



## THE ANNISQUAM HISTORICAL

7 Walnut Street  
Annisquam MA 01930

### Visit the Firehouse

The Firehouse will be open only by appointment until Spring. Please contact:  
avhistorical@gmail.com

### Admission

Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted.



WINTER 2019

## OLGA - the Wild Woman

By  
Anne Elder

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Anne Elder lived in Annisquam while her husband, John, was pastor of the Village church from 1957 to 1965. During that time John was studying full time at the Harvard Divinity School leaving only weekends and evenings for pastoral services. Ann often provided those services in his place.

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The phone call came in the middle of the night urging John to come at once. When he returned Olga was with him, smelling smoky but otherwise her usual disheveled self. She was hauling her dog along on a raggedy piece of rope smelling like a fire as well. Someone had seen the flames on the hillside and called in the fire.

Olga Lingard was the Village Mystery Lady, as well as a Wild Woman who was respected in town and protected by a pack of dogs she kept to keep out intruders. If one investigated carefully, however, they would discover there was only one old sheltie pooch left of the many that once did roam and protect the hillside.

Villagers loved recounting the tales about this Mystery Lady. Her home had been a magnificent mansion overlooking Lobster Cove and the Village Church. Many stories circulated about where the Lingards and their money came from – perhaps Olga's mother had been the mistress of some famous personage, did Olga receive some of her early education at a private boarding school in Switzerland? Records show she was at Smith College in 1908, and a member of the Women's Municipal League of Boston from 1910-1912; she volunteered at the Boston Dispensary Social Service Department in 1911 – all types of activities a young debutante would pursue. She was a friend of S. Foster Damon, a well known poet, and scholar of William Blake. He produced the Punch and Judy show in Annisquam and acknowledged her assistance.

Annisquam folks were clear about her young brother, her only and idolized younger sibling, whose life was memorialized in a faded newspaper clipping she frequently shared. Young Eric had been a pilot in the US Naval Air Force. In the early days of WWI he was assigned to protect the East Coast from German submarines.

Eric and his crew flew over the coast in an amphibious biplane, spotted a German submarine, dropped a bomb that hit the target but failed to explode. Weeks later his plane's engine failed and his plane crashed into the ocean. Eric was rescued and taken to the Chatham US Naval Air Station where he developed pneumonia and died. It was in October 1918. His life was mourned by his sister for as long as we knew her.

We never knew much about Olga's family, but she continued to live in the big house for many years. In 1947 the house was acquired by Russell Crouse of Broadway fame. The Crouse family moved to the Village and joined into community life. Olga moved into the servants' quarters – a good-sized house further up the hill in the woods. She moved many family treasures with her – a Steinway piano, antique silver, as well as the newspaper clipping about her brother. Olga loved to garden and take care of flowers. For years flowers or bouquets would appear at the Village Church, and often a small woman with a big hat, her head wrapped in a scarf wearing featureless clothes would slide into a back seat. But she and her dogs were usually loners – recluses.

It was the fall before the fire when John ventured up the hill and discovered there was really only one dog, and he and Olga were sharing a very simple life. Someone provided boxes of dog food, and Olga lived on cottage cheese and chocolate ice cream. They lived in the bottom floor of the house, sharing space along a hallway stacked on one side with newspapers and on the other with the empty dog food boxes and cottage cheese cartons. A neighbor shared our concern for Olga's health and for a while we alternated delivering a plate of the supper food we had prepared at home for our family. We were never sure just who shared the food - -

And then the inevitable fire happened. Olga came to our house; our son moved into the next room with his sisters since we had only three bedrooms, and Olga settled into the small room just big enough for

a double bed, a dresser, and a chair, with a window looking out over the woods on our hillside. The dog happily settled in as well.

The firemen discovered a rather large crowd of visitors at the fire site the next day, scrounging around in the ashes where they figured treasures might be found when the floors collapsed. Finally a notice went out that any treasures taken might be returned to the Village Church and returned to their owner with no questions asked. Each of our daughters now have a silver asparagus fork as a memento and one has a slightly warped silver tray with edges of entwined grape vines and a smoky stain on the bottom.

For several weeks Olga was our chief family entertainment. She enjoyed the young children – but not for too long. She did like our young son, and chose him as her companion. She would read books with him. We tried to introduce baths, etc.

