they are both against the laws of nature. One is perpetual motion, and the other is a flying machine." He was 50% right that time, but his average was much better than that.

When I was about fourteen years old, and Grandfather was over eighty, we used to spend a few weeks in the Summer at Franconia with Uncle Roswell Knights. Roswell is the correct name, but we called him Uncle Rossell and so did everybody else. We travelled with old Susan and the phaeton. It took two good days - what we now do in an hour. Grandfather did not want Susan to trot, and Susan did not want to either! She walked all the way, and the whiffletree squeaked with her every step. We never thought to oil it. In fact, I liked to hear it, and Grandfather was too deaf to hear it anyway.

The first day's journey was to Upper Waterford where we stayed over night with George Ide and his wife and mother, Aunt Almira, who was very old and feeble. George and his wife devoted most of their time while we were there to entertaining me, and how I enjoyed it. She told me stories, and showed me how to spin wool with a spinning wheel. George was in a class by himself. There never was anybody like him. He was old, fat and lazy, and his ways and his talk were comfortable and restful, and, to me, very interesting. For over thirty years he had not been to St. Johnsbury. He didn't go anywhere, didn't want to and was perfectly contented right at home. He had a horse as fat as a pig. He fed him well, kept him curried and shined to

perfection but he never used him. He had not had a harness on for ten years. George Ide had a big bass drum, and he beat it for my benefit - it made a tremendous noise. What we both enjoyed most was to sit in the sun in his wife's posey garden. He had a big red handkerchief which he slowly flourished occasionally to keep the flies off his bald head. There we sat all afternoon, and he told me stories of hunting and fishing. He had been a great hunter and fisherman, and his stories suited me better than any that ever came out of a book. He had a famous muzzle loading rifle that was made in a small shop nearby by his neighbor, Furby. The accuracy of this rifle and his skill with it were famous all over this part of the country. I am thankful for having known George Ide. His ways were different from others; he lived as he chose to, and he had everything in life that he wanted, which was very little. He never injured anyone, he was liked by all who knew him and many people knew him.

Another day brought us to Franconia. You might think that such slow progress would be disagreeable to an active boy. Not so at all, I enjoyed every minute. Grandfather's conversation was always entertaining, and there were new sights all the way. You don't know what real comfort is unless you have travelled in the big comfortable seat of a phaeton behind Susan. You didn't have to keep your eyes on the road. You could look around. You could even spot a four leafed clover beside the road, jump out and pick it, and jump back into the phaeton again without stopping Susan. That is something that you cannot do while travelling fifty miles an hour.

Uncle Roswell lived with his daughter and her husband, George Burt. There was a boy, Harry, about my age, and we were on the jump every minute. Every day there was enjoyed.

Grandfather, Uncle Roswell, and I went from Franconia to Lincoln to visit Grandfather's cousin, Mr. J. E. Henry. We were there two days. I wonder how they liked to have two old men and a boy drop into their busy household. They gave us a royal welcome, and, if they were annoyed, they certainly concealed it.

J. E. Henry was a great and wealthy lumberman, but his home life was simple and comfortable. He had the reputation of being a hard man in business. From what I have heard he was all of that, but I didn't see anything of that kind. He was hospitable, courteous and kind to a fourteen year old boy. He took an afternoon off from his busy life, and showed me all over his mill. Then he took me into his office, and invited me to sit down opposite him. He said he wanted to talk to me. He did talk. He told me that, when he was my age, he drove a four horse freight team through the Franconia Notch. He told me of his struggle to get started, and his disappointments that kept him poor until he was fifty years old. Then he went into the lumber business, and went to town in a big way. He told me how many thousand acres of spruce timber he owned, how many miles of railroad and how many camps in the woods. He told me how many men he employed, and how many thousand feet of lumber his mill sawed every day. It was 115,000 ft. He treated me as though I were a man and his equal.

His home was a happy one. His wife and family were all loyal, happy, and contented. They can't make me believe that Ev Henry

didn't have a side to him. He was a vigorous, handsome man. He had a well trimmed snow white beard. He wore fine black clothes and a starched shirt with a tremendous diamond in the bosom.

Mrs. Henry was Eliza Ide, George Ide's sister. She was a very remarkable woman, handsome, competent, always good natured and very friendly. It did a person good to see her and talk with her. Mr. Henry died before she did, but, with all her wealth, she continued to live in the old farm house in a simple, comfortable way. She was always a hard worker. I remember her saying, "Hard work won't hurt you - not if you're built for it." When she was 95 years old, she went to Europe. She said she liked it there all right, and would have stayed longer, only she didn't like their cooking. The last time I saw her, she said, "Will, bring your family and come over and have dinner with me. I have two hired girls, and, if they can't get your dinner, I can." She lived to be over 99 years old, within a few months of 100.

Just one more anecdote about the Henrys. When Ev and Lide, as he always called her, were young and "keeping company," she was a poor girl and he had nothing in this world except a pleasing personality. One evening he came to her house, and she was washing the supper dishes. He burst in, and he said, "Lide, get your hat and come on. We are going to get married tonight." Lide replied, "Why, Ev Henry, how you talk. What are you thinking of? You know very well that I can't go until I get the dishes done." "All right," said Ev, "I'll wait till you get the dishes done." The dishes were properly done in record time, and they were married that evening.

We arrived home safe and happy, thanks to Susan. Other vacations have cost much more, but I doubt if any were more thoroughly enjoyed.

HENRY CLAY IDE graduated from Dartmouth College, studied law and became a very successful lawyer. He was a hard fighting lawyer, and he, mostly, won his cases. He left his law business and his invalid wife and three growing girls in the charge of a competent housekeeper, and he took the position of Chief Justice of the Samoan Islands. At that time, the Islands were under the joint rule of Germany, England and the United States. He established a working government and courts of justice that were satisfactory to the three nations and to the natives. He was respected by all for his work. Next, he was a member of the Philippine Commission, of which William H. Taft was the head, to establish a government in those Islands. He was, for a while, Governor General of the Philippines. After that, he was United States Minister to Spain.

In this locality, many people admired his ability, but he had few close friends. However, out in the wide world, he had many close friends. Three who were his intimate and lifelong friends were William H. Taft, Robert Louis Stevenson and George Harvey.

He had a son, Harry, who died when he was very young, and three daughters, Adelaide, Annie and Marjorie.

HORACE K. IDE was a soldier, first, last and always. He was with the First Vermont Cavalry from 1861 to 1865, hard service all the time. The Cavalry never rested in that war. During the last year of the war, he was in Custer's Division of Sheridan's Army, probably

the fightingest outfit in the whole Army. In addition to the many scouts and raids that he took part in, he was in many of the major battles of the Army of the Potomac - Gettysburg, Yellow Tavern, Cold Harbor, Petersburg and Sheridan's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley. Then it was back to Southern Virginia to take part in the final battles that ended at Appomattox. He fought Mosby's men, and they were tough.

At Cold Harbor, the beloved Colonel of the Regiment, Addison Preston, was killed, and his body lay between the lines where the air was filled with bullets. Volunteers were called for to recover the body. Two men tried it and were both killed. Horace Ide walked out calmly and brought in the body of his Colonel. He was badly wounded twice and was starved to the point of death in the rebel prison of Belle Isle.

