

January 2016

Elinor Stevens Walker Correspondence

Elinor Stevens Walker 1909-

Maine State Library

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalmaine.com/maine_writers_correspondence

Recommended Citation

Walker, Elinor Stevens 1909- and Maine State Library, "Elinor Stevens Walker Correspondence" (2016). *Maine Writers Correspondence*. 649.

http://digitalmaine.com/maine_writers_correspondence/649

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Maine State Library Special Collections at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Writers Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact statedocs@maine.gov.

WALKER, Mrs. Elinor Stevens
b. Cornville, Maine October 24, 1909

See what the

Maine Newspapers

have to say About

**Our Great
Northern
Wilderness**

One of the finest books

written about the

Maine Wilderness

by

Elinor Stevens Walker

Portland Sunday Telegram & The Pittsfield Advertiser

—AND—
Sunday Press Herald

SERVING THE SEBASTICOOK AREA FOR 84 YEARS

Fascination For Katahdin Prompts Teacher To Write

CLINTON — A fascination for the Katahdin region of Maine has motivated a former school teacher here to write a book about it.

Due off the presses this month, the volume is the work of Mrs. Vernon Walker, who made her first visit to the area just six years ago.

The book — 17 chapters long, with 40 of its 100 pages devoted to photographs — contains a history of lumbering in Wassataquoik Valley, accounts of numerous personal exploits of the author and tales of others who have chosen the area as their home.

THE BOOK evolved from descriptive sketches set down on paper by Mrs. Walker. "I would go into the park (Baxter), see things there and go home and write about them," she relates.

Ironically, the author — whose love for the outdoors dates back to the age of four when her father treated her to her first fishing expedition in the Lily Bay section of Moosehead Lake — was not impressed with her first visit to Baxter State Park.

It was made at the request of a nephew, Irving C. Caverly Jr., then a newly appointed park ranger and bachelor, who wanted his aunt's company until the first campers of the season arrived.

MRS. WALKER stayed for two weeks — in May 1960 — then returned for three more in July. Since then, she and husband Vernon have made 12 trips into Russell Pond, situated eight miles from Roaring Brook campground in the very center of the park, and branched out on several other excursions, including visits to the Allagash region.

Many of the photographs included in the book were taken by the author while on excursions in the area. Others, particularly those of lumbering operations, were provided Mrs. Walker as a courtesy by the Great Northern Paper Company, which has displayed more than a passing interest in the volume. The paper company also supplied additional information and arranged interviews for the author.

Mrs. Walker credits former Gov. Percival Baxter with the idea of publishing her writings. Baxter, after reading some of the sketches forwarded him by Mrs. Walker, suggested she seek out an interested publisher.

Discouraged by Baxter's complimentary appraisal of her work, Mrs. Walker queried a magazine publisher, who politely rejected the material. So she decided to publish my own book," she relates.

THE VOLUME, in paperback form about the size of a book, is illustrated by pen and ink drawings done by Mrs. John Welch of Clinton, a friend of the author.

A native of Cornwall, Mrs. Walker was graduated from Skowhegan High School and Farmington Normal School.



Mrs. Walker

She taught school in Benton, Roxbury Village, Clinton and Waterville over a period of 21 years before an injury suffered in a playground accident necessitated leaving the profession. After termination of her teaching duties, Mrs. Walker turned to cooking, a favorite avocation, and is employed as a cook at Waterville Osteopathic Hospital.

Rumford Falls Times Interesting Stories Of Maine Wilderness Told By New Author

MRS. ELINOR STEVENS WALKER

A new Maine author has entered the Maine scene with the publishing this week of a new book just off the presses.

The book is "Our Great Northern Wilderness" and the author is a spicely, former school teacher, who admits to an overpouring love for the great outdoors and especially the wilderness area around Mt. Katahdin.

She is Elinor Stevens Walker, of Clinton. A native of Hilton Hill, Cornwall, which is 5 miles north of Skowhegan, she is the daughter of Lester and Alice G. Stevens. She was educated in Skowhegan schools, graduating from Skowhegan High School in 1929 and from F. S. T. C. in 1931. She has also studied at Colby College and the University of Maine; the Maine Audubon Camp and attended the Bryant Pond Conservation School on a scholarship the first two years it was opened.