Finally some family and legal connections were made. It was discovered there was a cousin in California, and this would be a splendid place for Olga to spend the winter. She was determined to get back on her hill, but agreed to make this airplane trip. John and Olga's chosen follower, our son, drove into the Boston airport in plenty of time to make the trip. This was years before the security encumbrance of these days, but everyone was anxious to see Olga safely on her way. The dear lady decided to wear a cotton dress over the overalls she usually wore, wrapped her head in a scarf and clutched her ragged sweater around her shoulders. Then she needed to visit the Ladies Room, so John and Mark waited patiently outside the door for her to emerge. And waited. Two males. Then the plane was called. And no Olga. Finally, when there was no chance for her to get on the plane, she appeared with a sheepish, smug smile and the three of them returned home.

A week later the same trip was planned. But this time our young daughter was the accompanier, and Mark stayed home. No bathroom trip was needed this time, and Olga spent the cold months with her cousin in California.

While she was gone we tried to discover who should be responsible for this woman. We knew she could not return to our home to share our three bedrooms and one bath. Her finances as well as her age were still somewhat of a mystery.

When she returned from California some plans had been made. There was a local nursing home where she could reside. Her dog had died so that faithful companion would not be an issue. We visited her with our son or one of the other children whenever possible and in another decade or so, 1970, as I recall, Olga herself died. John had been made her legal guardian and there are still files of legal papers detailing her finances. Perhaps in those papers we learned of the answer for one of the mysteries of the Mystery Lady. A friend – a

“classmate and clubmate” of her brother, Eric, had made a loan of money to look after Olga. This loan was attached to his will and thus to another person, and all of this was tied up in Olga’s final will. Indeed, a Village neighbor, a dentist, made a purchase of some of her land so this added to some of her financial resources that needed to be cleared.

Today the lovely mansion still sits on the hill overlooking Lobster Cove. It has a new owner who isn’t as well known in the Village. The land further up the hill has been sold to a developer and a road has been put through so there is no longer any place for roaming wild women.



*This photo of Olga as a young woman shows her dressed for an Annisquam Village Hall theatrical production.*



*The Lingard mansion is barely visible on the corner of Washington Street and Dennison Street.*

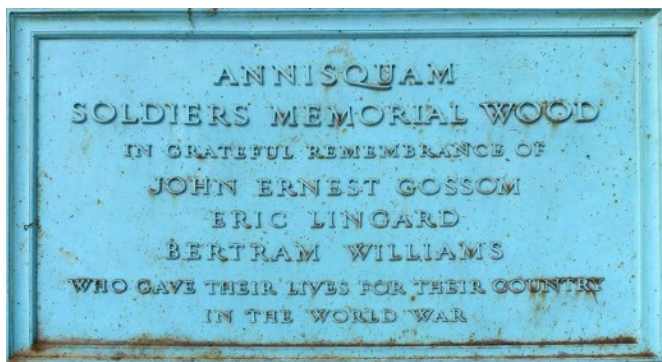
# Armistice Day- November 11, 2018

By Robert Russell

At noontime on the cold Sunday of November 11, a gathering of 35 people took place at the Washington Street side of the Annisquam Bridge to commemorate the official end of World War 1. This gathering was almost at the exact time of the signing of the armistice 100 years ago which ended the Great war in Europe.

The beautiful and emotional poem In Flanders Fields by John McCrae was read by Nan Weber. The assembled group then proceeded to walk the pathway from the foot bridge into the Annisquam Woods to reach the stone memorial, which commemorates the 3 sons of Annisquam, who died while serving in the war: Eric Lingard was a Navy pilot, who off of Cape Cod when he was on a submarine hunting mission and was forced to ditch his plane; John Gossom was an Army medic who died of the Spanish Flu while serving in Germany near the end of the war; Bertram Williams was an Army Air Corps pilot when his plane was shot down on a mission over France. Lingard and Gossom are buried in Mt Adnah cemetery, and Williams is buried in the American cemetery in Thiaccourt, France.

Upon reaching the memorial stone in the Annisquam Woods, the gathering listened to Bob Griffith of the Annisquam Historical Society, who recounted the histories of the 3 men and the circumstances under which they died. He then laid a wreath of poppies (see photo) next to the stone where the names of the 3 men are inscribed. Reverend Deirdre White of the Annisquam Village Church offered a prayer in memory of those who died in the war, and the assembled group then departed up to Washington Street or back along the pathway to the bridge.



