

Yesterday's News



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Jim Vance sitting in front of his blacksmith shop in Center Lovell. The shop was located at 1112 Main Street.

Photo donated by Anne Stone

Jim Vance, Blacksmith

James Knox Polk Vance

James K.P. Vance died quite suddenly Saturday, at the summer home of Judge A.P. Stone on Rattlesnake Island. He had lived in town about 30 years, working until recent years at his trade of blacksmith at the Center. He has since been a guide and caretaker at the Lake. The funeral was from the Christian church, Monday afternoon, in charge of Delta lodge of Masons. Deceased was about 75 years of age.

Were you to have read this notice in the newspaper in September, 1910 you might have been saddened by the loss of a neighbor, tradesman or relative. Jim Vance was the blacksmith in Center Lovell in the late 1880s. His life might easily have been forgotten by many except for one detail. During the summer of 1889 he met a group of recent graduates of the Cambridge Latin School. Before attending Harvard University in the fall, they had decided to camp on the shores of Kezar Lake for the primary purpose of fishing. The young men were Arthur P. Stone, William H. Allison, Frederick W. Dallinger, Lewis D. Hill and William E. Stark. They must have made an impression upon Jim because he visited their camp on Kimball's Point several times that summer. The following summer the boys returned to Kezar, camping on Rattlesnake Island, and developed a deep friendship with Jim who greatly influenced their lives.

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From the President

If you haven't done so recently, please visit our web site: www.lovellhistoricalsociety.org. Bonnie Fox and I just redesigned the site and we're very excited about it.

Watch the slide show of 42 historic images on the home page or read newsletters from the previous four years. Look at what is available for researchers on the "Online Documents" link. There are early maps of Lovell and indexed transcriptions of Lovell's vital records of births, deaths and marriages. The town's updated cemetery records, compiled by Irene St. Germain, can also be found there.

Don't forget to visit the "Search Our Collection" link where you can find 7,000 images and over 11,000 records. Click on "Random Images" to view an ever changing selection of photos from our collection. You might want to see if you or your relatives names are in the People search engine of "Click and Search". Also, using the "Keyword Search", you can browse for your favorite topics.

Enjoy the site and let us know what you think. We update the collections link monthly and your additions and corrections are very much appreciated. Please understand, with the amount of information provided on this site there are bound to be errors. We need your assistance in identifying them and look forward to hearing from you. If you would like to add family photos to this site, we would be more than glad to receive them or scan them and promptly return them to you. We would also greatly appreciate any genealogical information you have to share.

If you don't have access to a computer, come and visit the research center on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Saturday. We'll gladly show you the site and help you navigate it.

The benefits of having this material available on the internet are readily apparent. For example, last month we received a large collection of material on Rudy Vallee after a person searched the internet and found our site. Within the last month we have hosted two school field trips which have made extensive use of the material provided on the internet. The 3rd graders of the New Suncook school created a mural about the history of Lovell based upon photos they found on our site, interviews with local people such as Al Stearns and Phyllis Chandler and a bus tour of Lovell. The 6th graders at Molly Ockett school are also working on the history of Lovell and hope to create a web page incorporating what they have learned, focusing on a few specific topics. They have conducted their field trip to Lovell and the Historical Society and are planning interviews and searching for appropriate images on our site.

Over the last few years, and most recently last month, we have also hosted groups from local historical societies interested in how we have used the PastPerfect software to catalog our collection and present it on the internet. Several of these visitors have also become members of our Society.

All of this is made possible by a dedicated group of people and your support. It takes a lot of time to enter so much data into a computer program. It also takes a lot of financial support to present the information online. We have been so fortunate to have your support and hope it will continue!

The support we receive takes many forms and one in particular needs mentioning. Thanks to the town road crew, we were plowed and shoveled over the winter and were the recent beneficiaries of a thorough Spring cleanup. We greatly appreciate their efforts!

This summer we are planning our annual dinner at the end of June and will again host an antique show on July 18th. As we did last year, we will combine the show with an auction of exciting contemporary items. We can never have too many volunteers or too many auction items. If you have something you would like to donate or would like to volunteer at this event, please let me know. Best wishes!

