

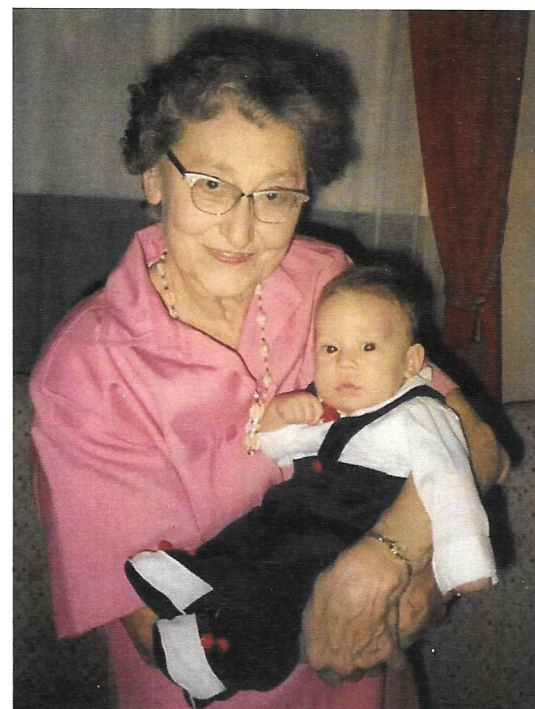
The Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives, Inc.

Happy 100th Birthday, Charlotte!

On December 15, 2016, the CLEMA Board and volunteers will celebrate what would have been Charlotte's 100th birthday!

Many town residents remember Charlotte the Town Historian, consummate lawn-mower, avid member and Sunday School teacher at the First Congregational Church. Charlotte was also a member of the Historical Society and unofficial town photographer. A few lucky people knew her family side as babysitter and cuddler-in-chief, children's home theater buff and pianist, generous-to-a-fault aunt and great-aunt and above all, lover of chocolate!

Born at her Madison home on December 15, 1916 to Cyrus and Mary Scranton Evarts, Charlotte joined her four-year-old brother Sidney. She grew up singing in the church choir, playing piano and participating in the Girl Scouts. She attended and graduated Hand High School and clerked for Clinton Light and Power, later Northeast Utilities. But every Saturday, she opened the doors to her little red house to her cherished great-nieces and nephew, where she had built a huge playroom filled with dress-ups, doll houses, tea sets (she let us use her childhood set!) – everything a child could imagine to fill his or her day. She would often keep us overnight, feeding us a hearty dinner and sending us off to church on Sunday morning. Aunt Charlotte had a bubbly laugh, a beautiful singing voice, patience for our young activities (singing and performing musicals for her - without the skill of either!), but most memorable, her sweet-tooth. There was always an open chocolate bar just out of reach on the top of the refrigerator, a yummy dessert after dinner and an overflowing dish of M&M's. As we grew and started our families, Aunt Charlotte was always the one to scoop up the babies and hold them through her entire meal – she was quite the multi-tasker. Our family celebrations were always complete when she was at our table.



Charlotte and great-grandnephew Michael Landon

We lost her all too soon, but with the generosity of the Town of Madison and a group of very dedicated friends and history enthusiasts, the Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives was founded in 1995, and it is through the work of the Archives, that we honor and remember our beloved Aunt Charlotte. So, on December 15th, we will honor her memory and her gift to the town with, what else? CHOCOLATE!

– As fondly remembered by the Evarts Family

Established in 1995, the Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to collecting, preserving and making available for public use archival materials related to Madison, CT. Visit us at 8 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443 or on the internet at www.evartsarchives.org. CLEMA's hours are: Tuesdays 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. and Fridays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. or by appointment by calling CLEMA at (203) 245-5667.

Over Here, Over There: Madison During World War I

To mark the centennial of World War I, CLEMA and the Madison Historical Society have teamed up to produce the exhibit "Over Here, Over There: Madison During World War I." Artifacts, images, and compelling text bring to life the story of local people connected to Madison who struggled through battles overseas as well as food shortages and the Influenza pandemic at home. The exhibit is staged at Lee's Academy and Memorial Hall. Check each organization's websites for updates as to viewing dates and times.

One of the many stories presented is . . .

Madison's Vanguard

Before the United States entered the war, five individuals connected to Madison experienced the conflict and its impact first hand.