In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place, and in the sky,  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead; short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high!  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.



Photo by Rita Teele

Bob Griffith recounted histories of the three Annisquam men who died in WWI.

## The Story Behind a Little Wood Carving in the Firehouse

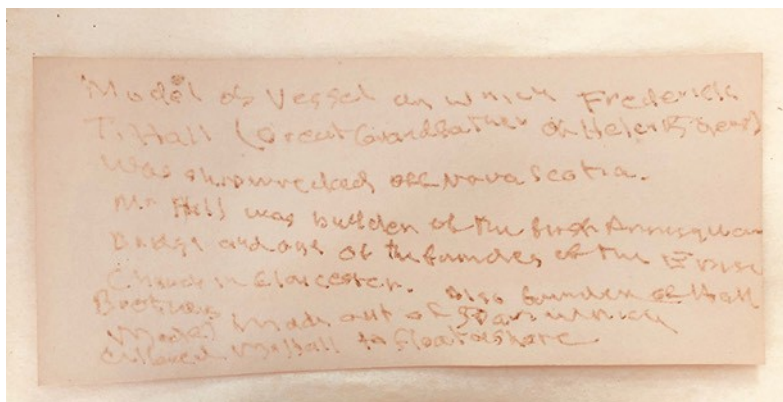
By  
Rita Littlewood Teele

This article is an expanded version of a presentation that I delivered at the Leonard Club on December 8, 2018.

Upstairs in the Firehouse, in a big glass case, is a little carving--about 3 inches in length, of a ship's hull.



The curled card, in which it is cradled, is covered in irregular, faded cursive writing.

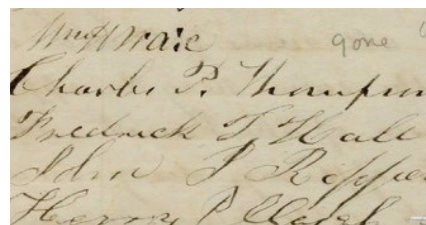


The card conveys the following:

*Model of Vessel on which Frederick Hall (Great Grandfather of Helen Rogers) was shipwrecked off Nova Scotia. Mr Hall was builder of the first Annisquam Bridge and one of the founders of the Episc Church in Gloucester. Also founder of Hall Brothers. Model made out of spar which allowed Mr Hall to float ashore.*

Helen Rogers, wife of Elliott Rogers, was the granddaughter, of Fredrick T. Hall (1830-1913), whose name was variably spelled as Fredrick or Frederick. Helen's mother, Grace G. (Hall) Janes was Fredrick's eldest daughter.

When they are available, original sources of information can confirm handwritten transcripts. Census records are ideal for establishing a person's age, place in the family, and the family's domicile. (Occasionally, errors creep into those records as well, particularly in the spelling of names, or with their transcription from cursive script. It was common in the 19th century for names to be spelled phonetically.)



Signature of Fredrick T. Hall from a document in St John's Episcopal Church.

([www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTq4H3aW874](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTq4H3aW874))



Frederick T. Hall's gravestone in Oak Grove Cemetery, Gloucester.

(Photo by John McNally, [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com))

Note the different spellings of Hall's first name in the two photographs.

The second Annisquam bridge, over Lobster Cove, was built by Joseph B. Burnham in 1861, not by Fredrick. However, Fredrick's son, Arthur W. Hall, helped in the reconstruction of the bridge in 1908 and Arthur C. Hall, Fredrick's grandson, was responsible for the rebuilding of the bridge in 1947. (A carefully documented engineering report on the bridge, which included the history of prior bridges, was issued in 1987. A copy is filed in the Firehouse.)

Of most importance is the last sentence on the handwritten card. It connects the wooden model to the story of a shipwreck, and dramatic sequelae in a young man's life.

Fredrick T. Hall, an Englishman who had already been at sea for some years, was 22 years old when he shipped as second mate on the barque, *Menapia*. The ship was bound from London to North Shields to load coal for the Brooklyn Gas Works at New York. Fredrick Hall wrote of that fateful voyage of June 1852: "We had been out two months with continuous head winds when we ran on Western Head off Liverpool, Nova Scotia. We struck at half past eleven at night, and by four the next morning [the ship] was broken all to pieces. We had two boats. One was smashed on deck. The other broke adrift and washed on shore." "About four o'clock in the morning myself and two others of the crew washed on shore on a piece of the wreck."

