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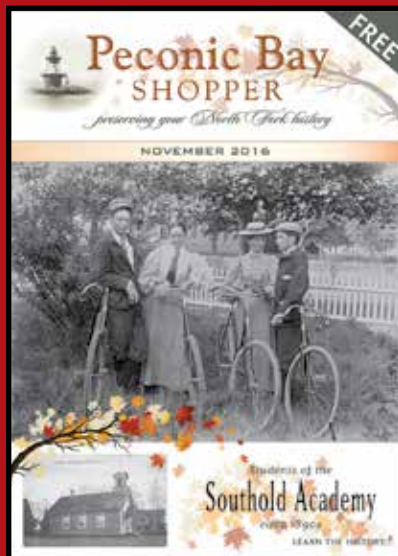
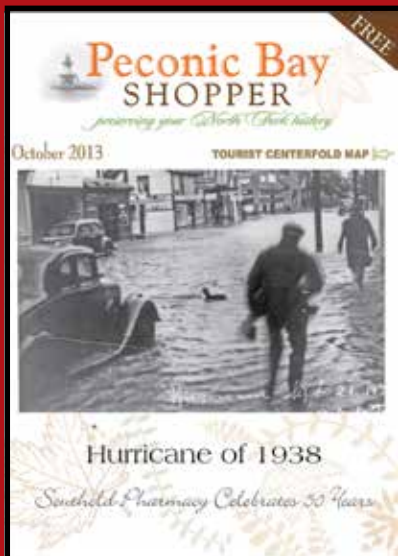
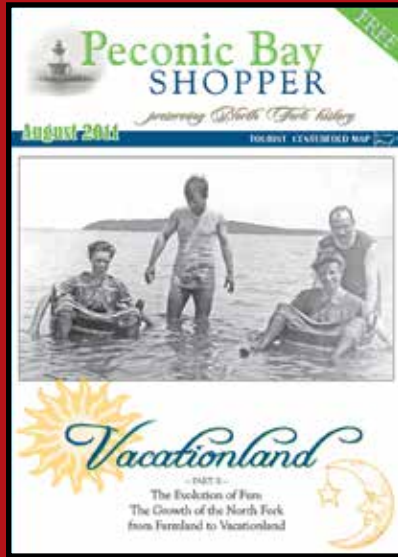
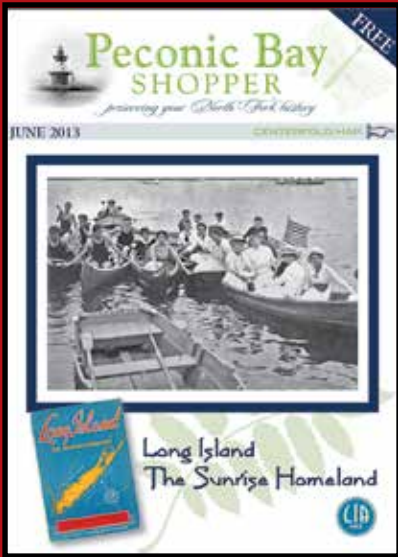
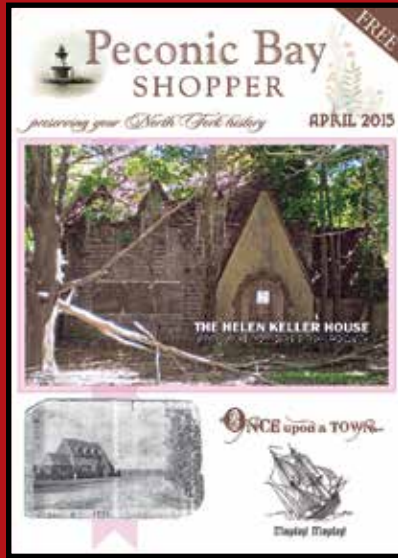
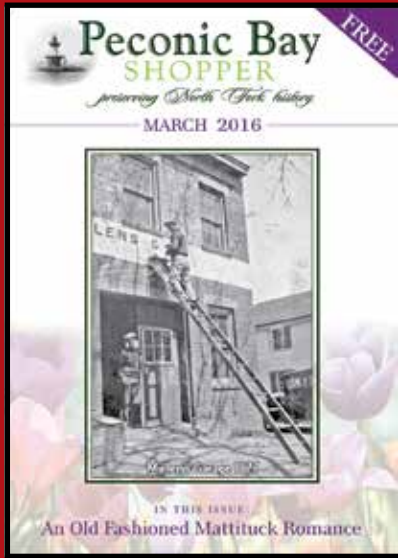
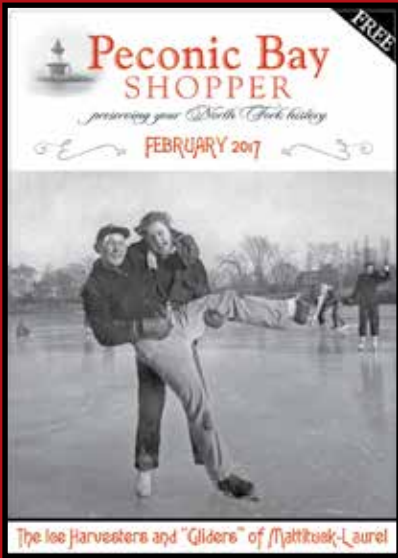
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OUR FAREWELL ISSUE



Ten Corwin Brothers - Four Corwin Homes
Peconic Village, Town of Southold, c. 1870





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On Our Cover...