She was married to Vernon Walker of Clinton on December 20, 1941, and they have an adopted daughter, Mary.

She has taught school at Benton for ten years; at Rox-

Portland, Maine, Sunday Telegram, June 26, 1966

Vivid Picture Of Katahdin Camping Trips

OUR GREAT NORTHERN WILDERNESS by Elinor Walker (Central Maine Press).

By F. L. PERT JR.

SIX YEARS AGO Mrs. Vernon (Elinor) Walker of Clinton made her first visit to Baxter State Park. She was not impressed. But on succeeding visits, the former school teacher and long-time camping enthusiast became thoroughly fascinated by the region in and around Maine's highest elevation, Mount Katahdin.

As a result, she began setting down her impressions of the rugged wilderness area on paper. Acquaintances who read them urged her seek a publishing outlet. And when former governor Percival Baxter did the same, Mrs. Walker queried a magazine publisher, only to be turned down.

The pleasant ending to the book is a 105-page paperback copy of Mrs. Walker's literary efforts published by the Central Maine Press of 1c entitled "Our Great Northern Wild". The book, liberally illustrated with pen and ink sketches, begins with an un-detailed history of lumbering in Vassataquoik Valley, which runs through t. ahdin area.

Mrs. Walker, whose previous experience has been confined to e-

in college composition courses attended in conjunction with her former teaching duties, utilizes a light, breezy but vividly detailed style in recounting her journeys in the Katahdin region.

INCLUDED in the chapter on lumbering history are some of the most complete word descriptions of the various types of early lumbering camps ever set down on paper. To wit: "Suspended from the roof were poles on which hung their dripping, steaming, from mittens, socks, heavy trousers, along with their grimy long underwear which got few washings but poured forth plenty of aroma and steam to all corners of the camp."

But, if it is fair to make a comparison, Mrs. Walker is at her best in making a



Great Northern Wilderness Is Story Of Katahdin Region

By CAROLINE HOTHAM

CLINTON — Our Great Northern Wilderness comes off the presses May 25, and many people who are "hooked" on the Katahdin area have already put in their requests for a copy.

The book, full of experiences of the author and others who have visited or settled in the area, is the work of Mrs. Vernon Walker of Clinton, who took many of the 40 photographs included in the book. Others, particularly those dealing with the history of lumbering in the Wassataquoik Valley, were supplied by the Great Northern Paper Company, which has taken a very real interest in the book.

With no thought other than preserving her memories of the camping trips, she collected a series of sketches, which were mentioned by a friend to former governor Percival Baxter, who asked to see them.

The sketches so impressed Baxter that he suggested that they be published. On the strength of his proposal, she approached a magazine publisher.

SCAMMER REPORTER

SKOWHEGAN, MAINE, THURSDAY, MAY 19, 1966

Mrs. Vernon Walker of Clinton, who grew up as Eleanor Stevens of Cornwall and graduated from SHS in 1929, has written a book about the Mt. Katahdin region and is publishing it this month. She became fascinated by the area about six years ago when she

any people in that vicinity. Mrs. Walker began taking notes for her book in 1960. She has enjoyed the cooperation from representatives of the Great Northern Paper Co. who supplied photographs and statistics relating to lumbering operations in sight of Mt. Katahdin.

is a paperback about the size of a town report and 40 of its 100 pages carry pen and ink drawings done by Mrs. John Welch of Clinton, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Walker are in Skowhegan frequently to visit with their daughter, Miss Mary Walker. They also have a cottage on the shore of Lake Umbagog in East Madison. Mrs. Walker also has a cousin, Mrs. Harold Stevens, who lives here in Skowhegan with whom she visits on many occasions as well as other acquaintances.

INGIBLE

Skowhegan High School, and ok a two-year course at Farmington Normal School, Summer sessions and extension courses at Farmington College. College of the University of Maine have brought her to within one inner session of a degree of scholastic Science in Education. She "might" finish the required courses, but one wonders here she'd find the time.

With 21 years in the teaching profession, Mrs. Walker left the schools following an injury in a playground accident, and ten years ago underwent a partial lung removal when a malignancy was found.

