

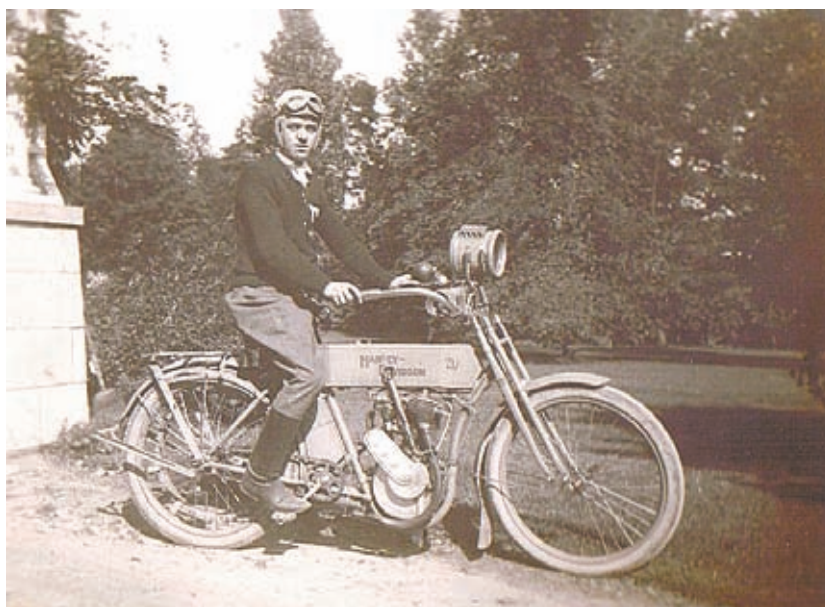
# Letters From Mother

by Lynne Belluscio

Over the past several years we have received bundles of letters that were written to Donald Woodward, the youngest son of Orator Woodward. He was born December 20, 1893 and attended school in LeRoy before going to the Fessenden Preparatory School in West Newton, Massachusetts. His mother, Cora wrote him twice a week with news from home and the comings and goings of his brothers and sisters. It also appears that the teenager was having the usual issues of growing up.

January 21, 1909 – “Time is flying and winter will soon be gone. It is like spring here.

Today – snow almost gone ... Frank is talking of going to Fall River on Saturday. One day he thinks he want to get married and the next he changes his mind but I expect he'll be captured yet" - (Don's brother, Frank was born in 1884, so in 1909 he would have been 25. *He eventually Persis Earle Davis.*) January 25, 1909 – “If you cannot do your level best in school I cannot think of giving you a good time this summer - - Helen says that she hates school but she never misses a trick I bet (Helen was Don's younger sister, who would have been 10 at this time) ... you must not ask Ernest or any one for money



**Cora Woodward makes reference to Don's repeated request for a motorcycle. Apparently Don won out because this was Don's Harley Davidson.**

(Ernest was Don's oldest brother and he was married to Edith and their son, Talmadge was born in 1905) ... Just paid a big bill for soda drinks, candy and gum for you – next semester you must pay as you go. ... Talmadge is such a darling – He sits at the table now and is as polite as a basket of chips ... Did you receive your tuxedo?" March 7th 1909 – “I purchased a clock in Buffalo for you and Helen as a wedding gift to Persis & Frank – I hope Frank will change and come out a fine man now – There is so much in life that is fair and beautiful and

enjoyable without carousing.”

April 22, 1909 “The wind mill blew down and I just bought another today. ... Edith telephoned that she was going to send Talmadge and Sarah to the Castile Sanitarium to night ... would not get scarlet fever. Maude Bishop, Mrs. Schuyler Wells and her maid and Mrs. ? have it and one of the girls died this morning – It is spreading and I keep Helen at home but the children have been here today ... LeRoy school is closed ...” April 23, 1909 - I am to congratulate you for the honor of President of your class. I am very much pleased. And

I also notice you have been making good time in some of the running races. From your picture you seem to be in wonderfully good condition ...” - May 22, 1909 - “Donald I am mighty pleased you are making good – Take a pledge never to touch drink (intoxicating). It goes mighty bad with our family. Paul has been home a few days. It is only a few years when he was a dear sweet boy – but he read bad books, smoked, drank ... Be nice to your sisters ...”

(Paul was the third Woodward son. He was born in 1886. Not much is known about Paul, but it certainly appears that his mother wasn't too happy about his path in life. He died in 1910 at the age of 23. Cora's stationary after Paul's death was heavily banded in black, symbolic of mourning.) June 2, 1909 ... “I am trying a new Victor Victrola. It is lovely. ... Doris Donnan and Charlotte have scarlet fever. It is spreading all over town and if Helen escapes it will be miraculous ...”



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