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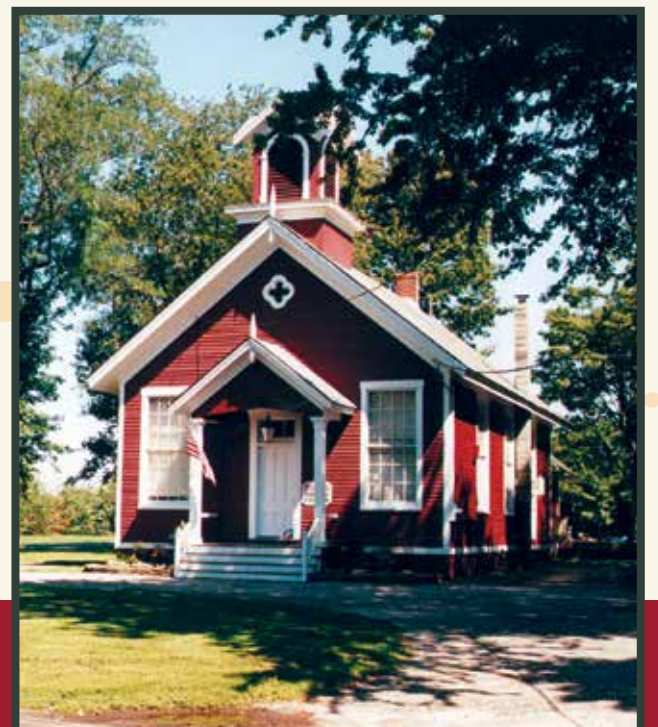
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Ten Corwin Brothers - Four Corwin Homes Peconic Village, Town of Southold, c. 1870

by Gerard Matovcik, Reference Librarian, Mattituck-Laurel Library, and Joseph O'Brien, Researcher, and Jeffrey Walden, Research Assistant.

The inscription on the reverse of this undated vintage photograph reads: "Uncle Albert and Aunt Lizzie's Home, with daughter Oriette and Station Agent Bill Craft (I think) with bicycles."

The "Uncle Albert" and "Aunt Lizzie" alluded to in the photograph inscription would be Albert H. Corwin and his wife Elizabeth. Their two children, Oriette (pictured here with her bicycle) and her brother Ernest were likely born in this home, and both siblings, who had never married, spent their lives together there. Oriette survived Ernest and sold the place about three years before she died in 1957. The house still stands on the east side of Carroll Avenue in Peconic, near the North Road.

Albert H. Corwin, with his twin brother George, was born April 18, 1837; the sons of Harry Corwin and Oriet Richmond. The boys were the fifth and sixth sons of the Corwin family, a family which would grow to ten children – all boys – who are said "to have never disagreed."

Harry Corwin had married Oriet Richmond at Southold in 1827, and for about twenty years, he worked as a captain in the seafaring profession to provide for his family until he tried his hand at farming. The family lived on a fourteen acre farm that fronted Main Road west of Peconic Lane. In their home on their smallholding, Oriet would bear tens sons: Daniel C.



(1828), Samuel D. (1829), William H. (1831), James R. (1834), Albert H. and George (1837), Theodore O. (1840), Charles (1843), Warren M. (1845) and Orrin Adison (1846).



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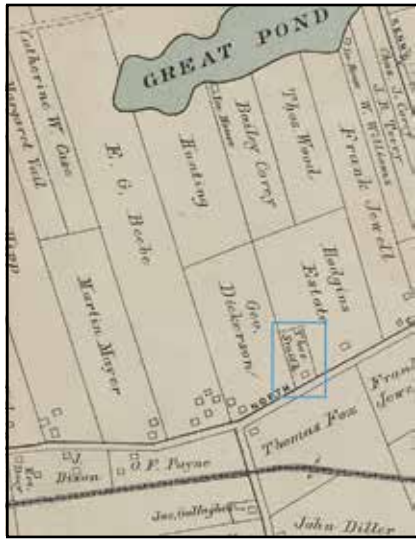


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*Peconic Village, c. 1873
(E. W. Beers Atlas of Long Island.)*

The property outlined in this map was the location of the fourteen acre farm of Harry and Oriet Corwin, a property they sold to Charles Davids in March, 1860.

