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Katherine Owen Correspondence

Katherine Chase Owen 1910-

Neal Creamer

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Place of birth: 

Date of birth: Dec. 10, 1910

Home address: Can Pass Hill- Eddy Rd- North Edgecomb, Me. 04560

Publications: "Dear Sue" and "Dear Captain Fees"

Biographical information

Graduated from Portsmouth High School, Portsmouth, N.H. Graduated from the Bick Memorial Hospital as an R.N.

Married to Albert S. Owen. Now a household manager, grand daughter of Sue and Captain Fees.
Biographical information

Attended elementary school in Edgecomb and Wiscasset, Me.
Graduated from the Portsmouth High School, Portsmouth, N. H. in the class of 1929. In 1932 graduated from a special course in pediatrics and obstetrics at Boston City Hospital. Receiving my R. N. from Maine in 1933 after graduating from the Bath Memorial Hospital Nursing School.

From 1933 to 1938 I worked at the Bath Memorial Hospital, Bath, Maine, as night supervisor and later as record librarian.

In June 1938 I married Albert S. Owen, M.D. and remained a housewife and office assistant until his death in 1951.

During the period of 1959-1963-4 I was a representative of the Educators Publishing Co. of Cambridge, Mass. covering the States of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, while also attending meetings in New York, Maryland and New Jersey.

One of the joys of my life was the purchase of a 23 foot motor home in 1969. It was a thrill driving across the continent, to Key West and around parts of New Brunswick, and many happy hours were spent living in it during the winter months. (I believe I was one, if not the first, of the first women to own and operate a motor home in Maine.)

In the fall of 1973 I started compiling Dear Sue and in 1975 I started compiling Dear Cap't Fess which will be published this fall or early Nov.

I have been a volunteer worker in many organizations; Sunday School Teacher, Church Clerk, sang in the Church choir, Chairman of the Red Cross Council, State of Me., Lincoln County Production chairman Red Cross, Lincoln County chairman Red Cross blood bank, Lincoln County chairman Heart Fund, and Republican Club of Edgecomb. Have been a active member of Old Bristol Garden Club of Damariscotta.

In the fall of 1975 I was one of a group to sponsor a Vietnamese, and a very nice young Vietnamese lived with me from Dec. 4th to May 18th.

I am a member of the Edgecomb Congregation Church and Parish, Col. Dummer Sewall Chapter D.A. R., Garrison Hill Chapter O.E.S. Life member of the Bath Memorial Hospital Nurses Association.
Cow Pass Hill- Eddy Road
North Edgecomb, Maine
March 12, 1977

Dear Miss Thayer

It was nice chatting with you yesterday and last night I realized that I had not given you a very detail picture of my life. So you may add the following to your biographical statement.

I was born in Wiscasset, Maine the daughter of Annie Colby and George A. Chase and the grand-daughter of Capt. Fessenden and Susan Lee Chase. Attended the Edgecomb and Wiscasset elementary schools graduating from the Portsmouth High School in Portsmouth N.H. in the class of 1929. Following this I entered the Nurses Training School at the then Bath City Hospital, Bath, Me. and became a licensed R. N. in the State of Maine. Later becoming night supervisor of the hospital and then Record Librarian. In 1938 I married Dr. Albert S. Owen and assisted him in his office. After his death a few years later I became a representative of the Educators Publishing Service of Cambridge, Mass.

After my Father's death in 1969 I purchased a twenty-three foot motor home and traveled with in the continent until the spring of 1973 when I settled down in my new home and started compiling the letters of my grand-parents and curiosity led me into doing the genealogies.

Thus was born "Dear Sue" and "Dear Cap't Fess". My next project is editing my mother and father's diaries.

Remember you are not a housekeeper or housewife any more but a home or house manager. I think that is just great.

Thank you again and I hope our paths will cross again in the near future.

Sincerely yours

Katherine C. Owen
Owen book 'Dear Sue' chronicles tales of blue water woman

BY ARTHUR YOUNG

NORTH EDGECOMB — The adventures of blue water men during the heyday of Maine sailing have been the subject of many a fireside tale, but the adventures of blue water women—that's another story.

And that story is being told in a new book just out by Katherine Owen of this town.