Catherine Stone

THE LOVELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MISSION

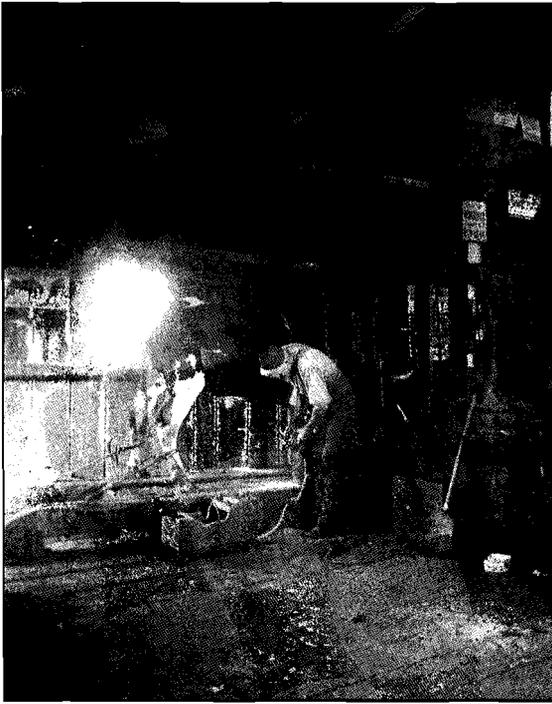
The Lovell Historical Society exists to collect and preserve historical and genealogical records, property, and artifacts, and to encourage and support interest in and study of the history of the Town of Lovell and its environs. Its collections are available for consultation by its members and other interested parties. In fulfillment of its educational mission, the Society presents public programs on relevant topics, publishes documents and the results of research, maintains an archive, a library and a museum, provides information and guidance to interested researchers, and collaborates with libraries, schools, and other organizations to carry out historical projects.

OFFICERS 2009-2010

Catherine Stone, President	Directors:
Beverly Bassett, Vice President	Renee Dutton
Mary Heroux, Secretary	Ruth Mitchell
Bonnie Fox, Acting Treasurer	Lou Olmsted

LOCATION AND HOURS

The Society, located on Route 5 in the 1839 Kimball-Stanford House, is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9am to 4pm, Saturdays from 9am to 12pm and by appointment. All are welcome to visit our museum and research collections. Business meetings are open to all members and are held on the third Tuesday of every month at 2pm. Our phone number is (207) 925-3234 or (207) 925-2291. Our collection can be viewed at our web site—www.lovellhistoricalsociety.org—and our e-mail address is lovellhist@fairpoint.net.



Jim Vance shoeing an ox in Center Lovell.
Photo donated by Joan Brown

After Jim's death, Arthur Stone wrote an essay titled "Jim" noting that "No account of our life at Kezar would be complete that did not take notice of our boyhood friend and companion, Jim Vance". Will Allison wrote a poem titled "The Woodsman" with these lines: "O Guide and friend/Thy lesson taught to youthful immaturity/Regains to aid us through life's tangle and obscurity". But it is Will Stark's essay "An Interesting Character I Have Known", that best portrays the influence the Center Lovell blacksmith had on the five young campers. His writing follows.

A little more than sixty years ago, a group of city high school boys who had had a little experience in camping out, not too far from home, determined to get well away from the weakening effects of civilization. From a study of maps we fixed on a spot in southwestern Maine just opposite Mt. Washington. A nine-mile lake promised fishing and swimming. To the West, across the lake, there appeared to be nothing but mountains. Indeed, at that time, most of that area was real wilderness.

Camping on one or another of the islands in the lake filled our summer vacations and a good part of our minds during the rest of the year. In those first years we had the lake practically to ourselves, but we did have one occasional visitor who became a friend, model, instructor—a kind of scout master before such a creature had been invented. This person was the village blacksmith whose shop was four miles down the lake. I have a couple of photographs here, one showing him at the door of his shop, the other

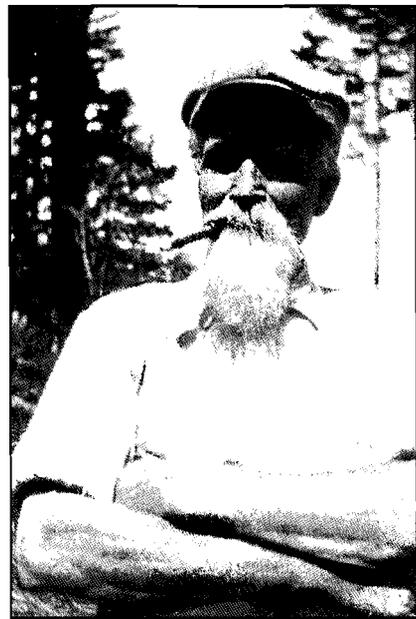
recalling an almost forgotten craft—shoeing an ox. He was an excellent blacksmith when he worked at his forge, but his love of the out-of-doors and for fishing frequently exasperated the farmers who needed service.