Fredrick saved a piece of that makeshift life raft which he kept for years afterward. It was family lore that Fredrick was lashed to a spar, but he did not mention that in his memoir.

Three of the crew were drowned: the captain and his 14-year-old son, and one other man. Their bodies were recovered and buried on shore in one grave. Young Fred Hall, was rescued by people from the nearby town of Liverpool, Nova Scotia. He was put

up in the home of Thomas and Diadamia Firth whose daughter, aged 14 years at the time, was to become Fredrick's wife.

After other adventure-filled seafaring years, during which he occasionally returned to Liverpool N.S., Fredrick and Diadamia married in 1854 when she was 16 years old and legally allowed to do so. In 1857, Fredrick Hall moved to Gloucester, with his faithful wife. He also brought with him the souvenir from the shipwreck. Family lore tells of a Gloucester wood carver producing four models of the hull of the *Menapia* from the section of saved wood. These were distributed to his sons. Somehow, through the years, one became the property of Helen Rogers.

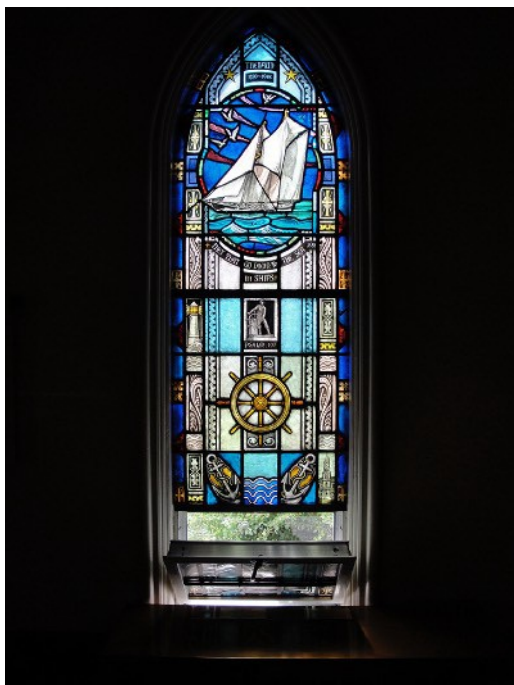
|              |          |            |        |         |           |           |             |              |    |   |   |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------------|----|---|---|
| Martha       | Bg       | J. Millon  | 194    | Belfast | 1841      | McLaine   | Belfast     | Bel. Livepl  | 10 | A | 1 |
| Maece        | Bg       | J. Wilson  | 223    | Yrmtth  | 1841      | Ringrose  | Hull        | Yar. Hull    | 12 | A | 1 |
| Majon Nancey | R. Jones | 46         | Pwhly  | 1841    | Pritchard | Pahely    | Bms. Constr | 10           | A  | 1 |   |
| M. Solodowni | A. Sitow | 387        | Riga   | 1841    | Solodowni | Ptrabg    | Lon. Ptrabg | 7            | A  | 1 |   |
| Menapia Bk   | J. Queen | 280        | N Brns | 1841    | R. Allan  | Wexfrd    | Wex.        | 4            | A  | 1 |   |
| Mary         | Bg       | Wynes      | 214    | Pgwsh   | 1841      | Morrison  | Liverpl     | Liv. Lisbon  | 5  | A | 1 |
| Mary         | Sk       | J. Jones   | 48     | N Quay  | 1830      | Rees & Co | N Quay      | Mil. Coaster | 6  | A | 1 |
| Matilda      | Sr       | J. Barrett | 108    | PEIsl   | 1840      | J. Peake  | PEIsl       | Ply. Meditr  | 4  | A | 1 |

Lloyd's Register of ships from the mid 1800s, lists the barque *Menapia*, 280 tons, with letters indicating that the ship had iron bolts (I.B.) and was constructed in 1841 of Black Birch (BB), Hackmatack (Hk) and Spruce(S).