(The "Charles Davis" inscribed on the map is actually Charles Lewis Davids.)

Lake City, Minnesota

About a year after Albert's twin brother George died in December, 1855, the Corwin family began to leave Peconic Village to start fresh a thousand miles west at Lake City, Minnesota. Lake City was located on the west bank of the Mississippi river, sixty-five miles south of Minneapolis and St. Paul, at a place where the river widens into Lake Pepin. The lake is deep and the village quickly grew as a grain port.

In this map, the green area delineates the "Half-Breed Tract."

(Detail from Minnesota Map No. 33 in Indian Land Cessions in the United States 1845-1893, Charles C. Royce, comp. (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1899).



Beginning in the 17th century, the French and British came to the area of Lake Pepin as traders and trappers, and many of them had Dakota or mixed-race wives. Lake City is notable as one of the few cities founded within a tract of land set aside as a Reservation for the children born of

these relationships. In the vernacular of the day, this tract became known as the "Half Breed Tract." In 1854, Henry Rice introduced legislation in the U.S. Senate to issue scrip certificates, granting the 'half breeds or mixed-bloods of the Dakota or Sioux nation of Indians' up to 640 acres each on unoccupied, unsurveyed lands in exchange for relinquishing all rights in the Half Breed Tract. Ultimately, the exchange benefited land speculators from New York and other eastern states who bought as much of the scrip as they could at a cut-rate price. This was part of a craze, between 1854 and 1857, for platting town sites and selling the deeds to settler-colonists that swept through Minnesota. In fact, former President Millard Fillmore led a Grand Excursion of boats on the Mississippi which brought newspaper reporters and tourists upriver, where travelers spent a night on Lake Pepin before proceeding to St. Paul. The furor for land speculation, as well as the national attention rendered to the area, opened Lake City for settlement to outsiders, and the population boomed.

The Corwin family would be a part of this early Lake City settlement. The first Corwins to travel west were the three eldest boys, Daniel, Dennison and William. They left Peconic Village in late July of 1857, and arrived at Lake City in time for a territorial census taken September 21, 1857. Dennison was single, but Daniel, the eldest, and William had traveled to Minnesota with their young brides. Incredibly, William and his wife traveled with their baby daughter who had been born in New York in July.

Two and half years later, Harry, Oriet, and the rest of the boys made the journey to Lake City. The parents, as described earlier, had sold their fourteen acre property in Peconic Village to Charles Davids in March, 1860, and arrived at Lake City in time to be counted there in the June, 1860, US Census. Harry's wife, Oriet, died in March of 1862, and he remarried in 1865 to Rosetta Bradish.



Henry Corwin and his second wife, Rosetta Bradish Corwin, in Lake City.

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In Minnesota, Albert found work as a carpenter before volunteering to serve in the Union Army during the Civil War. He signed with the 2nd US Sharpshooters at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, in October, 1862. The 1st and 2nd Regiments of US Sharpshooters were formed by Hiram Berdan, one of the country's leading marksman. Recruits were required to use their own open sight rifle, fire ten consecutive rounds, reloading as fast as possible, at two targets. Targets were a ten-inch circle. The first target was 200 yards away and fired at rest; the next target was paced at 100 yards and fired at offhand. A candidate missing the targets or averaging more than five inches from the center was disqualified. As a member of this elite unit, Albert wore a special uniform and was issued a Sharps breech-loading rifle.



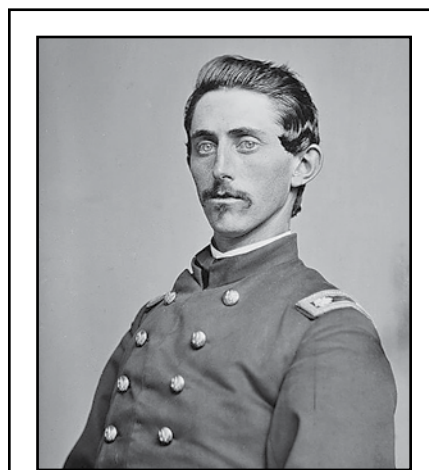
Berdan's sharpshooters wore a distinct uniform which included, among other items, a green forage cap and green pants.

Albert saw combat in eastern campaigns, and his company was transferred to the 1st Minnesota Infantry late in the war. Albert was wounded at Antietam Creek, Maryland, in September, 1862, in the bloodiest battle in the history of the United States. In May of 1863, Albert returned to duty and saw action as part of Hiram Berdan's brigade at Chancellorsville, Virginia.

Albert was taken prisoner on Saturday, May 2nd, at Chancellorsville. There is no extant report of how Albert separated from Confederate custody. According to a notation in the Minnesota, U.S. Civil War Records,

1861-1865, dated October, 1863, Albert "returned to his company for duty having been taken prisoner May 2nd at Chancellorsville, Va."