Our friend is dated by his name: James Knox Polk Vance. I suppose he was about fifty when I first knew him in 1890. An anchor tattooed on his arm was a souvenir of his service in the Navy during the Civil War.

Jim taught us some tricks about fishing in which he was an expert but, as a teacher, his chief classroom was the woods and mountains. We had done some mountain climbing where there were trails of a sort but the unbroken wilderness was still awe-inspiring, so when Jim offered to take us "over back of the mountain" for a week's trout fishing, that was adventure. To get ready he had each of us make a "kennebecker". Get a meal-bag at the store, sew up the mouth of it, cut a slit almost across the middle, stick your head thru the slit, and you have a good-sized pack on back and chest. If those two bags are loaded evenly, one can carry a heavy load with comfort and have both hands free.

We learned as we tramped. Jim had a peculiar short-stepped walk which covered ground at a rate which made it necessary for my short legs to break into a run occasionally. He could maintain that pace indefinitely. However, after we had been almost ready two or three times to give up but had stuck to it rather than be left behind, he would suddenly call a halt—but not long enough to let the muscles get stiff. At his "W-e-l-l!" we struggled upright, settled the packs and went on climbing. I won't stop to describe the exhilaration that the top of a mountain gives. Most of you know it. But I may mention the blueberries and mountain cranberries which became

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an important element in our diet for the next few days.

The following hours were a test on a different set of muscles. Down hill, through thick brush, over fallen timber, following the leader who, in some uncanny way, knew just where he was going. When we had been wondering for some time whether there was any bottom to this downhill stretch, through thick woods, suddenly we found ourselves on an old logging road, almost obliterated but once a track for loggers' sleds. Then, in a few minutes, Jim turned off into a sort of clearing and dumped his pack in front of a lean-to, bark roofed, log shelter—his hide-away when horse-shoeing palled. The brook which rushed beside the camp became very familiar during the next few days. Jim showed us the best pools from which we could land forty trout as fast as we could drop a hook.

We got some object lessons in handling an axe, although I, personally, never acquired much skill. Jim could make an axe do whatever he expected of it. He taught us some tricks about making and keeping a fire in wet weather and showed us how to bake bread in a frying pan. On another expedition to Mt. Royce, we watched him peel spruces to roof a camp. He took us to what he called "The Dividing Waters", where a brook coming down the steep slope of Mt. Royce strikes the exact summit of the pass between that peak and its neighbor. Which way will the stream flow? It would take very little to turn it either north or south. Actually it divides, part of the water heading north for the Androscoggin, the rest flowing south toward the Saco.

Jim proved to us on that first expedition that one can keep going with very little food. In fact, I go so hungry that ever since, when I take any responsibility

for the commissary, I am likely to take more than is necessary—just in case. Two things we had in plenty, trout and cranberry sauce—a fine combination, but bread or potatoes or beans would have been a welcome addition.

Jim Vance was known to comparatively few people and some of his neighbors who disapproved of his irregular program of blacksmithing did not admire him, but the group that I have referred to as "we" will remember him as long as we live. He had certain traits which we admired and took over. He was always to us a valued friend and his influence upon us was always wholesome. Although he must have had contact with rough characters in the navy, in the woods with lumber crews, and in his shop, I never heard him use language coarse or off-color. He had a kind of parental attitude toward us. When he died, we set up a stone to his memory.

