

Excerpted from a September 8, 2015 interview with Howard Wilcox, Middlebury, VT conducted by Gregory L. Sharrow (AU2015-2032) for the AFC Archie Green Fellowship Project (VFC2014-0005)

Howard Wilcox: *Milk & Ice Cream*

Howard Wilcox: They initially would bottle their milk by means of what would be called an aerator, which was a cone apparatus that was set up in a room. We had a really nice spring, which we still use, and they would bring the water, would go through the aerator. And on the top of that, they would pour the milk in and the milk would flow over the outside of the aerator. And they would hold the pint container or quart container underneath it. Open this spigot and fill that and then reach into a large barrel where the caps were and put the caps on. And my dad said that he thought our milk kept a little longer than the other ones because we had colder water, because at that point there would be no commercial type of refrigeration. We still had the old milk wagon that they used to use. My aunt, my aunt Mildred said that there was a spring over the bank opposite the house, and if they had too much cream, they would put the cream in in like a five quart pail with a cover on it, or a can as we would describe it, and put it in the spring to try to keep it cold. A story to go with with that would be my great aunt lived in the village and when we became 16 years of age, one of our jobs in the summertime was to drive the truck while the guy took vacation. So we would stop at my aunt's house, shut the truck off and go inside because she always had cake and cookies for us. And as time progressed and modern techniques evolved of pasteurization, she said, Well, I knew you were coming because my great uncle worked there and told her, and she said, but I tried to labor some milk in the pantry because she was used to making cookies out of soured milk. But she said I had had a heck of a time to get it to sour. So the transition of in the 50s, and if you go backwards, what my aunt was describing, which had been in the 20s and the evolution of refrigeration and the ability to keep products longer. So now we're in that 2015 area, and they used aseptic means to process milk, which can keep up to a month or more longer. In Europe, they're using techniques where it's all shelf stable. So it's quite a...if you think about all of these things, it becomes quite a thing to think you've gone through this period of time to see this amount of change, which is positive.

Gregory Sharrow: So where did ice cream come in?

Howard Wilcox: So ice cream in 1928 in a village, a gentleman by the name, I think it was John McGuire, I'm not sure, Mr Maguire had an ice cream business that he wanted to sell. And my grandfather decided because the kids were getting out of high school, it would be a good addition to his milk business. And he also probably had a surplus of cream. Again, my

aunt said that that they used to have. I'm going to say that BBS it was called student, not Student Day or Mountain Day and this Mr Maguire used to make a special ice cream for them, but she said he never put enough cream in it. So when my grandfather bought the business, they had the availability of cream. My uncle Roger made it in the village for a period of about three to four years before they moved it to the present farm and they used ice and salt. They used what we would describe today as an old fashioned ice cream crank. My dad said they had electric motor on it. So they used to get ice from Equinox Pond. I'm not quite sure. I never, my dad never told me where they stored it but they had to stored it someplace. They used to use sawdust to insulate the ice. Because that story comes from my father in law, who was part of the Hill Farm, which is about 5 miles south of where our present farm is. And they had an inn and they used to put the ice in the ice house. And when he got out of school, his job was to, because he had small hands, was to poke the sawdust between the ice so that it would keep.