



Albert W. Bee was a newspaper agent in Boston, who established a branch store offering newspapers, stationary, fruit, and confections in Bar Harbor during the summer months at least as early as 1881.

“I shall open my stores at Bar Harbor, with my usual line of summer goods, early in June; and at Southwest Harbor, July 1st.” – The bottom lines of a front page ad that Albert ran in many issues of the Bar Harbor Record; this one on March 17, 1887.

In order to oversee this business, Bee brought his family to Maine. They apparently rented a house or houses in Southwest Harbor for a year or two. In 1888 he built a house at what was then 30 Dirigo Road, on the back shore, and named it “Sleepy Hollow By-the-Sound.”

“Mr. Bee’s new cottage is nearing completion under the skilled hands of Mr. Lurvey. When done it will be an ornament to the place.” – The Bar Harbor Record, March 29, 1888.

The builder was probably Seth W. Lurvey, listed in the Maine Register and State Yearbook of 1891 (and several other sources) as a carpenter. Seth W. Lurvey was born in October, 1848 and was adopted by Samuel Jr. (1817-1893) and Joanna (Mayo) Lurvey (1815-1907). Seth married Mrs. Persis (Washburn) Annis of Brewer on January 24, 1874. Their son, Sam Allanson Lurvey was also a carpenter. Seth died in 1922. Samuel Lurvey Jr.’s first cousin, Levi Lurvey (1832-1902) was listed in the “Mount Desert Island and the Cranberry Isles” printed by N.K. Sawyer in 1871, as a house joiner. Levi would have been 56 when “Sleepy Hollow” was built. Seth would have been 40 years old.

“Sleepy Hollow By-the-Sound, is the name of Mr. Albert W. Bee’s new summer home at Southwest Harbor. It is located just north of the Claremont House, at the entrance to Somes’ Sound and is a very handsome and convenient cottage of which the owner was the architect. From the extensive verandas there are charming views of the mountains and ocean, and every boat arriving at Southwest Harbor or Northeast Harbor can be seen from the place. On the shore in front of the cottage there is a sparkling spring of pure water from which the house is supplied. Mr. Bee owns several acres of desirable land about his cottage and he has recently constructed an avenue through the property and has also laid out a second “tow-path” along the banks of the shore. Mrs. A.W. Bee and her two children are now located in their house for the season and Mr. Bee will spend as much time there as his business will allow.”

“Mr. A.W. Bee, the well-known stationer and confectioner, is at his old stand on Main Street. He has been busily engaged during the past week in fitting out his establishment for the season’s business, and has made many elegant improvements in his store.” – The Bar Harbor Record, June 7, 1888.

Albert Wilson Bee II was born in March 1854 to Albert Wilson I (1821-1863) and Sophronia Louise Clapp Bee (1830-1925) in California.

Albert's father, Albert Wilson Bee I, sailed to California early in 1849 to participate in the Gold Rush. He and his brother, Frederick A. Bee (c. 1826-1892) founded the Bee Line, the first telegraph line across the Sierra, linking California and Nevada, one of the first fragile parts of what would later be the transcontinental telegraph line that linked California to the east coast. Albert was a merchant in the gold fields. Frederick was involved in telegraph and railroad concerns and was appointed by the Chinese government to serve as vice-consul in the Chinese consulate in San Francisco in 1878. He was an early advocate for the rights of Chinese immigrants and is widely quoted in many histories of their struggles in California. Albert I died at the age of 41 in 1863 while engaged in silver mining in Nevada.

Albert Wilson Bee II graduated from MIT in 1874. By 1878 he was in the stationery business in Boston and Bar Harbor - "Suggestions and any information desirable for the Guide may be sent to Albert W. Bee, who, either at Bar Harbor or 169 Tremont Street, Boston, will be happy to give freely any information desired by tourists." - "The Hand-book of Mount Desert, Coast of Maine, with all the routes thither, Descriptions of the Scenery and Topography, Sketches of the History, with Illustrations and Views of Mount Desert, and Penobscot and Frenchman's Bay from the United States Coast Survey by Benjamin Franklin De Costa", Boston: A. Williams & Co., New York: T. Whittaker, Bar Harbor: A.W. Bee, 1878.

A.W. Bee Stationery, at 169 Tremont Street, Boston was across from The Common, near Avery Street - a very visible location.

In 1881 Albert W. Bee published "The Bar Harbor blue book and Mount Desert Guide, 1881 : with map and tables."

While in Boston, Albert boarded with the Payson family at 216 Wheelock Court in Boston. On May 30, 1881 he married the Paysons' daughter, Anna Holden Payson in Boston, Massachusetts. Anna was born on September 22, 1854 to Thomas and Melinda Pike (Blake) Payson, in Dorchester, Massachusetts where Albert's mother relatives lived. the Clapp family appear prominently in Dorchester history.

Albert and Anna had a son, Albert Wilson Bee III, born on August 11, 1882. Another son, Charles Everett Bee, was born in 1884 in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

"In 1884 A.W. Bee, whose summer home was at the Back Shore and whose stationery and confectionary store at Bar Harbor was a popular place with an increasing business, built a building on the rocky hill of land near what is now the Mills Store. Here, for some years was a place where the current magazines, newspapers, stationery and souvenirs were sold and it was the first "ice cream parlor" in the town. It did a thriving business in the summer months and was a popular gathering place all through the summer season until it was burned about 1909. Bradley of Bar Harbor built a photograph saloon on the north side of the building and here tintypes as well as "card" and "cabinet" size photographs were taken for several years until it went up in flames with the Bee establishment. Dr. George A. Neal was a photographer in charge for several summer vacations while he was attending medical school." - Traditions and Records of Southwest Harbor and Somesville, Mount Desert Island, Maine by Mrs. Seth S. Thornton, p. 171 - 1938.

