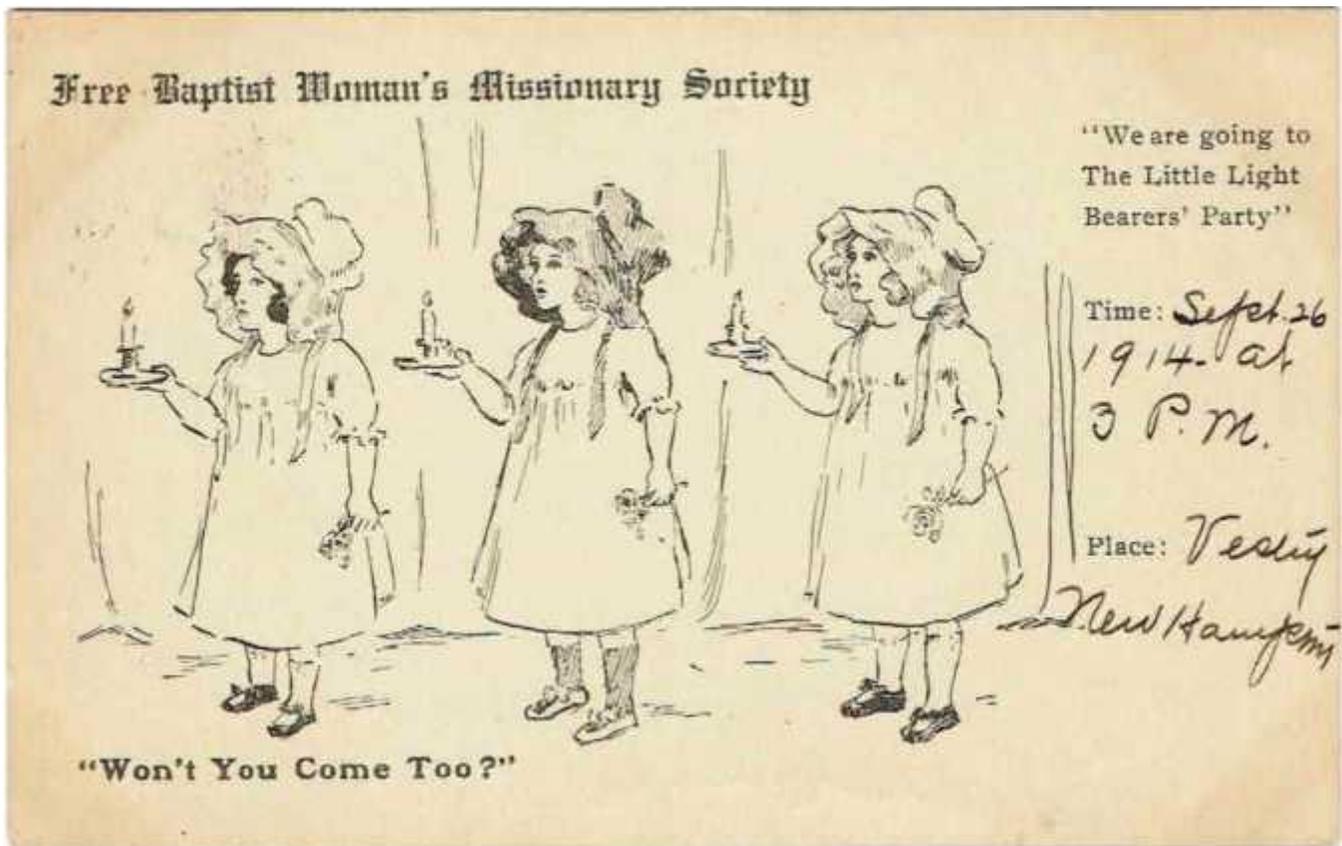


*BRINGING the PRESENCE of the PAST into the PRESENT*

*Celebrating Sarah Dow MacGregor: A Most Generous Friend of New Hampton*



In 1895, Sarah Curtis Dow MacGregor was elected to the first board of trustees of the infant Gordon-Nash Library and continued to serve until her death in 1956, a tenure of 61 years. Originally from Kennebunkport, Maine, Sarah Curtis attended New Hampton School (1890-93) and, following her graduation, married a local boy, Walter Dow, on Christmas Day of 1893. [2 &3] The Warren Harvey house, Old Bristol Road, was the home Sarah and Walter built and occupied for many years. The second floor of the house was purposely left unfinished so that the young people of the town could meet there for dances. With Walter playing the violin and Sarah at the piano there was many a fun-filled evening. [1] Walter died young in a lumbering accident, and, much later, Sarah married the Reverend Charles P. MacGregor. [2] At the news of this second marriage some of the children of the village were upset. Marianne Bickford was in tears as she asked her mother if her dear Aunt Sarah had really married that awful Mr. MacGregor who was so mean to Peter Rabbit! [1]