He was a man of medium size, perfect proportions and handsome; a very quiet and reserved man, liked and admired by all. His greatest happiness was meeting his old comrades of the Cavalry. He went to see them, they came to see him, and he attended the reunions. The feeling toward him from his comrades was more than admiration. It could be called affection. One of them told me that some of the officers were rough with the men. They stayed behind and drove the men into the fight, and beat them with the flat side of their sabres without reason or provocation. Said he, "Not so with Horace Ide. He was not behind. He was out front. He never raised his voice, but when the time came to advance into a hard task, he would turn in his saddle, look up and down the line, wave his sabre, and say, 'Come on, boys.' That was enough, we followed him."

After the war, he and my father formed the partnership of E.T. & H.K. Ide. They took over from Jacob, and ran the mill and general store. Horace's health and strength were gone. He was not able to be very active in business, but he did his best. He had terrible spasms of coughing and often nearly choked. They called it asthma, but I think that a .56 calibre bullet through his lungs had something to do with it.

His frail condition forced him to spend his winters in Florida. He had a comfortable house and an orange grove at Pomona, near Palatka, where he, his wife and an old cavalryman, named Hendricks, spent the Winters, raised beautiful oranges and were happy.

When I was ten years old, my father and mother went to visit them, and they took me with them. I remember it all better than I remember things that happened last year! We picked oranges Christmas Day and were glad to keep out of the hot sun by staying on the shady side of the tree. They sent me out every morning to pick some oranges for breakfast. I wish that I could get some now that would resemble the flavor of those. We went hunting for quail and ducks, and they let me shoot Uncle Horace's shot gun. It kicked me flat on my back. But that was no trouble at all, for I put five shots in the mark, and Uncle Horace, Mr. Hendricks and Father all said that was good shooting for any man. We went to Palatka by steamboat on the St. Johns River, and the boat stopped at every landing and took on more and more boxes of oranges until we thought we would sink.

He married Margaret Hidden from Danville. She was a vivacious

woman, a beautiful singer and loved society. She did not fit too well with some of the family, but, to me, she was tops. She made the best chicken pie that anyone ever made, and, sometimes, when they were home in the Summer, she would invite me down to their house on Sundays to have chicken pie. That was a day of happiness for me, to be with Uncle Horace and Aunt Maggie and eat chicken pie. I can think of no greater pleasure.

They had one son, Phillip Sheridan. He was a doctor in Wayland, Massachusetts.

ELMORE T. IDE, my father, grew up in the mill business. He married Cynthia Lois Adams when they were young; he was twenty, and she was 17.

The little old mill did not seem capable of supporting a family, so he went to Crawfordsville, Indiana, and worked at the millwright trade, intending to get established and then have his family join him. It did not work out well, and he was taken with a serious sickness. He got home somehow, I never knew how, and ever after seemed contented to stay there.

He went to work in earnest - operated the mill and general store and gradually built up the business. They lived in the same house with his father and mother, but in a separate apartment. They lived there many years, and five of their children were born there. I did not live there, as I was born after they moved to St. Johnsbury, but I have heard plenty about their life there, and it was a most happy family.

About 1880 they moved to St. Johnsbury, and they lived the rest of their lives at their Mt. Pleasant Street home. He operated the mill at Passumpsic and, also, a grocery and grain store on Eastern Avenue where Tegu's Theater now is. [Today, the entrance to the Star Theater occupies that location.]

Our home was a busy one and a happy one - six children and three grandparents! Father worked long hours, but seemed to always have time to do something to make home pleasant. Our table was always loaded with the best of food. Sunday evenings, we had pop corn and apples, and he would take me in his lap and sing, "Uncle Ned", "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny", "Swanee River", "A Bull Frog Dressed in a Soldier's Clothes" and "Pop Goes The Weasel".

With his limited means, I wonder how he ever did so much for his family. We had everything that we needed, and more. He always kept two or three horses, and we could always have a team to go where we wanted. Sunday afternoons, he hitched two horses, Pete and Peggy, to the surrey and we piled in and drove all over the country.

He took us for summer vacations. Once, we all went to the Breezy Hill Hotel in the White Mountains for two weeks. Uncle Henry and his three daughters went with us. It was a busy and happy two weeks. It was there that the waitress at breakfast announced, "Ham, beefsteak, lamb chops, and eggs to order," and my Cousin Marjorie, later Lady Leslie, after careful consideration, said she would have beefsteak and eggs to order. Then she rested her elbows on the table and discovered that one elbow was in her butter plate. Lady Leslie

never got over laughing at that one.

During the later years of his life, he could not endure the cold winters, so he went to Florida and came home each Spring, well and happy.

In business he was a hard worker. He was easy and pleasant in his ways, and he spoke quietly, but firmly. But when anyone tried to cheat him or put anything over on him, he was a fighter, and he fought hard and usually won. It was not good judgement to try to fool him. I don't remember of trying it but once. That was plenty. It couldn't be done.

He had the faculty of looking far ahead and planning for the future and his judgement was usually correct. He backed his judgement with his money, his credit and his hard work, and he made good. He established a reputation for absolute honesty and integrity, and I think that our Company still maintains it.

He loved horses, and was a horseman. He would not allow a whip in the carriage. He said he wouldn't own a lazy horse and that he could handle any high lified horse without any whip. He could, too. But when automobiles came along he was enthusiastic. He bought a noble car, a Thomas Flyer, and kept a man to drive for him. On Sundays, driving was my job. He insisted on having seven people in the car and heading for the back roads and the steepest hills. He loved to ride and he loved the country. He used to say, "Step on it. Let her go. Just keep between the fences. That's all I ask."

**WILLIAM ADAMS.** There has always been a William Adams, at least since 1630, when William Adams gave his son a silver coin the size of a dollar to hire him to go to school. This coin has been passed down from father to son ever since. Grandfather did not have a son, so he gave it to me on account of the name. My grandson, William Adams Ide, now has it. It is a good name, and has been very satisfactory to me for many years. I hope that it will be continued to future generations.

I know very little of Great Grandfather William Adams, and probably it is just as well. Grandfather never spoke of his father. He, evidently did not want to speak of him. All that I know of him is that he was a highly educated man, spoke eight languages, and had travelled extensively. His family lived in a poor little cabin, and he was seldom at home.

In the month of December, he came home one evening and found the fire out, the house cold, and his wife dead with a newborn baby beside her. Somehow, the baby lived, and that was Grandfather William Adams' start in life. The baby was given to an old ruffian named Keech, who called himself Doctor on account of his gathering herbs and pretending to cure anything and everything with them. Keech was an active man in the Church on Sundays, but on Mondays he got drunk and drove his wife and children outdoors, after beating them thoroughly. This was stamped on Grandfather's mind as the way religious people behaved, and all through his long, upright and honest life this idea persisted. He had no use for the church, ministers, or religion. He hated hypocrites, and wanted none of them.

He survived, somehow, and grew to be a big, powerful, four

square, honest man. He was rough in some of his ways, and most kind and gentle in other ways. I do not believe that he ever did a dishonest or dishonorable act in his life. He was a big-hearted, robust man. He ate hearty - pie three times a day. He bought his rum by the barrel, and it had to be the best, but I never knew of his taking too much.

He had many friends. Some were the highest type of men, and some were terribly disreputable, in appearance at least. But when he saw something good in a man, it made no difference to him whether that man wore broadcloth or rags. He was equally loyal to both.