Dear Sue is the story of Susan Lee Chase, who between the years 1870 and 1881 spent much of her time aboard her husband's three-masted schooners General Butler and Pleides. Susan Chase was the author's grandmother.

The 240-page, paperback volume is made up mostly of letters written to Susan Chase by her sisters Ada Lowell, Louise Chase and Augusta Parks. A few of the letters are from her husband Capt. Fessenden Chase and her mother Eliza of Winnegance in Phippsburg.

Mrs. Owen said the letters chronicle the quiet life in the Maine coastal area and life on a blue water ship, much of which was free from high adventure. Some of the letters, however, are tales of Ada Lowell's traumatic adventures aboard her own husband's ship whose home port was Bath.

An example of Susan's placid life aboard ship is told in her words:

"Sitting in little boat on deck. Have been reading most of the a.m. Sewed buttons on nightshirts, the firsts stitch I have taken with a needle since we have been to sea, I believe. Showers this morning, p.m. pleasant. I commenced cutting out calico wrapper—brown with polka spot."

And a letter from home to Susan spoke about "nice growing weather" at her father's Winnegance farm in June of 1874.

"The grass looks better than it did last year. We have nine goselins and 13 turkeys, 14 chickens and more chickens and turkeys to hatch. We have the milk of four cows and churn twice a week and get between 25 and 26 pounds of butter a week," Susan's mother wrote.

Mrs. Owen does not expect Dear Sue to be a best seller. She said she compiled the book as "a family project." Some 300 copies were printed. Mrs. Owen said she will put a few in local libraries and the rest will be for sale to members of the family and others. Some may go to local book outlets.

In addition to the letters, the book contains about 20 family pictures, genealogies of the Morse, Parks, Lee and Chase families, and other "notes of interest."

Mrs. Owen is now working on a second book of letters—this time those received by Sue's husband Fessenden. The book, tentatively titled Dear Fess, is also a family project and is set to be finished sometime next fall.

Some of the local names mentioned in the collection are: Purington, Adams, Rogers, Welsh, Sanford, Owen, Lowell, Cox, Langdon, Morse, Parks and Drake, all familiar to residents of the Bath area.

Sue was born in Arrowsic in 1844, the daughter of a mill owner. She attended Bath schools and worked as a clerk at Purington's dry goods store on Front Street in Bath before her marriage to Capt. Chase of Edgecomb in 1869. She had four children and died in a Portland nursing home in 1930.

When she died Mrs. Owen's father bought her house. The letters were discovered in the attic. Others came from Mrs. Owen's uncle.

The author is a former nursing trainee at the Bath City Hospital. She is widow of the late Dr. Albert S. Owen who for some years had a practice on Washington Street in Bath. She lives in a new home on the Eddy Road in North Edgecomb where she has two boarders, one a Vietnam refugee. For a number of years she was a local representative for Educators Publishing Service of Cambridge Mass.

P.S. I was the sponsor of the Vietnam boy and the other boy shared a room with him.
Mrs. Katherine Chase Owen of the Eddy Road in North Edgecomb, recently announced the completion of her book of letters entitled "Dear Sue". The book which encompasses a period of about ten years (1870-1880) is of letters written to her grandmother, Mrs. Susan L. Chase, wife of Capt. Fessenden Chase.

Mrs. Owen has spent much of the past five years "deciphering" the letters which were hand written and in some instances badly faded or — to save both space and paper, were written both horizontally and diagonally and reversed to write between the previous lines.

In addition to these letters which give much insight into the period are the family genealogies of Parks, Morse, Lee and Chase including births as late as Sept. 1975.

The book, printed by Jim and Donna Waugh, with some of the copy prepared by Mrs. Owen, and some by Mrs. Anne Bostwick, involved over 250,000 words of composition and proof reading — much of which is set in original spelling and grammar.

With a 1976 copyright "Dear Sue" will make an exceptional bicentennial keepsake and reference work. It is a limited edition of 240 pages, 8 1/2 X 11 with a variety of illustrations of family members, coats of arms and pictures of the Bath and Damariscotta areas. Priced at $25.00, the book will be on sale soon at various book stores in the area.