

The Friends' Quarterly

A Newsletter from the Enfield Shaker Museum

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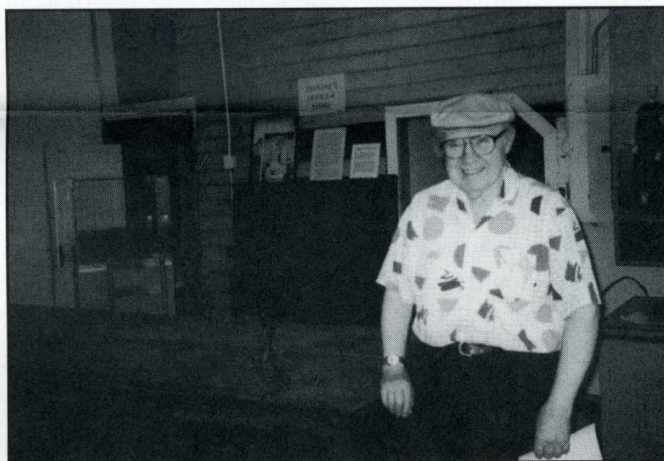
Museum Celebrates Unprecedented Donations of Artifacts in 2001

This summer the Enfield Shaker Museum has received numerous important donations of furniture, textiles and paper items, many of which originally came from this community. In their choice of the Enfield Shaker Museum as a repository for these artifacts, our friends have given the Museum a strong endorsement, rewarding our hard work to improve our facilities, security and professionalism. These new objects will expand our knowledge of the Enfield Shakers and provide new study opportunities for scholars.

The most eye catching new piece of furniture, an Enfield Shaker tailoring counter, is the donation of Robert Leavitt, well known historian from Lebanon, New Hampshire. In recent years Mr. Leavitt has been generously donating many significant Enfield Shaker artifacts and in August, the Museum received the remaining artifacts in his collection.

This large tailoring counter was purchased by his grandfather, George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt, from Enfield Shaker Elder Abraham Perkins. A large two piece counter, nine feet seven inches long, three feet wide and three feet tall, the piece is finished on all four sides with the top made of two tongue and grooved 18 inch boards. Attached to the top of the counter is a metal riveting press which Mr. Leavitt speculates was used to rivet the early fasteners on the Brother's clothes.

The items in Mr. Leavitt's collection come with an excellent provenance for they have been in Mr. Leavitt's



Robert Leavitt standing next to his donation of the Shaker tailoring counter. Behind him to the left is the Trustee's Desk from the Church Family Office which Mr. Leavitt also recently donated to the Museum.



1922 photo of Robert Leavitt being held by his favorite Shaker, Sister Margaret Appleton.

Elder Abraham Perkins. Perkins, when younger, had been the Brothers' tailor and recalled to George Leavitt how he had followed the old world custom of sitting cross legged

family since their purchase from the Shakers. Mr. Leavitt grew up in Lebanon, NH and spent his summers in Enfield with his grand parents and great grandmother at their lakeside home on Shaker Boulevard. His grandfather, George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt, had bought four lots near the end of Shaker Boulevard from Col. Churchill and here he built "Camp Driftwood," where his extended family spent their summers. "Point Comfort," a spot enjoyed by the Enfield Shakers on Lake Mascoma, was then at the end of the road and a path led from there to the town of Enfield.

George Ulysses Lincoln Leavitt, born in 1865, was the Deputy Sheriff in Lebanon for fifty years, and then was promoted to High Sheriff of Grafton County. He retired from this job at 70 years of age. In addition to his police work, George Leavitt ran an upholstery business in the old Odd Fellows Block, a trade that he passed on to his grandson, Robert.

While summering on the lake, the Leavitt family came to know the Enfield Shakers. George frequently visited with Elder Abraham Perkins and, like many of his neighbors at the time, when the Shakers no longer needed furniture or even buildings, he had an opportunity to buy a piece of Shaker furniture. In this manner George Leavitt was able to purchase a tailoring counter from

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