

ELEANOR ALICE TOOTHAKER

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GC: The first thing I wanted to know was just what you were starting to tell me. Which is, which was your family cottage and how did it come to be.?

EAT: The family cottage was built by an uncle who had gone west and became successful in finding gold. So he came back and built in Dixmont, a store which was quite a thing after awhile. It had a lot of history. Well anyway, he had some money left over, so he came to Northport and had a cottage built. He died, the cottage was built in the 1870's. And he died in the early 1880's, and left his cottage to four sisters. And one of the sisters was my grandmother and another sister happened to be my cousin's grandmother. She and I were very closely connected all our life, until she passed on.

GC: Do you remember that uncle's name that built the cottage?

EAT: Yes, Martin Stevens. And it was called the Steven's cottage for years and years and years. And up over the door, up on the point on the roof there, they always had a piece of board there, which was nothing very fancy, which said, "Steven's Cottage". I guess that's all gone now. Well, anyway, our two grandmothers came to Northport every year, not for the whole summer because they had business, farm business of their own. They would often let us come, my cousin and I, and we had a great time, and we brought all our friends there, too, you know.

GC: About what year was this have been when you started coming here?

EAT: Well, we started coming probably in 1917 or 1918 or something like that because we usually came in July, after the haying was over. Because my father's birthday was the 27th of July. I had all these cards that I wrote back from Northport, because I wasn't home for his birthday. And I said to my mother, once, on one of them, "find the pencil in the desk and give it to him for his birthday".

GC: Where was home?

EAT: Home was in Dixmont.

GC: How did you get to Bayside from Dixmont?

EAT: Well, we came, I came in our time, we didn't have horses and carriages to come in. My mother used to come, no, it would be her mother and they would come on horse and wagon, and they would stop at Swan Lake and have their lunch. They would start early in the morning by 5:00 o'clock and that wagon will be filled with everything. And I was telling the girls on the way down, that we always laughed about it that. Aunt Laura, she

was my aunt, (since) room (in the wagon) would all be taken up so she would wear all the extra things she needed to have, two or three petticoats and stuff like that. They used to hitch their horse in back of the cottage. I think that's interesting because when we kids started to go down ,out in back of the cottage, you could see there was an area where the horses were hitched back there. And then, finally, when we came, coming to Northport, it was, I would like to say, the Glory Days of Northport, because I know that you don't agree with that. Nevertheless, there were two boats that came down There was the Belfast and the Camden, that's right.

GC: And the Bangor?

EAT: I don't remember the Bangor. No, it was Camden as I remember it and Belfast. Well, anyway, at night they would go up, go to Boston, that was easy enough to go down to the wharf at night to see all the performance that went on then. But they came back again in the morning which is anywhere between five and six. But, we never missed a trick, we were always there. And you never quite got dressed, so you put on your clothes going down across the park. Well, we put on various garments going down the park. We got down there and the boat came in and sometimes it would be foggy and there would be fog horns around about, and then sometimes it would be hard to even find the wharf. And when they finally did find the wharf, they would throw off these big thick ropes that had a loop on them and I mentioned too, that there was a man just like a station agent that had trains, I don't know what he was called. Anyway, he was in charge of everything ant they had helpers and they would throw these ropes, looped ropes out, and they would go around the piles there. One time, if they didn't quite do it quite right, you could feel the motion of the wharf when they the boat came to a halt. And the wharf was much, much bigger than it is now. A big place.

GC: What were some of the other things that you and the kids liked to do at Bayside besides greeting boats?

EAT: Well, we always swimming of course, we always went swimming we didn't have fancy suits, either. We wore our serge bloomers, and we went swimming down, follow the road nearest to the wharf. And then, of course, later on, we were very much more interested in men, boys. And of course, the boys, always jumped off the wharf. Maybe they still do, I don't know. I'm not interested in boys now. And that was very exciting. You know they would go down a long way and come up. Then another thing I remember, we used to come, the whole family, on the 4th of July and my cousin had an older sister who got married, this is some years later, and so we would go down, we always fished there, we got flat fish there, what do you call them?

GC: Flounders.

EAT: But, we never kept them, we always threw them back. And anyway, one time, one 4th of July I remember so distinctly, all it was exciting he had these firecrackers, and he tied them on a rock. And they would light the firecrackers and they drop them off the wharf and they would go off on the water. They were heavy firecrackers. Oh it was

exciting, that's all I can say about it. (Laughter). Lets see what else did we do? Oh, we always went up to the store.

GC: What store would that have been?

EAT: Well, I don't know. Hastings, well all right. That had more groceries, but we needed a loaf of bread or that sort of thing. Or milk or things like that, But then there was another store down by the park down by the hotel, across from the hotel and that had ice cream.

GC: So the kids liked to go there.

EAT: Well, sure, and cards that you could get a card to send back to your father

GC: Do you remember the people that worked in the store. Who owned the store?

EAT: No, No, Orrin Dickey was the man that had charge of all the real estate, and he was some relation to Natalie.

GC: Did they have dances when you were a teenager?

EAT: Oh, let me think, No we didn't dance there. We danced at other places. Later on, we down to the Blue Goose to dance. That was much later.

GC: How far would you walk out of Bayside?

EAT: You mean with the tide out?

GC: No, I mean on the road.

EAT: Well, another thing we did too, always, we went over south shore and dug clams and brought them back and washed them in some water. And brought them back and ate them at the cottage.

GC: Tell me how cooking and refrigeration worked in the cottage. What kind of a stove do you remember?