Having inherited a large estate, Sarah was a wealthy woman. She always lived simply, however, preferring to use her resources for worthy causes. She loved New Hampton and filled many important positions in the church, in the clubs, and as a long-time trustee of both the Gordon-Nash Library and New Hampton School, as well as of The Golden Rule Farm for Boys (later the Spaulding Youth Center). [1] Always thinking of the needs of others, Sarah carefully planned her estate to bring happiness to others when she was gone. The four largest bequests were equal gifts to the New Hampton Community Church, New Hampton School, the Golden Rule Farm and the Town of New Hampton. [1] This last gift established the Sarah Dow MacGregor Scholarship Fund, which provides financial support to pursue higher education for students from the town of New Hampton. [2] Illustrated below is a 1914 invitation from Sarah to a young man on Gordon Hill, encouraging him and "his Mama" to attend the "Little Light Bearers" Rally in the vestry of the Community Church. The "Little Light Bearers" was an organization developed for children to learn about the life and work of Free Baptist missionaries. [4]

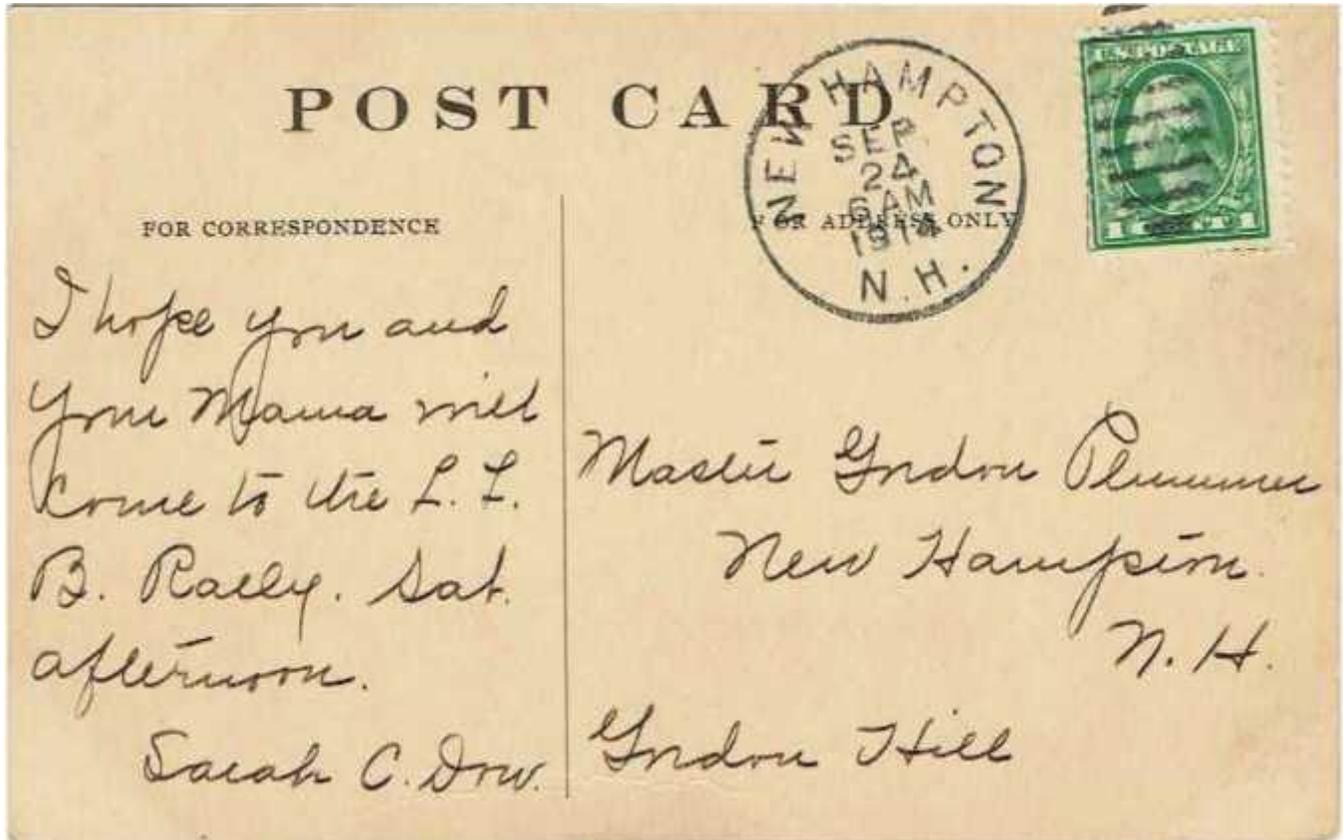
Sources

[1] Town of New Hampton Website: "Brief sketch of the life of Sarah Dow MacGregor"  
<http://www.new-hampton.nh.us/sarahdowmacgregor.asp>

[2] *New Hampton, New Hampshire: A Chronicle* (2003) by Kathy Neustadt & Tom Curren

[3] *A History of the Gordon-Nash Library* (1965) by Jeannette C. Matthews

[4] *The Free Baptist Woman's Missionary Society: 1873-1921* (1922) by Lena Fenner Dennet, Frances Stewart Mosher, and Clara A. Ricker



A 1914 postcard found on eBay. Sarah C. Dow (later MacGregor) writes to a resident of Gordon Hill hoping that he "and his Mama" will come to the Little Light Bearers Rally in the Church vestry.

For more information on the history of the town, please visit the New Hampton Historical Society website at [www.newhamptonhistory.org/](http://www.newhamptonhistory.org/)

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