The man that he admired the most was Thomas Bartlett, the most brilliant lawyer of his day. They were intimate friends, and Mr. Bartlett always called Grandfather "Nature's Nobleman." Mr. Bartlett gave Grandfather his cane, and it was always his greatest treasure. He gave it to me, and I have given it to William Adams Ide, Second. It is a very long cane, rosewood, with a gold head on which is engraved "T. Bartlett."

He was a fun loving man. Some of his fun was very harmless, and, from reports, some of his fun was rough and boisterous. He loved to play Euchre, and it was rather common for him and his cronies to play all night until breakfast time. He was a great story teller, and many of his stories are treasured by his Grandson, and repeated often. He was careless in his dress, but not in his manner. If any remarks were made about his clothes, he would look stern and say, "Pride has killed a great many people."

After leaving the farm, he moved to the brick house in Passumpsic. I do not remember the farm, but I remember the brick house all right enough. That is where we had the Thanksgiving dinners. Modern people could not have lasted more than half way through one of those dinners, but we went through it all. That is where Grandmother's "buttry" always welcomed us, and we always found a big store of pies, cakes, doughnuts, and gingerbread there.

I was a small boy when they lived there. Father went to Passumpsic to the mill often, and I went with him. Sometimes, I stayed the afternoon with Grandfather. I mind one day, he was getting up his Winter's wood pile, sawing with a buck saw. I took hold and helped him by carrying away the sticks as fast as he sawed them. When we got through, he said that I had been a great help to him, and, "Now," he said, "Let's go and see what we can find in the buttry." We found mince pie, rich and sweet with flaky crust, and we stuffed full. I was sick that night. Grandfather was severely reprimanded for that by my Mother, but he showed no sign of penitence. I like to believe, and I do believe, that he would have done the same thing again!

He entertained me in many ways, fishing in the river being the top notch one, and we always went down to the store and bought some figs. We were both very fond of them, and they set better on my stomach than the mince pie did.

During the last years of his life, he lived with us at St. Johnsbury, and that is when I got to really know him. I was ten-twelve years old. We were together much of the time, talking, looking at books and playing checkers. He could always beat me easily. He was an expert

in that line.

Father had a little mare, "Annie Rooney", who was very kind and gentle, and I was allowed to drive her anywhere. He used to go with me, and, usually, he wanted to go to see some of his old pals. Some of them seemed hardly wholesome, but he liked them, and what fun they had talking over old times. On the way home, he would sometimes say, "Maybe it will be better if you don't tell your Mother where we've been."

He was generous. He gave my Mother the home where we lived. He was always giving us children presents. He gave my brother George a shot gun. It cost thirteen dollars. He seemed to think that it established a precedent and created a custom, so he gave each one of us thirteen silver dollars. I will remember when my turn came, and, let me say that to me at that time, the thirteen silver dollars looked bigger than the whole U.S. Treasury would today. It was overpowering. He took me to the store and bought a jackknife for me, my first one. It was a good one - nothing poor or cheap for him. The next day, I went with the boys up over the hills to the Knob, and when I got home the knife was gone. I felt terribly, but it was all right after I talked it over with him. He did not scold me or blame me. He said we must go and hunt for it. He said it would be wicked wastefulness to buy another until we had made every effort to find it. "If we can't find it", he said, "then we will buy another." The next day he selected a sturdy beanpole for a cane, and we started out. He was old, heavy and lame. It was a long walk, some of the way steep hills and over ledges. He stopped to rest often. It took all the afternoon. We did not find the knife, so, then, he bought another. That one lasted longer.

When we were sick, it meant either castor oil, or ground rhubarb root mixed with water, administered with an enormous spoon. Therefore sickness was not put on, it was real. I remember one time I was out of condition, couldn't go to school, and felt terribly. Into the room, where Grandfather and I were together, came my Mother with the rhubarb. I put up the usual objections. He said to her, "Just go out and leave it with me. I can handle him all right." He did, too. He winked at me and swallowed the whole dose himself. He said, "Don't tell your Mother." I recovered rapidly, and Mother said there was nothing better than rhubarb to cure a sick boy.

His companionship was something for a boy to enjoy and remember vividly ever after.

His active days were spent on the farm, and he was also a drover. He bought sheep and cattle all over this part of the country and in Canada, and he drove them to Boston markets. He travelled on foot. The first day's journey was to the old brick tavern that still stands between Ryegate and Wells River, nearly twenty miles. It was quite some trip to Boston. He made his return trips by stagecoach. He also bought and sold hemlock bark for tanning, and he did well financially.

JOSEPH FELCH cleared the land and settled the farm in Waterford soon after the Revolution. This farm was known in later years as the Steve Hastings farm, and it is one of the best. He came alone on his first trip up here. He travelled on foot, and he travelled light - an axe, a blanket and a rifle. That was all. He

stayed alone that Summer. He cleared some land, raised a small crop, and built a log cabin. Then he went back for the Winter. The next Spring, he brought his family, and, in time, he had a fine farm and a good house.

He was a mighty hunter for moose and bear. He made long trips for moose, starting out before daylight on cold Winter mornings on snowshoes with his big hound. He would not return until after dark at night, packing his meat, if any, on his back. Sometimes the old dog became exhausted, and he would carry him home on his back.

I have some of Joseph Felch's papers. They are dated around 1790, and they are mostly receipts for goods bought and for the payment of loans. The prices are in shillings and pence.

From what little I know of Joseph Felch, we can be sure that he was a hardy pioneer, a successful farmer and a great hunter. Also, his papers show that he was an honest man and paid his debts in full. My opinion is that he was a very able man, and I wish that we knew more about him.

MARY FELCH, my grandmother, was the daughter of Joseph Felch. She lived in her Father's pioneer log house. She told me some about it, but not as much as I wish she had. She told me that for a while, until they could build a better house, they lived in the log cabin with a dirt floor and a blanket hung up for a door. They raised their food and the wool for their clothing. They spun and knitted and wove their clothes.

She said that the bears annoyed them terribly; they used to come around their blanket door at night. Her Father finally declared war on them, and he kept what they called a spring gun set for them every night. This was a gun placed in two forked stakes driven into the ground, and aimed at a bait on the ground which was attached by a cord to the gun's trigger. She said that every few nights the old gun would cut loose with a terrific roar in the small hours of the night, and that her Father would get up and light his lantern, which was a candle inside a tin can which had holes in it for the light to shine through, and go out and drag home the bear. They did not eat bear meat. They preferred moose.

This was only two generations before my time. This country has changed much during a comparatively short time.

She married William Adams. They got along somehow, but they were entirely unfitted to each other. She was quiet, serious minded and not given to fun or frivolity. Exactly the opposite to him. When he got to acting up in his fun loving boisterous way, she would heave a sigh and say, "Oh Will, why will you?" The only reply she got to that was a chuckle.

She was a cook beyond comparison. Her dinners would make us moderns realize that we do not know what good cooking is.

Her life was spent, mostly, in helping others. She was always available when neighbors were sick or in trouble, and she was a natural nurse.

When she lived with us, she was very old and frail. She broke her hip, and never walked again. She lived for some time after that and sat all day in her chair knitting. Her chair was a Boston rocker. I have

it now. Although she was practically blind, she knit stockings and stockings until she had a pillow case full, and she never dropped a stitch. They were red wool, and we wore them with comfort for many years after she was gone, and some of them were worn by her great grandson, Richard.