Driven by youthful exuberance and a sense of adventure, sixteen-year-old Morgan Redfield left home and concealed his age in order to join the Canadian Army. His letters relate a teen's perspective of the era and provide a glimpse of military training north of the border.



Paul Pavelka was a daring thrill-seeker. Shortly after Germany invaded Belgium, he offered his services to the French Foreign Legion. Present during early battles of the war, he survived being wounded in hand-to-hand combat before taking to the skies as a member of the famed air squadron – the Lafayette Escadrille.

Upon graduating from M.I.T., Philip Platt dedicated his early career to improving public health. The war gave him ample opportunity to do this in ways he never imaged. In 1916, he served in Brussels with the Commission for the Relief of Belgium. Months later while in France with the American Red Cross, he worked to decrease that country's soaring child death rate. Between these two postings, Platt took a State Department position in Petrograd (Leningrad) where he witnessed the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in March 1917.

Grace Cleveland Porter

Grace Cleveland Porter was known as "Mamma Graziosa" or "kind, good little mother" by Italian soldiers she tended as a nurse in a Red Cross Hospital in Florence, Italy. Whether playing her guitar, changing patients' bandages or teaching the wounded to string beads, Porter believed there was healing power in "love and understanding sympathy."

Dr. John Lancer was a humanitarian whose surgical skills saved lives on the Eastern Front. Among the first wave of Red Cross physicians sent from America to war torn Europe, Lancer headed a 130-bed hospital in Cosel, southeastern Silesia. Ironically, his patients were soldiers from Germany - the very country against which America would be fighting in 1917 and 1918.

While their motivations and roles differed, Morgan Redfield, Paul Pavelka, Philip Platt, Grace Porter and Dr. John Lancer were individuals of action with a keen sense of purpose and duty. Jeopardizing their own security, setting aside their own comfort, and interrupting their daily lives, they ventured forth to be counted among America's vanguard.



Dr. John Lancer

The Archives March On!



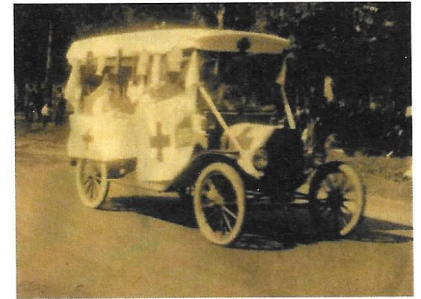
Many Americans volunteered to assist France in the early years of the First World War by driving ambulances to carry the wounded to care and safety. Many more volunteered for the Red Cross.

Above Mr. King's 1916 Model T. On the right is an original photo from the CLEMA collection of a Model T on Boston Post Road near the Green in Madison displaying banners of the Red Cross. This image is very near where the 2016 parade photos were taken.

Members of the Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives and the Madison Historical Society marched together along Boston Post Road in the Madison July 4th Parade to promote the opening of the World War One exhibit. "Over Here, Over There".

CLEMA Archivist Nancy Bastian and Board President Robert Gerard carried the flags of France and the United States just ahead of an authentically restored 1916 Model T Ambulance owned by Mr. George King, III.

Mr. King proudly displays this vehicle often and recently traveled to France to participate in 100 year remembrances held there.



Read All About It! Bauer Grant Rewinds History!

History has gotten "reel-y" interesting at the Archives. Thanks to a grant from the Bauer Foundation, 44 reels (and soon another 8!) have been added to CLEMA's microfilm collection. Joining select reels of *U.S. Census* records and the *Shore Line Times* are editions from such regional titles as New Haven's *Morning Journal & Courier*, the *New Haven Herald*, and the *New Haven Daily Palladium*.

It's exciting news as many of the date ranges precede the *Shore Line Times*, which began in 1877. The Bauer grant has given researchers the opportunity to read articles as far back as 1841.

The indexing process is underway and already volunteers have gained a greater understanding of Madison's past and personalities. Especially noteworthy is information about the Civil War era and Rev. Samuel Fiske. Rev. Samuel Fiske was the fifth minister of the First Congregational Church. During the Civil War, Rev. Fiske served as a Captain in the 14th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers.



