

# Florence Ward's Diary

by Lynne Belluscio

I received an e-mail from a woman in Wisconsin a couple of weeks ago. She had a transcript of a diary kept by Florence Chapman Ward of LeRoy, who was married to Harold Ward.

Florence was born in 1879 in Old Saybrook, Connecticut and attended Mt. Holyoke College. Harold and Florence were married in 1911. She was Harold's second wife. Harold was born in Brooklyn in 1867. He came to LeRoy in 1872 and attended the LeRoy Academic Institute. He attended Yankston College in the Dakota Territory and then returned to LeRoy and joined his father in the banking business.

When his father died in 1909, Harold became the president of National Bank of LeRoy. For ten years, 1917 until 1927, he was the Mayor of LeRoy. (Some of you might remember the photograph of the tank in front of the National Bank which I included in my article a couple of weeks ago. The man on the tank was Harold Ward - Mayor of LeRoy and President of the bank.) Florence and Harold lived on West Main Street, (in the house where the Boylan Law Office is located). The house was known as the 1812 House, although recent history would indicate that the house was not built as early as 1812.

Florence was a charter member of the LeRoy Historical Society, a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the History of Art Club, the LeRoy Women's Club and the Presbyterian Church. She died in March 1976, at the Methodist Home in Ossining at the age of 97. Her granddaughter transcribed the diaries. Florence's earliest diary is from 1941. It is a glimpse of everyday life before the war and mentions many of the people in LeRoy.

Feb 10 - 1941 (Florence is 62) Mon. Nice day. Art Program at Art Club. Guest day - invited Mrs. Jones. Hopelessly stuck trying to get out of driveway, had to walk. Good meeting ...

Feb 11 - Tues. Cool but good day. In aft. Had Nell McH, Jess S. Carolyn Boylan & Mrs W. O'Shea for School Com. Meeting. Served tea. Mrs. O had to leave before it. GOr Grover Lapp

to write Dick Thomas

Feb - 12 Wed. Warm and fair - thawing fast.

Expected to take H (Harold) to Roch but he didn't feel up to it. Ankles infected. Got appt for tomorrow at dentist to replace broken tooth. Felt mean all day - went to Dr's in aft. Wrote Ed Davis - ultimatum

Feb 13 - Tues. Bad storm - blowing hard & drifting - neither of us went out. Shortened 2 dresses & mended. Olive came in - had tea.

Feb 20 - Thurs Stormy still & very cold. Had Bertha, Zoe & Olive in for dessert & cards, mince pie & coffee. At nite Harold went to Hose Co Supper, I to church supper where a Chinese woman talked. Clarence got me & brot me home.

Feb 25 - Tues. Nice cool day. Busy all A.M. In aft went to D.A.R. in Library - took Olive as guest. Letter from Alan, Molly has scarlet fever. Village man dug out driveway.

Feb 28 - Fri. Very cold but clear. Cleaned up house well, made cookies & chowder. In aft went to Day of Prayer service in Meth Church, walked home with Bess Houston. In eve H & I went to library Hist Soc meeting ...

March 18 - Tues Big storm - bitterly cold - no school or Red Cross so worked at home, reversed shades & pressed new curtains. Room is lovely - painted floor today - green.

Mar 20 - Thurs Cold still but moderating & snow melting in sun. Mrs Lewis here all day. Settled our room, got out old oriental rug & cut rag rug in two & tied ends.

April 5 Sat. Poured all day. 12 for lunch: asparagus on toast, cheese sauce, tomato, bacon, hot rolls, relishes, date roll dessert,



Left to right - Harold; Florence; daughter Margaret; daughter Florence and the dog.

candy. Blanch high, Jess 2nd 4 apple salad dishes to each. Perky, Anna, Zoe, Jess, Bertha, Olive Helen Lapp, Grace P, Hilda, Blanche, Kay Stanton, self. Gladys ill.

May 3 Sat. Learn we're to go to Trumansburg tomorrow. Worried over tires. H. took car to garage. Says tires O.K. Asked Olive & Adrienne to go too.

May 4 Sun. Left at 8 o'clock. Lovely day. Drove over 50 mph, arrived 92 miles at 10:15. Liked Mr. Reed but not enough. Lunched Geneva, guest of our guest. Puncture on home trip. Home 4:15

May 10 Sat. - Nice day. Alan & Ruth. Molly recovering from measles. Lunch, then rode out to Roy's (McPherson) to see apple blossoms ...

Florence Ward kept her daily diary until she was 87 and living in the Methodist home. In June, she flew to Rochester and visited friends in LeRoy. On June 19, 1969 she wrote: "Sunday. To church, then Florence McP & I rode with Bill Nicholson to the Farm to visit with Janet (Frost) She was busy as Jill & Marnie (Frost - Janet's granddaughters) were with her over the weekend, their parents having gone to a wedding of college friends in Michigan. They are lovely children but can keep any adult quite busy. In the afternoon Florence called up from St. Louis, just guessing I might be there. I missed Bob (Frost) who was driving a bus. He had returned to the driving and David has taken over the farm."

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