When I was born she gave me a silver dollar, brand new, coined that year, 1881. I still have it, so I have the first dollar I ever had, which is more than some people can say.

They had one child, Cynthia Lois.

CYNTHIA LOIS ADAMS was my Mother. She was married to Elmore T. Ide when she was seventeen. Theirs was a double wedding. They were married with their friends, Levi Parks and his wife, in Thayers Hotel in Littleton. They took a carriage drive through the White Mountains for a wedding trip. Then, they came home to a life of work.

Being the youngest in the family, I saw nothing of their early years, but I know they were busy and happy.

During my early years, we had a large family to provide for - six children and three grandparents. She always had good help in the kitchen, but, still, I do not see how she did it all, and yet with it all, company was always welcome. Her life was given to her family, and no Mother ever did more.

However, her life was not all hard work. She had many pleasures. She liked to ride around the country with Father with the horses and carriages, and when automobiles came along, she was as enthusiastic as he was. They made the best of it.

She enjoyed people, and she had many friends.

In later years, they travelled considerably, to Florida and Alabama in the Winter, and they made other trips.

Occasionally, but not often, she played the piano, and she was the only person that, to me, ever got real music from a piano. Her playing was beautiful. I remember particularly "Annie Laurie."

Nobody ever had a better mother.

W. A. Ide, 1951

## THE MILL

The miller likes his work and takes pride in it. He likes the sight and the feeling of good grain. He can tell at a glance the quality, and, if there is one kernel of damaged corn or one wild oat in a sample, he will detect it instantly. He likes the noise of the mill, and his ear is tuned to it, so that he instantly notices any change in its speed. He even likes the fine white dust from the grinding. It smells good and tastes good, and it gives his lungs something to work on.

In addition to grinding grain, he must be somewhat of a millwright, which is an all around mechanic. He must keep his machinery in perfect condition. He must build and repair spouts and bins, repair belts and do all the necessary work, both as a carpenter and a machinist. Breakdowns and failures of machinery occur, and, usually at the busiest times, which sometimes means working day and night to get the mill going again with the least possible delay.

His clothes are always covered and saturated with dust, but he doesn't mind that. The home folks mind it though, for the chairs and furniture get covered with it.

Grain is bought and sold on a constantly fluctuating market, so that purchases made at one time will show a handsome profit, while purchases made at another time will show a most depressing loss. When the words are passed between the buyer and seller by telephone, that is a trade, and no further contract is usually necessary, except a confirmation from the seller stating the grade of grain, amount bought, price and time of shipment. According to the rules of the grain trade, the acceptance of this confirmation by the buyer binds him, but legally he is not bound. What really binds him is his word, for, in the grain trade, a man's word must be good, or he will not be in business long. When the trade is made there is no evading or cancelling by either party. If the price goes up, you get the grain, and if it goes down, you take it.

The miller must keep informed to the best of his ability of the many things affecting the future price - the carry over of last year's crop, the condition of the growing crop, export requirements and general business trends. Sometimes the quality of grain is better from some sections of the country and sometimes from others. Also, the promptness in shipping and time of transportation is sometimes better from some points and sometimes from others. With all these conditions in mind, he must use his judgement. Of course, he will make mistakes and take his loss and say nothing about it. Other times he gets a market rise which offsets the loss, but he must be right more than 50%, or he will not stay in business. He will disappear, as so many have, and then one grain man will say to another, "Do you remember-----?" "Sure, I used to do a lot of business with him. What became of him?" "I don't know." That disappearing kind are perpetual optimists, the kind that always say, "It will all go higher yet, boys." That kind never endure. You have to know when to be careful and go slowly, as well as when to buy heavily.

It can readily be seen that there are times when the problems and disappointments will not be conducive to quiet nerves, sound sleep

and good digestion, if you take them home with you. Consequently, we leave those at the mill - until morning. I still remember my Father's advice on the first day I worked in the office. He said, "Do everything the best you can, no man can do better than that. Leave a notation on your desk of any unfinished business. Then go out, lock the door, go home and do not think of business until you return in the morning." I have kept this advice constantly in mind, and have followed it, which is one reason why I have lived long enough to have seven grandchildren.

The grain business is a most friendly and pleasant business. We have a personal acquaintance and friendship with most of the brokers and dealers that we buy from. Some of the friendships are of many years standing and are highly valued. Also, our relation with the customers that we sell to is equally pleasant, and many of these friendships are of long standing. Controversies with buyers or sellers are very rare, and they are usually settled in a way that will tend to continue the pleasant relationship.

One of my Father's strict rules was to never allow a place of business to be closed except on Sundays and the principal holidays. I remember the time when the great epidemic of influenza was raging. At that time, we were operating the Griswold McKinnon plant in addition to ours, employing three men there. They were all sick, and I had been keeping the place going as well as I could for two weeks. When they returned, I went back to my desk to find work enough there for several days. Word came that the Fairlee mill was closed, as the two men employed there were both sick. Father said in his quiet way, "You must go right down there and start the mill." I told him that it seemed unreasonable to expect me to do that. I mentioned what I had been doing the preceding two weeks, and called his attention to the accumulated work on my desk. I said, "There is no limit." He said, minus his quiet voice, very forcefully, "There is no limit. Never mind what you have been doing. The work on your desk can wait. We have been in business over one hundred years, we have never been closed and we won't begin today. Don't stop to eat your dinner. Take something in a paper bag and eat it when you can. Take my car, start immediately, step on it, and START THE MILL." I did so without further argument. Considering the roads of those days, I think I made record time between St. Johnsbury and Fairlee, and the mill was started up and grain was grinding within five minutes after I arrived. I decided on the way down that he was absolutely correct and was glad he drove me to it.

We have continued that rule ever since.

In the Grain and Flour Exchange in Boston, with its many offices, there is but one office that is open for business on Saturdays. That is the office of my good friend Robert C. Bacon, E. R. Bacon Grain Company of Chicago and Boston. I asked him why he kept open when every other office was closed. He said that it was on account of a conversation, at which he was present, between his Father and my Father. He said that my Father said that when he went into business he threw the key to the mill into the river, and thereafter, never closed.

I have tried to make clear why a miller likes his work. I hope that I have succeeded.

In 1813 when Timothy Ide started in the mill business in Passumpsic, and, for many years thereafter, it was a small business of grinding the grain raised by nearby farmers. There was no grain for sale by the mill except what was taken in toll, as no western grain was brought into this section. The farmers raised all their grain, and, in addition to the corn and oats that were ground for feed, there was considerable wheat grown that was ground into flour, so it was then a flour mill as well as a feed mill.

In those days the miller received no money for the grinding. He got paid by taking a specified amount of the grist. The pay for his services was called toll, and, as scales were not in use then, everything was measured by volume. This was, of course, an indefinite method, and, as the miller did the measuring, there was opportunity to take out more than his legal toll. This caused considerable suspicion against the "Honest Miller," and many stories were told that were not exactly complimentary to the miller. One story was about the miller who had three sons. He asked each one separately if he had tolled the grist, and each one answered, "Yes, sir." Then he said, "You all lie so that I can't believe a word you say, so I'll toll it myself to make sure." And then there was the simple minded boy who hung around the mill and got in the way, and the miller said to him, "Do you know anything at all?" "Yes," said the boy, "I know that millers always have fat hogs." "Well, well," said the miller, "So that is what you know. Now tell me what you don't know." Said the boy, "I don't know whose corn it was that fattened them."