Rev. Samuel Fiske

A letter he penned appears on the front page of the July 28, 1863 *New Haven Daily Palladium*. In it he confronted critics of the 27th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers, a unit with a 9-months enlistment period. "I hear sometimes slighting words spoken of nine months troops for not volunteering to stay after their time expired." After recounting the 27th's battle record at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, Rev. Fiske reminded readers: "let no man sneer at them as nine months' men, till he can show in his whole life as much good service rendered the Commonwealth as they have given in a brief three-quarters of a year."

On May 6, 1864, Rev. Fiske was wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness. He died 16 days later. The details of his funeral service in Madison occupied 1½ columns of the front page of the May 27, 1864 edition of the *New Haven Daily Palladium*.



Maria Elena Pignatelli

Farewell to a Royal Princess

At a graveside service this July at West Cemetery, the Evarts Archives and friends said good-bye to Princess Maria Elena Pignatelli. A longtime CLEMA supporter and volunteer, she was also the last of the Pignatelli royalty to reside in Madison as well as the last direct descendant of the George Augustus Wilcox family.

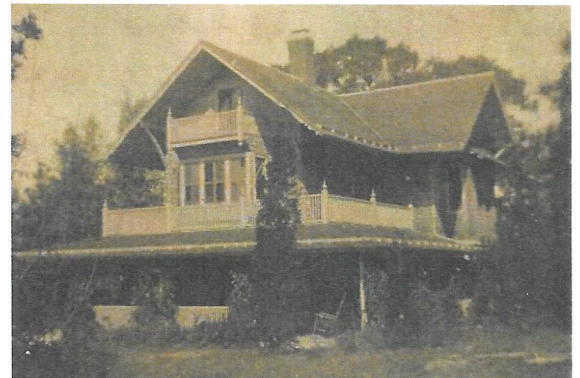
Maria Elena was the granddaughter of George Augustus Wilcox (1830-1928). Born and educated in Madison, George graduated from Yale in 1852 before becoming a successful Michigan lawyer and entrepreneur. Two years after he retired, he married Mary Hobart Grenelle (1867-1943). Constance Wilcox (1895-1977) was the couple's only child. A noted playwright, Constance co-founded the local summer theater groups: The Garden Plays and Play Barn, which later inspired the summer theatrical touring group, "The Jitney Players." On August 28, 1925, Constance married Prince Guido Pignatelli, a

descendant of both Italian and Russian nobility. Constance was now a royal princess. Their only living child was a daughter, Princess Maria Elena.

Maria Elena's full royal title was "Donna Maria Elena Natalia Patricia Pignatelli dei Duchi di Montecalvo." Born on March 29, 1928 in Florence, Italy, Maria Elena trained in the performing arts both in America and Europe before embarking on a career as a director, opera singer, playwright and poet. In 1959, she directed the critically acclaimed production of "Our Town" for the American Embassy Little Theater Group in Paris. A mezzo-soprano, she sang in opera productions in New York City.

Like her grandparents and parents, Maria Elena was devoted to Madison. She produced shows for Madison Public Access TV, was the 1983 chairperson of the local history observance "Battle for Madison" and hosted for years, a Halloween haunted house for the community at Oakledge, the family home. Maria Elena was a volunteer at the Archives, Grave House, and Historical Society. She enjoyed sharing her passion for photography and the written word, holding exhibits, talks and poetry readings. Although Maria Elena moved away from Madison in 1996, she remained a frequent Archives visitor and source for local history.

On November 19, 2015, Maria Elena passed away peacefully in Hamden. This summer, her ashes were buried in the Wilcox plot in West Cemetery.



Pignatelli homestead on Island Avenue

Finders, Keepers . . .

September 15, 2016 was an exciting and fruitful day for CLEMA at the Academy Street Elementary School tag sale.

Six representatives from the Archives were present at the public tag sale perusing, searching and selecting items from the tables that were set up in the gymnasium. The items chosen were deemed representative of the legacy of the building that was first opened as Hand High School in 1921. The last High School Graduation in the school was the class of 1960. The building was last used as a school in 2004 and has been shuttered ever since. We all scurried around collecting our cache and adding to our ever-growing pile of historic items of letters, documents, and photographs of times past. We also picked up many items that we have passed on to the Madison Historical Society.

On the following Monday, we were privileged to tour the entire building as we continued our search for significant and historical items to preserve for future generations in Madison. We again left the building with an appreciative collection of items.

We at CLEMA want to thank the Town of Madison for this opportunity to allow us to preserve a part of the history of our town.