The stone in Jim's memory is located at the Center Lovell Cemetery. It is larger than most situated there and, for one not familiar with the circumstances, seems out of the ordinary. But for five men, Jim was far from ordinary and well-deserved this tribute. The stone reads:

James Knox Polk Vance
March 4, 1845—September 3, 1910
A sailor who served his country in the Civil War.
A blacksmith in this town for many years.
A woodsman skilled in his craft.
A lover of nature, who in the woods and waters
Of this pleasant place found much to make life
beautiful for himself and enjoyable for his friends

•••



William Allison, Arthur Stone and Will Stark camping on Rattlesnake Island in 1890.

Photo donated by Bob Oxford

Digging for Indian Artifacts

By Tom McLaughlin



I want to understand everything, but with a tight travel budget and less than a century of life-expectancy to study, I can only try to understand everything about the area in which I live—everything within, say, a twenty-mile radius of Lovell. I want to know how the mountains formed, how old they are, what's inside them, and what grows on them. I want to know why the rivers and streams flow as they do, how the lakes and ponds and swamps formed. I want to know what's under the ground I walk on and how it got there. I want to know why it rains and snows and freezes and thaws. I want to know about the glaciers that scraped it all, and I want to know about the people who have lived here since the last time they melted.

The best guess is—that happened when two-mile-thick glaciers receded from southern Oxford County around 11,000 years ago. The earliest evidence of human activity in the form of stone tools is from approximately 9,000 years ago on the shores of Long Lake in Bridgton as well as Bear Pond in Waterford, Kezar Pond and Lovewell Pond and other locations around the Fryeburg area. As far as I know, the earliest evidence of human activity so far discovered in Lovell proper is about 4,000 years old along the shore of Kezar Lake.

One of the most intriguing bits of evidence—though of unknown antiquity—was an Indian skeleton uncovered in the late 1990s near Pleasant Point on Kezar Lake. Norris Bennett was digging a ditch with his backhoe to sink some water lines when he found a human skeleton. It's rare for bones to survive long

in Maine's acidic soils. My daughter, Annie, was working there at the time and told me they reportedly belonged to an adolescent Indian female and were taken away by a woman from the University of Maine Orono. I've heard nothing about them since.

Last summer I mentioned them to Dr. Arthur Spiess, Senior Archaeologist for the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. He'd never heard of them, though he'd been to Lovell on at least two other occasions in the performance of his work. That surprised me, but he indicated that when archaeologists uncover bones likely to be Native American, they usually avoid going further. He didn't say much more about it, but I got the impression that it was because of potential objections from modern Indian groups who would object to people digging up their ancestors.

It's questionable at best whose ancestors they might belong to if the bones should date from 4,000-9,000 years ago. Little is known for sure about who those people would have been, and the claim that they would be ancestors of today's Abenaki is weak. We simply don't know much about where those early Lovell residents (or visitors) came from or where they may have gone.

A lot of archaeological research in this area is confidential. I've had to promise to keep it that way in order to learn several things and that constrains what I can write here, so I'll only refer to them obliquely. That goes against my nature because only serious-minded people with respect for history would be



reading this publication anyway, but a promise is a promise.

The *Maine Archaeological Society Bulletin* for Fall, 1998 contained an article by William F. Rombola entitled: "The Ceramic Period in the Upper Saco River Drainage: An Analysis of the Helen Leadbetter Collection". Helen was the most knowledgeable of the many amateur archaeologists in our local area over the years and had the most extensive collection of artifacts collected in Fryeburg, Lovell, Bridgton, Hiram, Conway and Ossipee. She was often accompanied by her friend, Eve Barbour and both have since passed on. Though Rombola's article focused mostly on Helen's ceramic stuff, he included some analysis of her lithic (stone) artifacts as well and those intrigue me most.

Rombola says the oldest artifacts in the Leadbetter collection date from the "Early Archaic Period" which would mean they are among the oldest artifacts found anywhere in Maine so far—7,000-9,000 years old. Most are made of hornfels, which Rombola says "is prevalent in New Hampshire and southern Maine" and usually gray/black. Other artifacts are made of material from Mount Jasper in Berlin, NH, from the Moosehead Lake region, the Munsungan Lake region, the Champlain valley, from upstate New York and several other sources. There was one piece made of the most intriguing material found only in one location: Ramah Bay in northern Labrador. It's a material favored by the "Maritime Archaic" or "Red Paint People" who lived in northeastern North America, including northern Labrador, more than 7,000 years ago. Though I don't know where Helen Leadbetter found her one piece, I was very lucky to find a small arrowhead made of Ramah chert last June as I walked along a recently tilled area adjacent to the Kezar Lake outlet dam in Fryeburg Harbor.