After having been promoted to corporal, Albert was discharged February 23, 1865. In early April, 1867, he witnessed his brother Warren's wedding in Minnesota, but was back in Suffolk County by January 19, 1870, the day he married Miss Lizzie P. Miller of Noyack, at Sag Harbor.



Major Homer R. Stoughton commanded the 2nd Regiment at Antietam and wrote this about his troops: "While lying on their faces on the open ground they did more damage to the enemy than any brigade in our front or to our right, we firing obliquely. Into the field opposite and in front of Campbell's battery were put in one grave 192 of the enemy ..."

2nd Regiment US Sharpshooters at Chancellorsville.


Adapted from Col. Hiram Berdan's report of the battle. (Please note that Albert Corwin was attached to the Second Regiment.)

At Chancellorsville, Saturday, May 2nd, at about noon, Colonel Berdan received orders from General Birney to have his men skirmish through the woods. Berdan deployed his First Regiment in the woods, using the Second Regiment as a reserve, and the sharpshooters drove the rebels out. When the rebels rallied at an abandoned foundry building nearby, Berdan advanced with flankers from the Second Regiment. The Second Regiment kept up so accurate and rapid a fire that the enemy dared not leave the cover of the building. Berdan then ordered his men to cease firing, and called upon the rebels to surrender, upon which they came in, after throwing down their arms and showing a white rag.


The support of their skirmishers, with those who were able to escape, fell back along the road and rallied in a lane, covering in their retreat a wagon train, which was visible moving down the road. After sending the prisoners to the rear, Berdan ordered his left flank to gradually advance, keeping the attention of the enemy by desultory firing while he rapidly pushed forward his right flank in the woods until they had outflanked the rebels and opened fire. The rebels then attempted to come out of the railroad cut, in which they had taken shelter, and to retreat to the rear, but on meeting the fire of the sharpshooters, they returned again to their cover, and very soon threw down their arms and surrendered.

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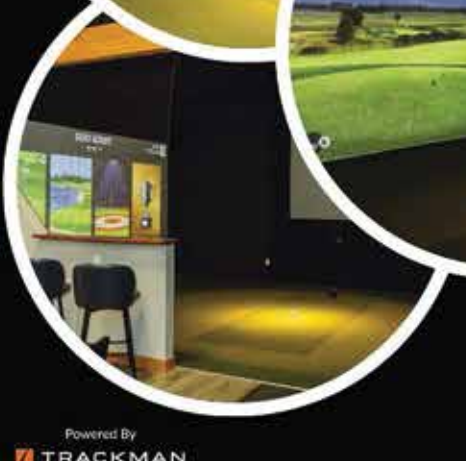
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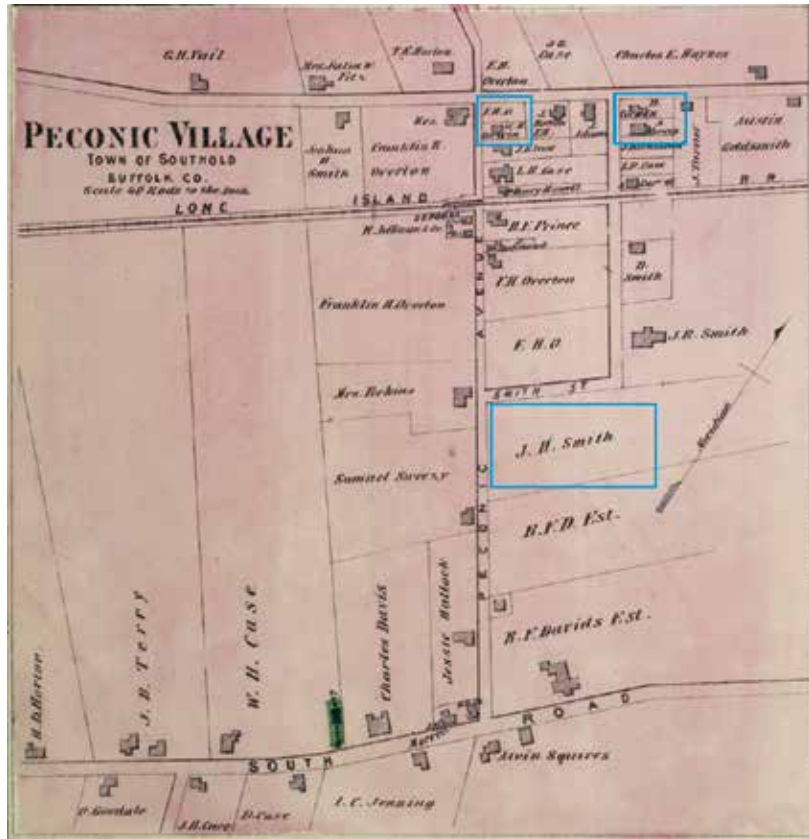


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Peconic Village Detail, c. 1873 (F. W. Beers Atlas of Long Island.)