EAT:I can't remember refrigeration. We had an icebox. But I do remember the flush-- the toilet. You had a big room, the living room, then a dining room, but not as large as this one. And then there would be a little cozy kitchen but nobody ever paid any attention to those two rooms. They were always either on the porch or in this big room. Well then, out from the kitchen was a kind of a place that a wood box, and I suppose that's how they heated, I don't remember. It was always summer, so I don't know, And they had this thing, it was a flush, and of course back home, we didn't have flushes. Which was a real exciting thing too, and it had a big box up on top with a chain that hung down. And when you flushed you pulled the chain, which was another great thing.

GC: What about bathing? How was that accomplished?

EAT: The what?

GC: Taking a bath.

EAT: We went swimming. That was our bath.

GC: OK Do you remember anything how laundry was done?

EAT: No, because we didn't stay long, we took our laundry home. As far as walking goes, we walked all around and we walked up to Cobe estate that was, you looked at it with your eyes wide open.

GC: I think people still like to do that as well. Can you tell us exactly where this cottage is?

EAT: The cottage is on Park Row, three cottages down, am I right, Amos?

Amos Kimball: I think so

EAT: Well, it was an ideal spot. I mean you could just sit on the porch and see everything that was going on, because, everyone, we weren't the only ones that met the boat. Everybody in town met the boat. All the campground met the boats. And the little community hall was still there and I think, I recall, the movies sometime in my existence. I never went to the movies, there was too many other things to do.

GC: Was there a post office?

EAT: A what?

GC: A post office?

EAT: I don't know. We weren't interested in post offices. If we had a card to mail, we went to the little store there.

GC: How about sports? Did you play tennis, or horseshoes,

EAT: We didn't, no, we were just so excited about the water.

GC: Fishing?

EAT: Fishing and swimming. And we got to know some of the kids, you know in the area, but we always had each other and we always had this cottage which would be open, you know, you came over here.

GC: Who was staying here at the time?

EAT: Well, I don't know, Warren would. Warren, your uncle, Amos. But your mother never was here. Not when I was ever here. Another interesting thing, can I tell them about what happened?

Amos Kimball: You must remember Janet Collett.

GC: Yes, Janet Collett, who is now Janet Pattee

EAT: Well she wouldn't know me, because I know she wouldn't But I remember her because she was kind of special.

Amos Kimball: Well you were bout the same age.

EAT: Well, yeah, probably. One time we came down here. This is when I am growing up, and I knew better. We came down, four of us. There were those twosome things. And so we came down and Warren was with us, It was his doin's, we didn't have any intentions.

Well anyway, at that time there was a cupola, tower, on top of the cottage, this cottage right here I am talking about. And I remember, we all four went up there and it probably wasn't safe for one to go but anyway we all four went up, and I can see that the harbor it was the most thrilling thing, to look out that thing. You could sit and look all over, the trees like now.

And we came down and chatted chatter and what deviltry we could do and Warren said Frances, that famous mother was coming down that next day. And let's pile up all the furniture up and she'll think someone has been in and broken in so we tugged and we hauled all this furniture and put it out there in the kitchen, Everything. One of them was a heavy table.

Amos Kimball: A mahogany Hepplewhite table.

EAT: and Warren was interested in antiques as Amos is and knew as much about them as Amos does. And so, anyway, our parting shot was--we put the table on top of the chairs, you know, they had cushions on them. Well we tee-heed and said. "isn't it going to be funny when they come back the next day and see all that stuff. We couldn't wait until somebody went and told us about it, you know. Well the next day, they never came. In fact, they never came until Spring. And poor Warren, wrung his hands and pulled his hair and said " Ooh, that table will go down through the roof." It was so funny. So that's my story.

Amos Kimball: And the table is presently in Newburgh

GC: That was a good one. Is there anything else that comes to mind? Of the people you used to spend time with?

EAT: We just spent time with ourselves.

Amos Kimball: But this was only one of several places we went to. They moved around like the royal families in Europe, going from one castle to another.

EAT: One other time we came, this cousin and I and took with us two cousins on the Toothaker side. And they lived over in Etna. And we spent, I don't how long we were here, maybe four days or so. But anyway, we went through the same performance. Going to the wharf and all that stuff. And also, we sat in the park. And we got severe sunburns. And the two cousins we brought with us weren't used to the place they were homesick, in other words. Anyway, we, the only thing people told us to put on our sunburns, was cream, So just our backs, you couldn't wear anything on you know, and we would take these pieces of gauze and dip them in the cream. My gosh, we just about died. They cried, oh it was awful.

Then, I was lucky enough, I consider this luck, I didn't know it at the time, I didn't appreciate it at the time, but we had a friend, my mother and I, who lived with us for years and she, of course we came down, too, and my mother and this friend and I came often.

She, let's see now, what was I going to say on that score? Oh yes, she said, we ought to go on the Boston boat, to Boston. So, we made the arrangements, which was my mothers favorite home, but she took us to Bangor, and we got aboard the boat in Bangor. It was one of the last years that the Boston boat went down, and we went down, came into Boston harbor, which was a very thrilling thing, because I had never been in Boston harbor by boat since. And we came back.

GC: I am glad you had a chance....

EAT: I am, too, you know it was my friend that said we should do it, and we did.

Amos Kimball: That was the closing of an era. My grandmother and grandfather would take trips to Boston and were always invited to sit at the captain's table. That would be Captain Raleigh from Hampden and as gesture of courtesy, he would send the steward to dine at his table.

GC: Those were the Glory days. I am going to thank you very much, Mrs. Toothaker for sharing those stories with us.