She first taught in Benton and was there ten years, until she married Vernon Walker, Dec. 20, 1941, then later taught in Roxbury Village, near Rumford, before coming to Clinton, where she was in the classroom two years, until the arrival of their daughter, Mary, who is now employed in Skowhegan. When Mary started school, Mrs. Walker went back and this time stayed six years. Following an illness which forced her out of the Clinton schools for a time, Mrs. Walker taught for a year in Waterville.

ALWAYS ACTIVE in local organizations, she is a past president of the Mabel P. Judkins Philathia Club, a past matron of Fireside Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, a past president and secretary of the Pine Cone Club, and a past lecturer of Clinton Grange. She and Mr. Walker have also been active in the work of Brown Memorial Methodist Church for several



MRS. VERNON WALKER

Mrs. Vernon Walker is Governor Percival Baxter, who had read the sketches, she was referred, and this experience made her determined to have the book published herself.

Busy this week, working with the publisher and making final decisions on the photographs to be used in the book, Mrs. Walker has no time at the moment for any other of her myriad hobbies. In addition to working with the publisher, this week, she has been interviewed by several reporters, and will be heard on the radio program, Luncheon With Allison, Tuesday at 12:45 p.m., and again in the evening.

When she submitted her manuscript to a magazine publisher, on the advice of former



years. She is now employed as a cook at Waterville Osteopathic Hospital.

In writing the book, Mrs. Walker was grateful for the courses in composition she took at the University of Maine under Professor Hilda Fife, and for the nature study background she received from Professor Charles Preble of Farmington and Professor Richards of the University of Maine. Mrs. Walker was also a scholarship student at Bryant Pond the first two years the camp there was open. Two professors there, Robert Miller of Gorham State Teachers College, and George Davis of the University of Maine also provided much insight into the world of nature.

Governor Percival Baxter, who had read the sketches, she was referred, and this experience made her determined to have the book published herself.

Busy this week, working with the publisher and making final decisions on the photographs to be used in the book, Mrs. Walker has no time at the moment for any other of her myriad hobbies. In addition to working with the publisher, this week, she has been interviewed by several reporters, and will be heard on the radio program, Luncheon With Allison, Tuesday at 12:45 p.m., and again in the evening.

When she submitted her manuscript to a magazine publisher, on the advice of former

A very busy woman, Mrs. Walker. It isn't often that "Luncheon With Allison" is a new author. But this week she can, and every one who knows Mrs. Walker is proud of her success. But not surprised. Just proud.

July 22, 1966

Mrs. Elinor Stevens Walker
68 Main Street
Clinton, Maine

Dear Mrs. Walker:

A copy of your book, OUR GREAT NORTHERN WILDERNESS, was delivered to this office, although addressed to the Augusta Public Library. We are forwarding it to the public library, but shall, of course, want a copy for the State Library. Enclosed is an order for the book.

We hope that you will want to inscribe and present another copy to the Maine Author Collection, which, as you may know, is a permanent exhibit collection of books written by Maine persons, or about Maine. The newspaper tells us that you are a Maine native, and certainly the book is about Maine, so we are eager to have a copy in the collection.

Sometime, will you let us have your birthdate and birth place information? Is it Cornville? We try to have information complete about our Maine authors.

Our best wishes for the success of the book.

Sincerely yours

hmj
Encl--1

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

68 Main St.
Clinton, Me.
Aug. 1, 1966

Dear Miss Lord,

Your letter, card and
the order for two more
books have arrived.

I felt sure I had sent
a complimentary copy to our
State Library as to all others
in our nation.

I will be very happy
to present to the Maine
Authors' Collection a copy
also, thus that would
leave only one copy for
you to pay for.

The three communications are a bit confusing but I hope I have it straight, you may use the inscribed copy for the Maine Authors Collection.

Regarding my background. I was born on Hilton Hill in Cornville, Me. on Oct. 24, 1909 the daughter of Lester G. and Alice Gitchell Stevens.

I was educated in the Showhegan schools graduating from the High School there in 1929.

I spent two years

at Farmington Normal School graduating in 1931

I taught school in Benton from 1931 to 1941 and in Rosbury, Me. in 1941-1942, coming to Clinton in the winter of 1943 I taught here a total of eight years at two different times.