Four Corwin brothers eventually returned from Minnesota and built or purchased homes in the same area of Peconic Village within walking distance of each other. The above portion of Peconic Village map, c. 1873, displays Albert's home on the east side of Smith Street (now Carroll Avenue), separated from the North Road by one house. That one house was built a year earlier by his brother Samuel Dennison Corwin. Uncle Den shared the home with his wife Sarah Smith Corwin, and their adopted daughter Jessie. Directly west of Albert's home, and across Smith Street (now Carroll Avenue), was the home of his brother William, who had also recently returned from Minnesota. When their brother, James R. Corwin, returned from Minnesota, he eventually bought the Joshua H. Smith home at the corner of Peconic Lane and Smith Street (presently Carroll Avenue).

The houses of Dennison and Albert Corwin are shown below as they appear today, on Carroll Avenue, in recent photos:



Dennison and Sarah Corwin



Albert and Elizabeth Corwin

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Aunt Helen's House

*Inscription on reverse [in part]:
April 1903,
Corwin House
Helen*

*(This would be Helen Corwin,
wife of James R. Corwin.)*



A recent Google photo of the Joshua Smith - James Corwin House

Helen Corwin was born Helen Elizabeth Reeve, daughter of Mr. Reeve and Elizabeth née Hedges Reeve Smith. After Helen married James R. Corwin, about 1859, the couple traveled to Lake City, Minnesota. Helen gave birth to three children there, losing one, before the couple decided to return to Peconic Village. Helen was born about 1838, and so, in the vintage photograph above, she would have been about sixty-five years old.

Helen's home was originally built in 1869 by William Corwin for Joshua Harris Smith and his wife, born Lucinda Squires Ludlow. The Smiths had a house on the North Country Road and appear to have built a larger house for their growing family on Peconic Lane. The new house was, and is still, located at corner of Peconic Lane and Carroll Avenue. Mr. Smith

had been a farmer, well-known locally for the quality of his vegetables, and the house was built on the fifteen acres he had purchased from the very recently widowed Mrs. Dezhiah G. Perkins. Mrs. Perkins lived directly across Peconic Lane in what is known as the Jefferson House, after later owners, Leroy and Carrie Reeve Jefferson.

A year after Joshua Smith died, his widow sold the parcel to James and Helen Corwin, and Mrs. J. H. Smith moved back into her former house just west of the northern end of Peconic Lane. Like most of the Corwin brothers, James was or had been a Joiner or Carpenter, and he knew the house well, having done repairs for the Smiths at an earlier time. Almost immediately after purchasing the property in April, 1888, James and Helen



Suffolk County, V. 2, Double Page Plate No. 11, 1909
 [Map bounded by Long Island Sound, South Hold Bay, Little Peconic Bay, Cutchogue]

sold an acre and a half to the Town of Southold, which built a new school on the property. The original parcel the Corwins purchased from Joshua Smith can be seen in the 1909 Suffolk County map above, and would have included the “Mrs. Jas. Corwin” lot, the school lot, as well as the eastern parcel occupied by Addison Conklin. (Case Avenue on the above map is now known as Carroll Avenue, and before that had also been known as the New Road and Smith Lane. Peconic Lane was known as Hermitage Lane before the Post Office came to town and the hamlet took the name “Peconic.”)

James R. Corwin, who had been born February 11, 1834, died, January 30, 1895, after a lingering illness. His wife continued to live at the house until her death in November, 1926. The house was then occupied by her son George, and at times by her daughter, Evelyn G. Smith.



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Grandpa Smith's House

Inscription on reverse: House on North Road. Grandpa Smith, Henry, Evelyn and Hilda - Gray Bon and Katie (left). Undated.

The Theo and Annie Smith home and family are shown in the vintage photograph above. The house and barn sat on a one-acre lot on the north side of the North Country Road, near the intersection with Ackerly Pond Lane, formerly known as Bowery Lane.

“Grandpa Smith” is George Theodore Smith. Known as Theo, he was born about 1849, the son of seaman, George O. Smith, and Mary Catherine Simpson. He would have been about fifty years old in the photo.

His wife, born Annie Costello of Peconic, is not pictured, and is perhaps the photographer. Annie was born about 1857, the daughter of Frank and Nancy Costello of Peconic. After her father died in early, 1867, Annie’s mother married the widower James Kane of Peconic. Annie’s half-sister Sarah Kane married Thomas Hodgins and lived next door to the Smiths for many years.