The Nautical Magazine of 1874 lauded black birch for its tough nature, and when seasoned, its long lasting nature. Knees in sailing ships were often from hackmatack, also known as the Eastern larch or tamarack, because roots of the tree are superficial, growing laterally from the trunk at a 90-degree angle, thereby forming a strong, natural wooden knee. Spruce was often used for spars. The little carved hull is quite light, but its color and the pattern of the wood may be mahogany rather than spruce. (Mahogany could well have been

fashioned into doors or paneling for the captain's cabin.)

As for Fredrick Hall, the experience on the *Menapia* was only one of many near-fatal adventures he had seafaring. His experiences may have reinforced his strong religious faith. He was among the founders of the Episcopal Society in Gloucester, and subsequently, an original member of St. John's Episcopal Church. His signature as shown above, is from an early church document. I am sure that Fredrick Hall would approve of the stained glass windows in St. John's that are based on biblical stories with maritime connections.



This window, among others in St. John's Episcopal Church, was designed by Wilbur H. Burnham Studios in Boston. It features the Gertrude L. Thebaud, the last fully rigged fishing schooner to be built at the Essex Shipyard, the words from Psalm 107: "They that go down to the sea in ships" and the Gloucester statue of the "Man at the Wheel."

After giving up seafaring, Fredrick Hall was founder of a family company, based in Gloucester, that built many of the wooden wharves of Cape Ann and the

North Shore. His occupation was listed in the national census of 1880 as "spile driving." The words "spile" and "pile", have the same meaning although nowadays, metal or concrete are typically used in place of wood.

There is much more to the story of Frederick T. Hall. In April of 1973, Joseph Garland wrote an article in North Shore magazine based on Hall's memoir. That article, plus a transcript of Hall's original memoir and a copy of the biography, written by his great grandson, are in the family file cabinet in the Firehouse.

As a footnote: Elliott and Helen Rogers were important supporters and donors to the Annisquam Historical Society. Elliott was the brother of Martha Hale (Rogers) Harvey, one of Annisquam's famous photographers. She was married to Charles Wainwright Harvey, the artist. Both couples were childless. That may be the reason that so many items were bequeathed to the Historical Society from the Rogers and the Harveys.

# Notes from the AHS photography department- December 2018

## New photographic material project

Bob Cunningham and Betsey Horovitz have agreed to start amassing photographs from outside the firehouse to cover the lost years, i.e. from circa 1920 onwards. The existing glass plates and prints provide a rich view of the decades before, but we have little thereafter.

You may well be asked to look around for photographic prints, negatives, and slides (remember slides?). With your permission, we plan to collect digital copies only. Your family photo albums are safe. Does anybody have pictures of the aftermath of Hurricane Carol or Mr. Rice's ice truck or the Nugent garbage truck or Doc Stanwood and his boat, the *Aries*?

Contact: Betsey Horovitz ([betseybh@gmail.com](mailto:betseybh@gmail.com) or 978-879-4640) or Bob Cunningham ([rwcsail@gmail.com](mailto:rwcsail@gmail.com) or 978-317-4101)

## Digitizing our collection of postcards

John Hentschel heroically sorted the entire collection; this was a true labor of love. There are many hundreds! Many early postcards are actual photographic prints on post card stock. As a teaser, we include a photograph of the *Wonasquam* (a party boat) tied up at the ferry dock at the end of Leonard Street. We believe the card dates from circa 1915.



### Comments about the Wilder Smith Article Last Quarter:

Marvelous! Although Wilder wasn't much for attending worship services, we enjoyed each other's company. During my ministry in Annisquam I was commuting almost daily to Harvard Divinity School working on a series of degrees. We had only one car, so when my wife needed the car, I would sometimes drive with Wilder to or from the airport in his VW bug and cover the rest of the distance by bus or the T. For most of those years Wilder's was working on his boat in his yard - but never quite succeeding in getting into the water. *John Elder, Oberlin, Ohio*

Great article about Wilder! I adored him (and his dog Fronzi) and spent many cherished hours chatting with him about the weather and the Pasture. *Lisbeth Bornhofft*

I knew Wilder. I used to meet him sometimes when going from my house to the beach through the pasture. It was good to learn more about his background. *Anthony Marolda*

His wife Mildred was also one of Annisquam's remarkable inhabitants. *Diane Sargent*

Thanks so much for doing the article on Wilder. I know how much time and thought went into it and I loved seeing it in print and reading it. Great job. *Roz Smith*