For many years all the grinding was done with mill stones. In fact, stones were used up to the time that I began work. The first Summer vacation from school that I worked in the mill was the time that the mill was changed over from stones to roller mills and attrition mills; therefore, I never operated mill stones, but I was around the mill as a boy when the grinding was done that way, and I have been told some things about it by older millers.

The stones were buhr stone, imported from France. This stone is very hard and tough. The stones were circular, about four feet in diameter. The bed stone was stationary, it was firmly set in the floor and it had to be exactly level. The upper stone, the runner, was heavier than the bed stone, and it was hung in the exact center on a perpendicular shaft from the water wheel. This shaft extended up through the center of the bed stone. As the runner was supported only in the center, it had to be perfectly balanced. This was done by drilling holes in the circumference of the stone and running lead into the holes until the balance was perfect. The upper stone was adjustable, up and down by using a hand wheel, for coarse or fine grinding. Both stones were covered by a large circular covering made of wood which was called the curb. Above the curb was a large wooden hopper, round, big at the top and tapering down to a small outlet. The hopper was full of grain spouted to it from the large bins above, and this was fed by a shaking feeder down through a hole in the center of the upper stone. The ground meal was discharged from the outside of

the stones and elevated into a bin, from which it was bagged.

It took skill and experience to grind with stones. The speed was regulated by opening and closing the gate to the water wheel. This was done by a large hand wheel near the stones. The miller had to judge the speed and have it right. The amount of grain fed to the stones had to be right, considering both quality of the product and good capacity. The grain fed to the stones must never stop. If it did, the stones would rub together, with disastrous results.

Grinding with millstones was not the crude, slow process it might be thought. The flour and meal were of excellent quality, and the capacity of good sharp stones was good. But, of course, the modern grinders are more easily operated and their capacity is greater.

The greatest objection to grinding with stones was sharpening the stones, or "dressing" the stones, as it was called. This had to be done when the stones became worn and dull. The hopper and curb were removed, the upper stone was lifted with a hoist and it was turned over so that the grinding side was up. Then both stones had to be trued and sharpened. This was done with a hand "pick," like a hammer with a sharp chisel shaped head of very hard steel. First, the stone was made true, that is, no high spots. This was done by passing a straight edge coated with blue paint over the stone. The places that showed the blue paint were high spots, and they were picked until no paint showed. Then the process was repeated, again and again, until the stone was true. Then the countless grooves and furrows had to be picked to the proper depth and the correct cutting edges. This was a long, slow, tedious process requiring several days and, also, nights. Small particles of steel from the pick flew with great force, and they penetrated the miller's hands under the skin. They stayed there so that his hands were speckled with black specks for ever. This was the trade mark of the miller. Picking mill stone required great skill, as well as tremendous patience. After a miller had pounded away incessantly for several days and half their nights by the light of a kerosene lantern while sitting cross legged on the mill stone with his hands dripping blood from the flying particles of steel, he was in no mood for mirth or laughter. Better wait a day or two before you tried to joke with him. However, when the job was done, and the stones were again grinding, he took great pride in his work. There was much rivalry among millers as to who was the best hand to dress a stone.

I know very little of the details of the business during Jacob's time, and the early years while Elmore T. and Horace K. operated the old original mill. The mill was just a small one, grinding only local grain, and it was not very profitable. They also operated the general store, the same store that is still doing business in Passumpsic. [Now it is the Post Office.] They had a fair sized dairy farm. The barn was on the home place, and the land was in different places nearby. Jacob had a flock of sheep and several hives of bees, and, after the railroad came, he was station agent, or depot master as they called it then. With all their various interests, they made a living, and a happy one, perhaps because their wants were few.

The old mill burned about 1882, and the new one was built in the same place in 1883. This was a splendid mill, a mill that a man could be

proud of. It was large, well arranged, and high. Height is what you want in a grist mill, so that you can elevate the grain and the meal to the top and then spout it by gravity wherever you want it. I never worked regularly in this mill, but I worked there during several summer vacations from school. I also spent every minute that I could there at other times. I remember, perfectly, every water wheel, grinding mill, and mill stone. I remember every shaft and pulley and belt and elevator and storage bin. It was a terrible shock to me when it burned in 1904, and I have never fully recovered from it. In my mind, I can still go over all that mill from wheel pit to attic and remember everything just as it was.

The first summer that I worked there, 1900, the mill was remodeled to a modern mill. A big, powerful waterwheel, a La Felle Sampson, was installed to take the place of several small wheels. All the stones, but one, were taken out, and roller mills and an attrition mill were installed. That one run of stone left was used until the mill burned. New bolting reels, elevators, spouts and bins were installed. It was then a modern mill of good capacity, with plenty of power always available from the river.

Meanwhile, Father moved to St. Johnsbury in 1880, and left the operation of the mill to Frank Mason. The partnership of E.T. & H.K. Ide continued and operated a grain and grocery store on Eastern Avenue, where Tegu's Theater is now. They started a coal business, and the coal sheds and also a storehouse were located across the railroad tracks about opposite where Coombs' Service Station now is. [Now Harold Clough's Garage and Service Station occupies that spot.]

With a good mill in Passumpsic and an office in St. Johnsbury, the company was prepared to enlarge the business. They had been buying grain from the West for several years, in addition to the local custom grinding. In fact, they brought in the first carload of western corn that was ever bought in this section of the country, 500 Bu. - a carload now is 2,000 Bu. The old timers predicted ruin for anyone who was foolhardy enough to buy 500 Bu. of western corn.

In addition to the retail business in Passumpsic, they built up a wholesale business of considerable proportion, and they shipped carloads of all kinds of grain and feed to many points in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

Horace K's health and strength were gone with his army days, and he was not physically able to do hard work at all times. He did his level best, though, always, and with his splendid personality and great popularity, he was a big asset to the business.

At his death, the partnership of E.T. & H.K. Ide ended, and the business was incorporated in 1897. The corporation was named the same as the partnership, E.T. & H.K. Ide. Father wanted it just that way, and no more nor less. Recently it was necessary to add the word "incorporated," so now it is E.T. & H.K. Ide, Inc.

About this time, Father purchased the location where our mill is now. This was his private venture. The Company was not in the deal. This included all the territory on both sides of Bay St. between the underpass and Portland St. At that time it was a swamp, and in some places water was several feet deep. The whole place was filled, and,

of course, all the fill had to be hauled there by horses. This was a big undertaking, but it was finally completed, the underpass was constructed and the street was laid out.

The idea of building a place of business in such a location, was criticized and condemned by nearly everybody. They all said that people never would go down to that location through the narrow underpass to trade, and, if you picture it as it was then, you might agree. However, the building was built, and people have been coming there for many years. Some days, with the yard filled with cars and trucks and with the office filled with customers, you would think that all the World and his brother had found their way there. Father was correct again, as he usually was.

This building is the large frame elevator building as it is now. It is 50 ft. by 80 ft., five stories and a cupola. The main building is 50 ft. high, and the cupola 40 ft. above that. It was built to endure. All the timbers are extra large and of old growth clear spruce. There are no such timbers as these to be had today. We never have to limit the load in that building. It will sustain all that can be loaded into it. There was elevating machinery, but no grinding machinery, so it was just a storehouse with grain bins for bulk grain and with floor space for sacked feed.