The “Henry” pictured above is the Smith’s son, and only child,



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Henry Ainslee Smith, named for Theo's older brother, and only sibling. Henry's wife Evelyn was born Evelyn G. Corwin, the daughter of James R. and Helen Corwin of Peconic described earlier in this article. Both Evelyn and Henry were born 1877 - 1878, and they would have been about twenty-five years old at the time of the photo. Their first daughter, Hilda, is standing with her mother.

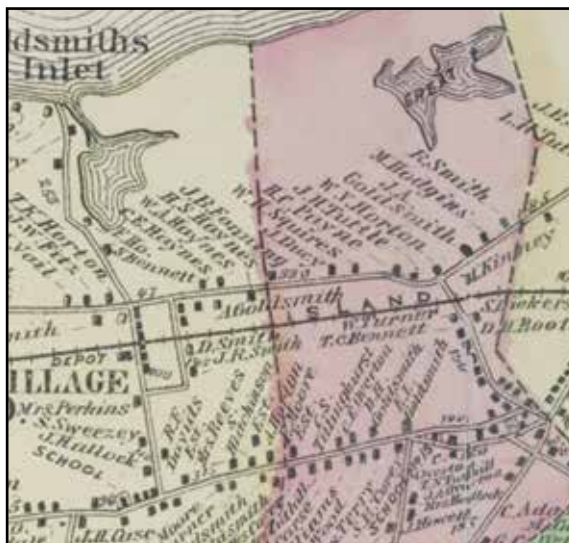
We can date the photo quite closely from 1903 until early 1905 from an astonishing press release in The County Review:

THE COUNTY REVIEW.
 RIVERHEAD, N. Y., MARCH 31, 1905.

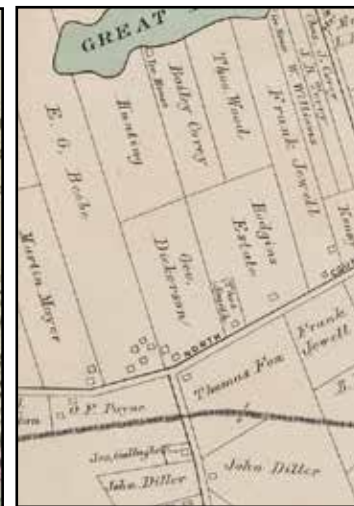
Henry A. Smith, a farmer of Southold, has been missing from his home for four weeks, and nothing is known of his whereabouts. Four weeks ago last Sunday he went to the depot and said he guessed he would take a run up to Riverhead. He did not stop in this village, however, but went on to Long Island City, and from that time nothing has been heard from him. He is 28 years old, and has a wife and child.

Evelyn was probably pregnant when Henry deserted her in March, 1905. Evelyn would give birth to the couple's second daughter, Altha, on August 26, 1905.

The house dates to at least 1854, when Joseph Ambrose Goldsmith occupied the place after he married Theo Smith's recently widowed mother. Her husband George had died at age thirty-one, leaving her with two very young boys. Theo purchased the house and barn from his step-father in August, 1877. The Goldsmith-Smith home can be seen in the 1873 Beers Atlas and in the 1909 E. Hyde Belcher Map of Long Island. The latter ascribes the property to "Thos. Smith," but that is an error. Southold property tax and census records clearly show Theo and Annie Smith owned the house until they died a month apart in 1926.



1873 Beers Atlas



1909 E. Hyde Belcher Map of Long Island

What became of the Corwin brothers who had remained in Minnesota? Charles Corwin died, in Lake City, nine days after his mother Oriet passed away. Orwin, the youngest brother, died in 1930 at age eighty-three. Son Theodore died in Minnesota of heart disease at age twenty-six. Warren passed in Lake City in 1905. Daniel, who lived in Minnesota, passed away there at age seventy-four.

We do not know why the four Corwin brothers returned to Peconic Village, Southold, after having lived in Minnesota for various numbers of years. We do know that by 1870, Lake City, Minnesota, had become a booming city with the railroad line into the city almost completed. Did the Corwin brothers long for the more moderate temperatures of Long Island and the pleasant rustic life of the North Fork? Dennison and his wife, Sarah, had returned to Peconic Village in 1865, where Dennison continued to work as a carpenter. Albert returned in 1870 and married Elizabeth Miller; Albert worked as a carpenter and house painter. In 1873, William H. Corwin would open a grocery store in Peconic. By 1880, James and wife Helen were back in Peconic where James was a house carpenter. The Corwin brothers and their families were held in high esteem by their neighbors and friends in Peconic Village, and they have made important and lasting contributions to our local history.