Leadbetter's collection also contained artifacts the age of which Rombola doesn't guess at, including what he calls "groundstone" tools like "half-channeled gouges" he says "are thought to have been used for some specialized form of woodworking." By groundstone, I assume he means polished. There have been several polished slate artifacts similar to what he

describes found in Red Paint sites all over the northeast and as well as sites in northwestern Europe dating from the same periods. "One," Rombola says, "was recovered from the north end of Kezar Lake in Lovell, Maine."

In July of last summer, fellow teacher Terri McDermith and I arranged for several of our students to assist Dr. Spiess and his team of archaeologists as they excavated a portion of the area behind the Fryeburg Harbor Church. That's just across the Old Course of the Saco River from the Kezar Lake outlet dam. Many other locals have extensive collections of artifacts gathered from there during the 20th century. We found chips and scrapers of hornfels and Munsungan chert as well as pottery shards and fire pits surrounded by fire-cracked rock. Dr. Spiess said they all probably date from around 1200 AD. Time and funds ran out just as we were digging the most promising pits, but that whole area would seem to have been used continually from about 4,000 years ago until the Pequawkets (who were Abenaki) cleared out nearly three centuries ago.

In the Fall, 1986 *Maine Archaeological Society Bulletin*, Dr. Spiess published a study titled: "The Kimball Collection From Bear Pond Inlet (Site 22.8)". Locals know that's in nearby Waterford. The artifacts were gathered prior to World War II by Harold Kimball as he walked by the area where Mill Brook enters the pond on his way to and from work every day. Spiess said, "... the collection ... apparently includes Early Archaic material (circa 9000 B.P.). B.P. means "Before Present". He goes on to state that "Abrasive stones are present in a variety of forms." By "abrasive" I assume he means what Rombola



referred to as “groundstone” and other archaeologists call polished slate. Most old stone wood-working tools are made of polished slate. The grainy images of them in the article look like the polished slate tools I’ve seen depicted in Red Paint sites. Spiess states later that, “[this] heavy woodworking equipment, we suspect, belongs with the Early Archaic, Middle Archaic, and Laurentian Late Archaic”. That would mean they were between 3,000 and 9,000 years old.

Also in the *Maine Archaeological Society Bulletin* for Fall, 1998 was an article by Craig Norman called, “Controlled Surface Collection And Artifact Analysis Of The Stevens Brook Site, Presumpscot Watershed”. Craig Norman, also, was alerted by reports of local amateurs collecting artifacts, this time on the shore of Long Lake where Stevens Brook enters and forms a sand bar. Here also, both stone and ceramics were recovered. The stone was made mostly from the same materials as those in the Leadbetter and Kimball collections. As with the Fryeburg Harbor site, there was much evidence in the form of what archaeologists call “lithic debitage” (lots of stone chips) that stone tools were created on the site over several millennia beginning during the Middle

Archaic Period, 7,200 years ago.

So it seems the earliest evidence of human activity within a 20-mile radius of Lovell is in the form of stone tools 9,000 years old when the whole area would have been treeless tundra. They must have hunted animals, some of whom would now be extinct. The tools they made were of materials from as far away as Northern Labrador. Some sites were continually occupied, at least seasonally, for many millennia. We don’t know who the earliest people were, but the latest occupants before European settlement were Pequawkets—the local branch of Abenaki Indians. People around here used pottery for at least three millennia. They planted and harvested corn during the last millennia. The Pequawkets were known to be aggressive, raiding English settlements in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

There are still many gaps to fill in my quest to understand everything that ever happened around here, and I’ve only got about 25 years left to do it. If you are interested in this archeological excavation continuing, please contact me at my email address: tommclaughlin@fairpoint.net.