The grinding was still done at Passumpsic, but this was not entirely satisfactory as it made it necessary to transfer much grain and feed between the two locations. They managed by shipping carloads from each place to the other, and by loading ground feed at Passumpsic and having the car stopped off at St. Johnsbury to complete the load. They did a good business those years.

The mill at Passumpsic burned in December, 1904, and the miller was without a mill again.

I was working in Alabama that Winter, and when I returned in May, Father had bought an old mill near Lyndon, situated in a forsaken region, and the plan was for me to live there and operate the mill. Before I had been one hour in that mill, I was sick of my job. It was hopeless for making a good mill. Nothing about it was good, as far as I was concerned. The grinding was done with seven runs of antiquated mill stones. A milling engineer had been employed to install elevating and bolting machinery. A crew of millwrights had been working, and had it about completed when I took over. They spent a lot of money, and they succeeded in making it crazier than ever. To make it all complete, Father had engaged an old timer for a miller. He corresponded exactly with the mill. He had a long beard, and he completed the crazy set up. This job had driven Father into a nervous breakdown, and I don't wonder. When I arrived home, he was leaving for treatment in a sanitarium, and I took over. This was one of his very few mistakes. When he ever did make a mistake, he made a real one....no half way measures about that.

However, fire has corrected many mistakes, and it did that one. The mill had been operating only a short time when a spark from a passing freight engine set fire to the roof, and the mill was entirely destroyed. I was away over the weekend when this happened. I didn't send out and hire any mourners when I heard of it.

The water power rights at Passumpsic were sold to the St. Johnsbury Electric Co. for \$15,000. This is a small part of what that water power is worth today, but it represented more then, and the money was needed to build a new mill.

The mill was built in 1905, located beside the elevator building just as it is now. It is 24 ft. by 32 ft., built of cement blocks, and is the same height as the other building, 50 ft. The soft ground in that location was not solid enough for a foundation for a building of that construction. It was necessary to drive piles 25 ft. to bed rock. The piles were capped with a thick cement wall to complete the foundation. This was an expensive job. The foundation cost about the same as the building did, but this building has never settled the fraction of an inch.

This mill was powered by electricity instead of water power. When it was built, it was equipped with two roller mills, two attrition mills, two corn crackers, five stands of elevators, and three bolting reels, for sifting and grading the meal.

The roller mills were big, heavy machines. They were what we call three pair high because of three pairs of rolls, one above the other. The rolls were nine inches in diameter and thirty inches long, solid steel. They were corrugated lengthwise on a slight angle. The corrugations had a sharp cutting edge on one side. The rolls revolved in opposite directions, toward each other. One roll of each pair revolved three times as fast as the other. The cutting edges on the fast roll pointed down, while the sharp edge on the slow roll pointed up. This cut the grain as it passed between the rolls. The upper pair was coarse, the middle pair medium and the lower fine.

These mills required considerable skill and experience to operate, and the operation was much more expensive than the attrition mills. They made excellent meal and did good service, but, after several years, they were taken out, and all the grinding is now done with attrition mills.

The attrition mill is the most efficient grinding mill ever invented, and it is doubtful if any other type will ever be made to equal it.

The grinding is done between two steel disks, 24 inches in diameter. The disks are faced with removable grinding plates, which are ribbed with many cutting edges. The disks are mounted on the ends of heavy shafts laid horizontally in the machine, so that the disks are vertical and run very close together. The grain is fed between the disks at the center, and the meal discharged around the edges. The disks revolve in opposite directions at high speed, 1800 R.P.M. Each disk has a separate motor, 15 H.P. each, and the motors are direct-connected on the shafts. The shafts run on heavy ball bearings which never get out of alignment so that the machine requires no adjusting, except for the adjustment for coarse or fine grinding. One of our mills has been in constant use for nearly forty years. These mills have large capacity, are economical to operate and require very little skill. Most anyone can be a miller now-a-days.

This mill was built right and for permanance. It is a good mill.

Meanwhile the coal sheds were built with a storage of about 800 tons.

These buildings made a good working plant, except that we needed more storage space.

We bought the Griswold MacKinnon plant, and that gave us good storage but required considerable trucking between the two plants. We used this a few years, and then we sold it to C.A. Smith - at a good profit. Meanwhile, we had bought an old building adjoining ours on Bay St., and we got along for a while with that, until we broke it down by heavy loading. It was a miserable, cheap old building, and I finally told the foreman to load it heavy and never mind if it did break down. He followed orders, down it came, and nobody was sorry. I never could stand it to store grain in poor buildings. I want a building to be strong enough to carry all that we can put into it, and any buildings that Ides owns today will do just that. The old building was worth more down than it was standing, for we used the lumber toward building the new storehouse!

The new storehouse was built in 1927, just as it is now. This is the large L shaped building, one end at our side track, and the other end joined to the elevator building. It is large and gives us all the room we need. There are two floors. The first floor is cement, on the ground. The second floor is supported by heavy steel beams. With this building, our plant was completed, and it is a well built and well arranged plant. We have storage for 35,000 Bu. of bulk grain, and 900 tons of sacked feed.

This building was completed and filled just in time for the November, 1927, flood. The water was six feet deep in that building, and, of course, the other buildings were flooded too. When the water receded, it left a heavy deposit of mud. The feed was piled twenty bags high, and the lower five bags, all through the building, were soaked, and they immediately began to heat and steam. This presented a tough job which had to be done fast to save the good feed. The good feed was moved to a dry place, the wet feed trucked to our farm in Waterford. Our men and trucks worked in shifts, day and night, until the damaged feed was moved and the building was cleaned. The spoiled grain was spread on the land for fertilizer the following Spring, about 2,000 bags. It made good, but rather expensive, fertilizer. This was a severe loss, as we had no insurance.

Meanwhile, for some years, the big grain companies had been crowding us more and more, with several of them notifying us that we could take our choice of selling out to them, on their terms, or being driven out of business. With their enormous advantage of large modern plants and unlimited capital, it looked as though, perhaps they could at that.

We decided that it was better not to attempt to compete with them for the wholesale, carload business, but rather to devote all our efforts to the retail trade. This required branch stores, which we established in Bradford, Fairlee, Passumpsic, St. Johnsbury, Danville, North Danville, and West Barnet.

This has worked out satisfactorily. The branch stores, with our retail trade at St. Johnsbury, take about all that our plant is capable of handling.

The store at St. Johnsbury Center was closed a few years ago, be-

cause it did not pay, and its customers are now taken care of from St. Johnsbury. Recently, we were obliged to give up the Bradford store because our lease on the building had expired and the owners wanted it for their use. The Bradford customers are now served from the Fairlee mill by truck, and this has worked well.

We own all our branch store buildings now, so we are not obliged to lease any.

None of the stores are equipped for grinding, except Fairlee. This is a complete plant for grinding and mixing, and, to me, it is the best small plant of its kind that I know of. We have our own side track, a well equipped mill and ample storage for both bulk grain and sacked feed. The building and equipping of this mill is one thing that I did right the first time. I couldn't improve it.