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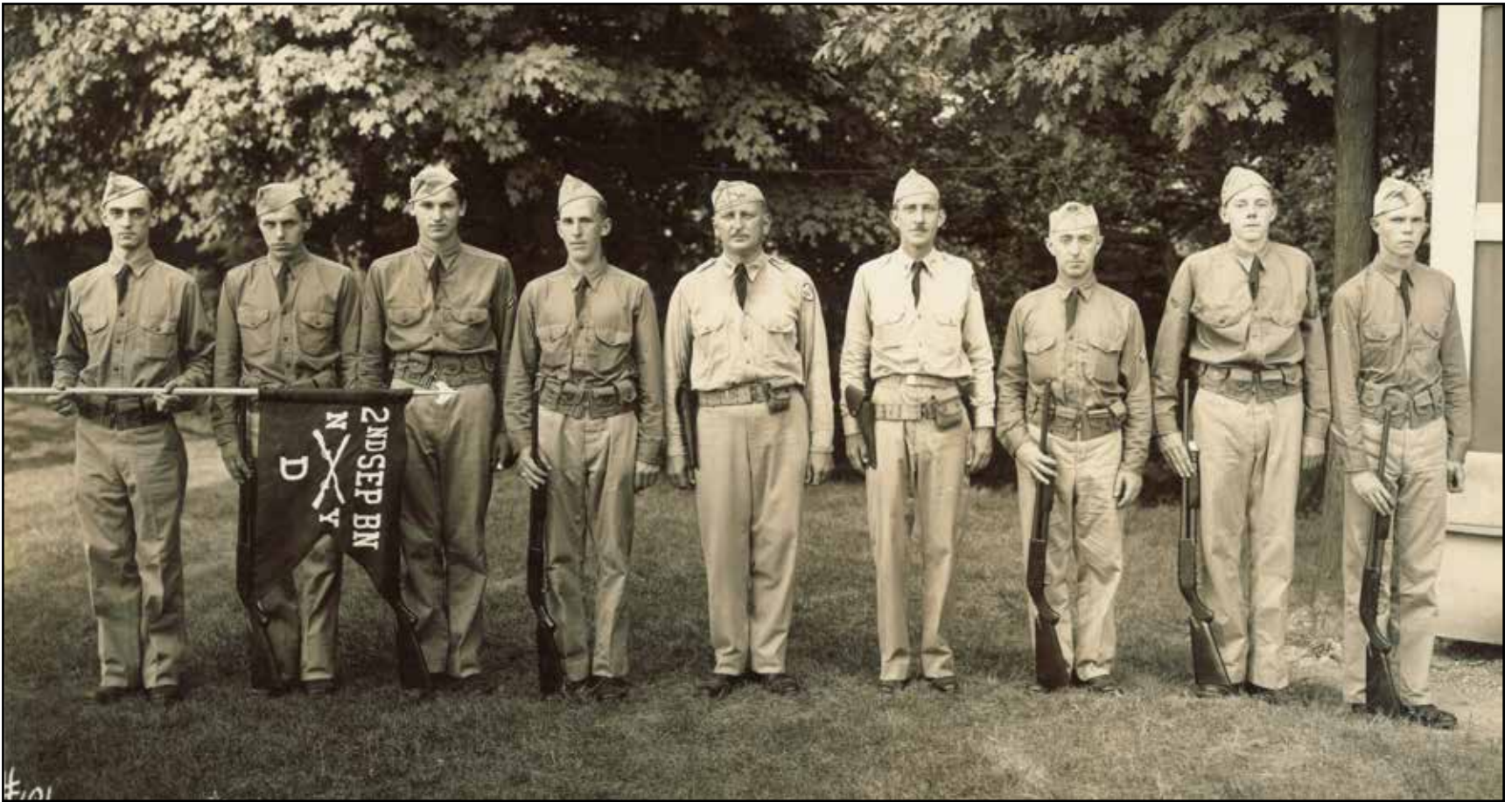
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Southold boys training with the local Militia, 1942. Kenneth Hagerman is third from left.

During World War II, the New York State Guard was formed for homeland protection. During this time, young men from the local high schools were recruited for this service. The minimum age was 16 years and these young volunteers were expected to perform the various hazardous duties today's National Guard does throughout the state.

In 1942, union workers at the Brooklyn Navy Yards threatened to strike. Riots seemed imminent and the local state guard was being asked to mobilize. Ken Hagerman remembered his group gathering at Southhold

High School and told to wait. Armed only with their ammunition belts, uniforms and World War I Doughboy helmets, word came that the shotguns locked in the school basement were to be issued. Thankfully, after a lengthy wait, they were sent home.

Later their training consisted of simulated skirmishes in and around the dunes in Peconic, drilling in the school basement and training at Camp Smith in upstate New York.