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Gifts and Donations

We are very grateful for the following gifts received since the last newsletter:

Sandra Bell—collection of house photos; **Taylor Bowie**—large collection of Rudy Vallee photographs and memorabilia; **Phyllis Chandler**—permission to scan photos; **Linda Drew**—permission to scan photos, sign from the Silkworth’s Pot Luck tearoom, Ring genealogy; **Renee Dutton**—permission to scan photos, *Maine Register 1901-02*, *The Whipple House in Ipswich, Mass.* by Thomas Franklin Waters, *The Hotel Cluny of a New England Village* by Sylvester Baxter & *An Old Ipswich House* by W.H. Downes; **Dennis Emery, Wayne Harmon & Barry Gilman**—photo of the Fryeburg & Lovell Stage in Lovell Village; **Betsy Evans**—permission to scan photos, material on the Dallinger family; **Scott & Dawn Ferguson**—charcoal rubbing of Colin Hurd’s name from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial with photos; **Dick Fox** (in memory of Cora Cook & Josiah Fox)—war ration books; **David Garcelon**—permission to scan photos, transcripts of Charles Augustus Garcelon’s Civil War letters; **Barry Gilman**—permission to scan a photo; **Gary & Mary Heroux**—framed charcoal sketch of Rev. Arthur Ford by Don Dickerman; **Robert & Gladys Littlefield Family**—permission to scan photos; **Earl McAllister**—genealogy of the Will H. and Eva A. McAllister family, Ring genealogy; **Beryl Merrill**—letter folding machine; **Fred & Ruth Mitchell**—kitchen tools; **Del Purslow**—permission to scan photos; **Nancy Pratt** (in memory of Georgia Keniston Ingalls)—permission to scan photos; **Sam Ring**—Annie Heald School graduation program for the class of 1965; **Edwin & Joanne Sargent**—information on Farrington’s Hotel, photos, permission to scan photos, McAllister family Bible, Trufant family Bible, Farrington family Bible, Farrington’s Hotel employee ledger 1923-1929; **Paulette Serbin** (in memory of Granville Watson)—photo of the Fryeburg & Lovell Stage in Fryeburg; **Margery Sholes**—permission to scan photos; **Hal & Carol Taylor**—permission to scan photos.

Cash donations have been gratefully received from:

Michael Bannon; Charles & Claudia Bengé; Bill & Deborah Berman; Edward & Audrey Clout; Bernard & Eugenia Cohen; Glenice Denison; Andy & Kathy Feld (in memory of David Evans); **Robert Fenn & Anne Wolf; Peter & Cary Fleming; Collier Hands; Bob & Paula Lawrence** (in memory of David Evans); **Paul & Cynthia Littlefield; Dave & Peg Mason; Robert Mead & Susan Hamlin; Clement & Ellen Nelson** (in memory of Wilda Taylor); **Linda Nista; Jane Orans & Quisisana; Anne Pilsbury; Nancy Pratt; Robin Prescott; Mark Rogers & Sally Campbell; Frederic Sater; Peter & Kathryn Schoch; Mary Semple; Paulette Serbin; Margery Sholes; Hal & Carol Taylor; Beatrice Webster.**

If you have made a donation or given an artifact or other form of historical material and it has not been listed here or previously noted, please contact us immediately. We appreciate the thoughtful generosity of our members and friends, and most certainly want to acknowledge and list gifts properly.

In Memoriam

Jane (Broscious) Carreiro, 82, of North Lovell passed away on January 20, 2010. She grew up in Snyderstown, PA and, upon moving to Lovell, became a member of the women's auxiliary of the VFW. She was predeceased by her son Robert. She is survived by her husband Adolph, two sons—Joel and Peter, two daughters—Ann and Ellen, and six grandchildren.

Robert L. Fenn, 87, of Weston, MA passed away on March 26, 2010. He served in the Navy during WWII, spent his career as an executive of Lowell Shoe Company and did extensive charitable work. Bob spent his summers at Kezar Lake and was a Life Member of this Society. He was predeceased by his first wife Caryl and his daughter Robin. He is survived by his second wife Anne Wolf, his son Peter, five grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, 2 step-children and 3 step-grandchildren.

David Robinson Hastings II, 85, of Fryeburg passed away on February 14, 2010. He was born and raised in Fryeburg, served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and, after graduating from Harvard Law School, joined his family's law practice in Fryeburg. David was a contributor to this Society. He was predeceased by his wife Doris and step-son John Graustein. He is survived by his son David III, daughter Ann, step-son Bob Graustein, eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The Lovell News

November, 1934 - April 22, 1938



Willard C. Warren, Editor
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Carlton Brown Jr., Society Editor

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