When I began work, and for many years after, we sold the grain and feed to the farmers, and they mixed it to suit themselves. Now nearly all the feed is mixed at the mill. A mixed, balanced ration is composed of several different feeds, thoroughly mixed, with molasses added. The formulas have to be carefully made to give the best results for milk production and for the health of the animal. Each brand of feed is named, and each bag is tagged, showing the list of ingredients and the chemical analysis with the percentage of protein, fat and fiber. Each brand is registered with the State for a fee of \$20.00 each, and State inspectors take samples and analyze them for ingredients and chemical analysis.

For mixing, we have two mixers. One has a capacity of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons each mixture; the other, 1 ton. After mixing, the feed is elevated and run over a powerful magnet to remove any metal, and then over a shaking screen to remove any foreign material. Then it goes through the molasses mixer, which mixes molasses through the feed thoroughly. Finally, it is bagged or spouted direct into trucks in bulk. The molasses mixer has a capacity of 200 lbs. per minute.

In our office, besides myself, are Richard Ide, Fred Johnson, Everett Daniels, Hugh Ramage, and Frank LaPoint, 2nd. These are all very competent men, they are completely loyal to the Company and they work for the interest of the Company always. They have all been with us for many years. All are friendly toward each other, never any friction or trouble, and every man is always ready to take the work of any one who is absent.

I have avoided a one man business. I want it so that if anyone is absent, another can take his place, and that is the way it is.

During the fifty years that I have been with the company, I have done each and every kind of work that is done, even to shovelling coal. The first three years I was in the office keeping books, then I was in the mill for more than ten years, and I called myself a competent miller. I have been in the office for many years.

I take very little credit for any success the company has had. I have, mostly, carried out Father's plans, followed his policies and used his methods. The competent men that have been with me have done more than I have, and they are entitled to more of the credit.

There is one thing that I do take pride in, however. For 45 years, I have been in charge of all building and repairs. I have planned and

had charge of the construction of all the buildings that we have built during that time. I have planned the machinery, bought it and superintended installing it. I have had charge of all the many repair jobs during that time. I am willing to let the buildings and equipment, as they are today, show if I have done my work well. If any word of praise is given to me, "He built well," will be sufficient.

What I have written is just memories set down in a rambling manner. I have referred to no records, nor talked with anyone. Every word is from my memory.

### W.A. Ide. 1951

## ASSOCIATES

**Men who spent their entire lives with the company,  
Did much for the success of the business  
And are no longer with us.**

GEORGE M. GRAY went into the business soon after he married my oldest sister, and was there the rest of his life, every minute of which was spent for the good of the Company. He was a hard worker, he did much to increase the business, and he was responsible for much of the success of the Company.

He was a skillful salesman, and he found time to make trips selling car loads all through this territory. Farmers from far and near wanted to trade with George. Business had to move when he was around. He worked hard, and expected those around him to do the same.

He was born and raised on a farm, and he was always, at heart, a farmer. He owned the large farm, where David Whitehill is now, for several years, and he operated that on a large scale, while also carrying on his work at the office.

His farm was the gathering place for many family parties and picnics, and good times and good food were assured.

He was Vice-President and Secretary of the Company for many years.

FRANCIS W. MASON started work with Father in the old original mill at Passumpsic when they were young men. He and Father were as unlike as two men could possibly be, and, at times, he was a great trial to Father. But, with it all, there was a strong and enduring friendship and complete understanding between them. For all of his life, Father took things from Frank that he would have taken from no other man, and he was not even ruffled by it. Frank could get away with most anything, but he was a wise man, going only to the limit and no further.

He was a large man with a big black moustache. He had a magnetic personality, and he was known and liked by everyone for miles around. He was a competent miller, and, in his younger days, a hard worker. When I knew him, he did the office work at the mill in Passumpsic. He was the head miller and the boss. Let nobody doubt that. He would regret it if he did.

To us boys, who worked under him, he was Mason, but to everyone else, he was Frank. He did not do much hard work himself in those later years, but those around him did - plenty. He was a wholesome mixture of business, hard work and fun. He was fairly boiling over with jokes and fun, but, with it all, the mill must operate to capacity. He was a diplomat. He understood human nature, and he knew exactly how to handle people, both old and young.

The old mill had a plank walk along the ridgepole of the roof. The purpose of this was fire protection. There were ladders in place leading up to it. If the roof caught fire, buckets of water could be quickly carried up. When my brother Henry was three years old, Mother looked out the window of the house and saw him running back and

forth along that narrow plank, with his little dress fluttering in the wind. A lesser person would have fainted or screamed for help, but not her. She ran to the mill and told Frank. "Don't worry," said Frank, "I'll have him safe and sound." He went up the ladder just fast enough, but not too fast, so as not to startle the child, and, when he was at the top, he called, "Come here to me, Henry, I have some candy for you." And when Henry came within reach, a big hand grabbed him and a strong arm held him tight until they were safe on the ground. Then Frank went up to the store and bought some candy for Henry.

He knew when to be tough and to bear on, he knew when to be kind and considerate and he knew when to look the other way, and, thereby, to know nothing about it.

He was probably the most popular man in the town of Barnet and could be elected to the Legislature any time he wanted to. He served one term and that was enough. He liked the mill better.

He was generous beyond reason, and he would give us young folks anything he had. Not only that, but he would give us anything that he thought we wanted.

He was a bachelor, and he lived in a fine house with his mother. She was a most delightful old lady, very interesting in her conversation. She wore her snow white hair in long curls down to her shoulders, the style that girls of that time favored.

The door step to Frank's house is a mill-stone. It is still there. This is not a buhr stone. It is granite, and it was made by my Father from a granite boulder. It is perfectly made, round and true in every way, and the grooves and furrows in the stone are there just as he cut them.

Net Lewis was the Mason's housekeeper, and a good one. Theirs was a happy household of three, everybody always pleasant. I boarded there one Summer, when I worked in the mill during vacation from school. They all tried to make it pleasant for me, and they succeeded in doing so. I was happy every minute.

We worked until six o'clock those days. One day at 5:30 I heard Mason coming like a full grown tornado, calling, "Will, Will, where are you?" When he found me he shouted, "Drop everything and come with me quick. We are quitting a half hour early today. Net's got a strawberry shortcake for supper." Net did have a shortcake, all right. I have eaten shortcake before that, and shortcake since, but never one that was in a class with that. I would be glad to quit work a half hour early any day, now, to once again draw up to Frank Mason's table and face one of Net's shortcakes.

One afternoon, he ordered Frank LaPoint and me up to the top floor of the mill to nail boards on a new meal bin that we were building. It was a terribly hot day, and up under that roof was the hottest place I was ever in. We worked well, though, and accomplished considerable. Frank LaPoint sawed the boards the proper length, and I nailed them on. At five o'clock, I said, "Let's go down to the river and go swimming." He said that it wouldn't do, that Mason would be mad, and that neither of us would care to face Mason when he was mad. I allowed that I didn't think Mason would ever know anything about it.

I said, "We will go out the back way, be back again before quitting time and leave work with the others. He agreed to this, and it worked perfectly. We had a glorious swim, and Mason never mentioned it. I supposed that he knew nothing about it, until years later when Robert Simonds told me that he was in Mason's office that day, when suddenly he had jumped up, gone to the window and said, "Rob, look down there at the swimming hole and see those two little white bugs jumping around. Those are the boys that I sent up in the attic to build a meal bin, and they think I don't know about it."

Ask any of the old timers around here if they knew Frank Mason. The answer will be, "I'll say I did. He was a good feller. How I miss him."