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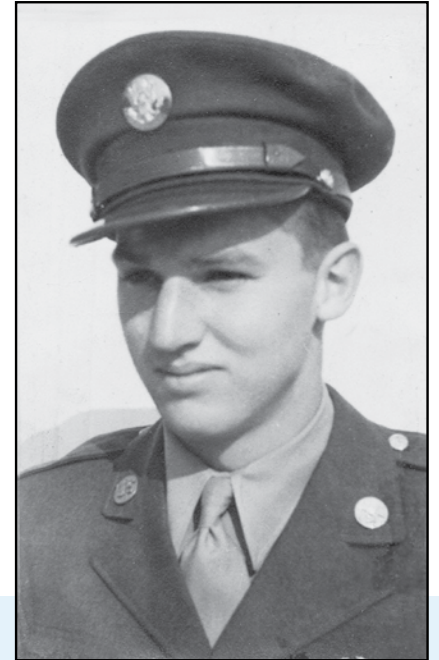
45655 ROUTE 48 • SOUTHOLD

A TRIBUTE

In a tribute to my late father Kenneth W. Hagerman, I feel honored to publish a letter he'd written in 2001 but never submitted to the American Legion Magazine he subscribed to.

My father was a co-founder of the Peconic Bay Shopper, with the first issue being published in May 1978. As this is the last issue of the publication, his will be the last story published.

Thanks Dad, we miss you! —MPH



October 21, 2001

Dear Mr. Ambrose,

I read the article on G. I. Joe in the September issue of The American Legion magazine and spotted the paragraph at the end. So I thought, before my 76 year old brain goes AWOL, I had better put down on paper what I can remember.

I graduated from Southold High School in June of 1943 and just before I shipped out to Camp Upton, Long Island, NY, I became engaged to my high school sweetheart.

From Camp Upton I was sent to Camp Blanding, Florida for 17 weeks of basic infantry training. We were allowed to go home for a week and then on to Fort Ord, California. After waiting, (what else, it's the army), about two weeks, I was on my way to New Caledonia. There I joined up with the 27th Infantry, 2nd Division anti-tank Company. Actually, the company was a combination of anti-tank and infantry intense training. That lasted until December, 1944.

On our way north, we practiced landing on Guadalcanal a few times and then we were on our way to the Philippines and the Island of Luzon. We landed on January 11, 1945. The landing itself was relatively easy. We encountered some machine gun fire but because of darkness, it could have been friendly fire. However, the air raid right after we landed was not friendly. Its surprising how many bodies can fit into a fox hole.

We then started out on a north or westerly direction with the 161st on our left and the 35th on our right. We headed up Balete Pass and encountered minimal opposition from the enemy. The regiments on our flank had it rougher than we did.

The Japanese had a 75MM canon ahead of us which wasn't very accurate. It was around this time that I had a weird experience. Among the wild animals in the islands, the Panther was the most feared, especially its screams every so often. We dug a three man fox hole, taking turns on guard duty. I had just dozed off when three shots from our buddy on duty roused everybody in the area. It seems a panther had let go a bloody scream and we thought we were being attacked. Come daylight, my helmet had three bullet holes in it, and I had to wear it until I was able to swipe one from one of our wounded. I was getting weird looks from the other men in our company.

Continuing up highway 5 in the Cygayan Valley we were doing a lot of night patrols. My job was point for our company, or scout as it was called then. On the morning of April 8, 1945 I was on patrol when a sniper knocked me out of commission. Our medics patched me up as best they could and 2 Filipinos carried me down hill and put me on a two stretcher Jeep. One of my buddies tried to make me feel better by telling me he didn't think they would cut off my arm. (they didn't).

One more thrill on the mountain was at the aid station where we were put in an ambulance and had a full load but weren't moving. We were told the Japanese had the only road down zeroed in and would fire two or three rounds every hour. I agreed that it was a good reason to wait. After we finally got down, I was flown by Piper Cub to the Battalion Aid Station.

At the aid station, the doctors put a ½ body cast on me and I was shipped to the Island of Leyte. I was going batty with the heat and the rash under my cast which couldn't be scratched. After 10 days on Leyte, I was loaded onto a hospital ship and headed for home. Needless to say, I was more than a little concerned that our ship would be torpedoed because I figured I would sink like a rock in my heavy cast. Fortunately, we made it to San Francisco without mishap. We were about a week out when VE day was announced and we all cheered like mad. The crew, being Norwegian, didn't cheer. They just got quite drunk. It's a wonder we made it home.

We were unloaded at San Francisco and were admitted to Letterman General Hospital. We were wined and dined by the locals, forgot our wounds and had a very enjoyable time. After about two weeks, I was sent by train to Atlantic City, New Jersey, the closest Army hospital to my home on Long Island. Actually, these hospitals were huge hotels converted into hospitals for the duration. We all had good care and after a couple of weeks recuperating, we were allowed to go home on leave. In October of that year, I was discharged and was home at last for good.

In June, 1946, I married my high school sweet heart, had three children who gave us seven beautiful grandchildren.

Sincerely,
Kenneth W. Hagerman
Southold, New York



Kenneth William Hagerman
1925 - 2010