I finished my teaching career in Waterville, Me. as 3rd grade teacher in South Grammar.

For five years I've been a cook at Waterville Osteopathic Hospital.

This is my first venture at writing other

than Club papers and
themes etc for my work
in College as I studied
at Farmington, University
of Maine, Polby, & Bryant
Pond Conservation School.

I also had one summer
course of 2 weeks at Audubon
Camp of Maine.

Sincerely,

Elmer S. Walker

August 11, 1966

Mrs. Elinor Stevens Walker
68 Main Street
Clinton, Maine 04927

Dear Mrs. Walker:

Thank you for sending OUR GREAT NORTHERN WILDERNESS, and for your generous gift to the library, and also to the Maine Author Collection.

This is very kind of you, and we appreciate it, also the biographical information which you sent in response to our request.

The attractive booklet should have appeal to all lovers of outdoor life, and of course especially to Baxter Park enthusiasts. We hope it is warmly welcomed, and that you are encouraged by its success.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection

Fascination For Katahdin Prompts Teacher To Write

CLINTON — A fascination for the Katahdin region of Maine has motivated a former school teacher here to write a book about it.

Due off the presses this month, the volume is the work of Mrs. Vernon Walker, who made her first visit to the area just six years ago.

The book — 17 chapters long, with 40 of its 100 pages devoted to photographs — contains a history of lumbering in Wassatquoik Valley, accounts of numerous personal exploits of the author and tales of others who have chosen the area as their home.

THE BOOK evolved from descriptive sketches set down on paper by Mrs. Walker. "I would go into the park (Baxter), see things there and go home and write about them," she relates.

Ironically, the author — whose love for the outdoors dates back to the age of four when her father treated her to her first fishing expedition in the Lily Bay section of Moosehead Lake — was not impressed with her first visit to Baxter State Park.

It was made at the request of a nephew, Irving C. Caverly Jr., then a newly appointed park ranger and bachelor, who wanted his aunt's company until the first campers of the season arrived.

MRS. WALKER stayed for two weeks — in May 1960 — then returned for three more in July. Since then, she and husband Vernon have made 12 trips into Russell Pond, situated eight miles from Roaring Brook campground in the very center of the park, and branched out on several other excursions, including visits to the Allagash region.

Many of the photographs included in the book were taken by the author while on excursions in the area. Others, particularly those of lumbering operations, were provided Mrs. Walker as a courtesy by the Great Northern Paper Company, which has displayed more than a passing interest in the volume. The paper company also supplied additional information and arranged interviews for the author.

Mrs. Walker credits former Gov. Percival Baxter with the idea of publishing her writings. Baxter, after reading some of the sketches forwarded him by Mrs. Walker, suggested she seek out an interested publisher.

Encouraged by Baxter's complimentary appraisal of her work, Mrs. Walker queried a magazine publisher, who politely rejected the material. "So I decided to publish my own book," she relates.

THE VOLUME, in paperback form about the size of a town report, is illustrated by pen and ink drawings done by Mrs. John Welch of Clinton, a friend of the author.

A native of Cornville, Mrs. Walker was graduated from Skowhegan High School and Farmington Normal School.



Mrs. Walker

She taught school in Benton, Roxbury Village, Clinton and Waterville over a period of 21 years before an injury suffered in a playground accident necessitated leaving the profession.

After termination of her teaching duties, Mrs. Walker turned to cooking, a favorite avocation, and is employed as a cook at Waterville Osteopathic Hospital.

68 Main St.
Clinton, Me.
May 16, 1969

Maine State Library
State House
Augusta, Me.

Dear Librarian,
Your order for three of my
publications "In and Around
Our Great Northern Wilderness"
has been received.

I am mailing them out
to you today.

Regarding a library discount;
I'm giving no discount on
these only when sold on con-
signment.

I've financed my own
publishing which has been quite
expensive, and having lost my
husband two years ago and
Railroad Annuitants due me plus

other smaller income than me not coming through I've really had to plan to make ends meet.

If it should help you I'll pay the postage. I don't know what the State would do regarding State ^{Sales} Tax. That is 16 cents a copy if they'd cut that off for you it might help you a bit more.

Thank you kindly for the order.

Respectfully,

Elinor S. Walker