GEORGE HALL began work in the Passumpsic mill with Frank Mason when he was a boy. He was a competent and skillful miller, and he was a good hand to keep his mill in perfect condition. He was quiet and easy in his ways, and he never got excited. He got results, and he seemed to do it easily. He was a man of excellent character in every way. It wasn't any effort for him to be straight and square and faithful in his work. He was made that way. Also he was full of good wholesome fun at all times.

After the mill burned, he came to St. Johnsbury and was with us during the rest of his active life.

He could do a big day's work, he would do it every day and his good nature and pleasant way would keep the whole gang in a happy mood.

I worked with him many years, and we also had good times together outside of work. We used to go hunting together, and those times are well remembered. We were a well matched pair at hunting. We both loved to hunt, but neither of us could be called expert.

He was a most enjoyable companion at both work and play, and I value the memories of the days that we worked and played together.

CHARLES CRAIG began work in the Bradford mill when he was 17 years old, and he worked there all the time until he was 83. He worked up to four days of his death.

When we took over that mill in 1909, Charles, naturally, came with it.

He was neither Mr. Craig nor Charlie. He was Charles to everybody near and far.

No man ever loved his mill more than Charles did. But he was not a good all-round miller. He could grind grain all right. In fact, he could put more grain through a mill than any man I ever knew, but he would plug spouts and elevators. Then he was helpless until someone helped him get straightened out. He had little mechanical ability and absolutely no patience whatever, two things that a real miller must have. He had a sudden and most terrible temper when things did not go right, and, instead of clearing out a stopped up spout patiently, he was known to sometimes take a sledge hammer and knock the spout all to pieces.

But, with it all, he had a wonderful personality, and he was liked by everyone. I have worked in the mill with Charles many days and weeks. I have been a guest in his good home many times and we developed a friendship such as men working together seldom have. His temper used to get away with him; he would get terribly mad at me but get over it just as quickly. There was always a perfect understanding between us, and I believe that he thought as much of me as I did of him.

When Charles was nearly 70, he went to work one morning as usual. This happened to be Friday, the 13th of February. He had just started his mill, when his hand was caught in a big gear and all that was left of his right hand was the thumb and one joint of the first finger. He did not go to any hospital. Mother, as he always called his wife, took care of him at home. His doctor was his old friend and pal, Dr. Fletcher. Dr. Fletcher was an old man. He was one of the old fashioned doctors. A hard working, conscientious man of absolute honesty, with much skill and ability. He did not feel competent for the surgery, so he called a younger doctor, also from Bradford, to do that part, but Dr. Fletcher attended him otherwise. It was a perfect recovery.

During the time that he was unable to work, I went down and ran the mill for him. It was a busy time that Winter. The mill was going every minute from 7 A.M. until 6 P.M., and I worked hard. Some of the time, I stayed at his house, and he and "Mother" made it very pleasant for me. They were friendly and hospitable people. I did sleep in a terribly cold room though. It had been closed all Winter, and it was like a refrigerator. I expected to suffer, but I didn't. I never rested better in my life. After a day's work in that old mill a man could rest most anywhere.

After I had wrapped myself around one of Mrs. Craig's breakfasts, I could face a cold morning and a hard day's work without flinching. Pork chops, baked potatoes, graham rolls, and a big dish of corn flakes with sliced bananas, cream and sugar. That is what we had for breakfast.

Charles did not come to the mill during the five weeks that he was recuperating. It was late in the afternoon on a Saturday that he made his first appearance. It was a cold day. The mill had been going full blast all day, and the air was so thick with dust that you could hardly see across the room, when the big door opened and closed with a tremendous slam, and there stood Charles. He drew his lungs full of the dust, and said, "Oh, don't that taste good. Say, Will, I want my job back again. I want to run this mill. If you don't want me, I shall bring a chair here and sit here until I die." I didn't need to think it over to answer that. I answered instantly. "Charles, as long as you live, and I live, you will have a job when you want it." "All right," he said, "That's all I want to know. I'll be on hand Monday morning."

He worked many years after that. He learned to use his mutilated hand to good advantage. He received full pay, and he earned every cent of it. But he never worked again on the 13th of February. I didn't work on that day either. He always came to St. Johnsbury to spend the day with me, and we celebrated the occasion, high, wide and han-

dsome. It became a day to look forward to. Now it is a day to look back upon with pleasure. There are no regrets for missed opportunities. We had a good time.

When I went to Bradford, I usually had some calls to make on customers, and I arranged for Charles to go with me. He was a most entertaining companion. He loved the country, and he wanted to stop occasionally to admire the view. One day, he said, "Now, Will, slow down and be ready to stop when I tell you. There, stop right here. Now, I want you to look at the view. See that river winding between those great green meadows, the hills in the background, and, away in the distance, the white steeple of a church. I hate to think that I must go away and leave it all. Oh, well, we are here for only a little while anyway. That's all, Will, drive on."

FRANK O. LAPOINT's beginnings with the company are indefinite; we cannot say exactly when Frank began work. He began gradually. When he was a small boy, he liked to be around the Passumpsic mill, and Mason gave him errands to do. Gradually, he did more and more until he was a regular employee, and, surprisingly soon, he was a competent miller.

He worked in the Passumpsic mill for several years. When the mill burned, he came to St. Johnsbury, and he was the miller for several years and the Superintendent of our plant for many years. He was a most competent miller and he also was an excellent millwright. For many years, he did all of the millwright work, including the installing of new machinery.

It is also rather uncertain when Frank and I became acquainted. It was when we were small boys, before we were old enough to work. But we were old enough to play and have good times. We were boys together, and we have worked together all our lives.

Frank started in the mill before I did, so that he was a good miller when I first began. Most of what I know of the millers trade, I learned from him. I worked with him during Summer vacations in the Passumpsic mill, and, since he came to St. Johnsbury, we have worked together ever since.

In the old days at Passumpsic, we both worked and played together. We went hunting, fishing, had all sorts of good times and were together constantly. I could always be sure of a good time with Frank. What he couldn't think up, I could. He was a live wire both at work and play.

He was the quickest man I ever saw, and, for his size, the strongest. There were none that could keep up with him handling grain bags, and, in other work, he was equally capable.

He was easy to get along with, always fair and square in all his ways. He never started trouble with anyone, but, if anyone started trouble with him and physical violence seemed unavoidable, his motto was, "Strike first, strike hard, and talk it over afterward." On the few occasions that this was necessary, the one blow from LaPoint was sufficient. I never heard any one ask for a second one.

Our lifelong companionship and friendship is something that I like to remember.

Frank is retired from work now, and he and his wife are living

happily in an apartment in the house in Passumpsic with his son Frank O. LaPoint, 2nd. It is the same house in which he and his wife started housekeeping so many years ago.

Frank comes up to the mill occasionally, and he and I talk over old times of work and play. I notice that the young fellows in the office have their ears cocked, so as not to miss any of our talk. Maybe they regret that they could not have lived in those good old days.

Elmore Ide and Frank Mason both regarded Frank LaPoint as the most competent and capable miller, everything considered, that was ever with our Company. Both of these men were most excellent judges of men, so we will have the record stand that way. I will add that I agree with them.

In closing, I will say that, I believe no man ever enjoyed his work more than I have, and no man ever felt more enduring friendship for the men he has worked with.

W.A. Ide 1951