In 1886 Albert's family were probably renting a house in Southwest Harbor. They are listed as staying at "The Homestead" in various directories. We have not found anyone today who can distinguish just

which homestead, of many, that would be. It is possible that it was Captain Nathan Clark's house near Steamboat Wharf in front of which Bradley photographed Mrs. Bee and the children (see SWHPL 5643).

"Southwest Harbor - Homestead Cottage" – Mrs. A.W. Bee and family, Boston; Mrs. S.L. Bee, San Francisco; Mrs. M.M. Clapp, the Misses Clapp, Mrs. M.P. Payson, Dorchester, Mass." – Listed under Southwest Harbor in "Bar Harbor and Mount Desert Island" By William Berry Lapham, 1886.

Mrs. S.L. Bee was Albert W. Bee's mother, Sophronia Louise Clapp Bee (1830-1925).

Mrs. M.P. Payson was Anna Bee's mother, Melinda Pike (Blake) Payson.

The other ladies were members of the Clapp family from Dorchester.

Albert's mother, Sophronia Louisa Clapp, only daughter of Jason (1773-1852) and Louisa M. (Hutchins) Clapp, was an interesting lady. She married the senior Albert W. Bee, " of New York State, who had an interest in some of the silver mines of Nevada. They lived most of their married life in California. He was connected with many of the public and private improvements in that part of the country, but was taken away in the prime of his life in 1863. His widow was afterwards employed in a responsible situation in the U.S. mint in San Francisco, and large amounts of the precious metals passed through her hands. She has journeyed several times to and from that State and has therefore had much experience as a traveler. She is now residing at the eastward." – "The Clapp Memorial: Record of the Clapp Family in America" by Ebenezer Clapp, 1876, p. 257.

Albert and Anna sold "Sleepy Hollow By the Sea" in September, 1910 and went to live on a farm in Saratoga Township, Santa Clara, California. Anna was apparently farming while Albert ran a general store. By 1920 Albert and Anna were retired and living at 1625 Laguna Street, Santa Barbara, California. Albert Wilson Bee died in 1924 in California.

"Albert W. Bee Dies At California Home

Pioneer Bar Harbor Business Man Passes Away In Santa Barbara Dec. 28

Albert W- Bee, for more than 40 years one of Bar Harbor's well known businessmen, died December 28th at his home in Santa Barbara, California at the age of 70 years. Mr. Bee was born in California but came to Bar Harbor as a young man about 60 years ago and was truly one of the pioneer business men of the resort. He established his well known Main Street shop which he conducted for more than 40 years.

Mr. Bee was in Bar Harbor for the last time in 1915 and at approximately that time sold his shop to Miss I. D. Shaw who had for many years been his assistant in its management. Miss Shaw conducted the business successfully for a number of years and last year sold it to Miss Clough, who continues to conduct it under the name of Bee's.

For many years Mr. Bee spent his winters in California where he had a ranch near Santa Barbara. He is survived by his wife and by his mother, Mrs. Louise S. Bee of San Francisco, who is 94 years of age. Mrs. Bee makes her home with her son, Everett Bee. Mr. Bee is also survived by two sons, Albert W- of Chicago and Charles E. of Howe Cave, N. Y." - The Bar Harbor Times, Wednesday, January 7, 1925

Albert and Anna's son, Albert Wilson Bee III graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1904 with a Bachelor of Science degree from the Civil and Typographical Engineering dept. He entered

building construction work in the Chicago area and did considerable work at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1933. He also contracted for track-laying on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe line. Albert III probably married Ruth Andrews.

"F.G. Clapp, formerly with the U.S. Geological Survey, and A.W. Bee [Albert Wilson Bee III] have opened offices at 610 Fitzsimmons building, Pittsburg [Sic], Pa. Their practice will include geology and the allied branches of engineering, having to do with coal, oil and gas properties, wells, ground waters and public water supplies, and minerals, with the surveying, mapping and drafting accompanying Investigations on these lines." – "Water and Sewage Works", Volumes 34-35 – 1908.

Frederick Gardner Clapp (1879-1944) was Albert Wilson Bee III's fourth cousin once removed as they both descended from Lemuel Clapp (1735-1819). He was an internationally known geologist was born to Edward Blake and Mary Frances (Jones) Clapp on July 20, 1879, Boston, Massachusetts. Frederick received his degree from MIT in 1901, and worked for the United States Geological Survey. He married Helen Drew Ripley on December 28, 1908. He photographed the Southwest Harbor Water Company's first pump and windmill on Freeman Ridge and, in 1909, wrote "Underground Waters of Southern Maine" during the time the Bee family summered in Southwest Harbor.

Frederick G. Clapp made the first map of the Oklahoma oil fields c. 1919, worked in Canada for the Department of Mines (c. 1911) and China (1913-1915). He headed the Commonwealth's search for oil in Australia 1923-1925. Frederick G. Clapp died on February 19, 1944. Albert Wilson Bee III died on February 14, 1949 in Belvedere, California.

Albert and Anna Bee's second son, Charles Everett Bee, was born in 1884 in Dorchester, Massachusetts. He received his degree in Civil Engineering from Stamford University in 1910 and a Masters degree in the same subject from Cornell University in 1915. He married Helen E. Blake, a 1908 graduate of Cornell. Charles was a science instructor at Gresham High School, Gresham, Oregon and later practiced Civil Engineering Charles died on October 3, 1938. His home was in Homer, New York, near Ithaca.

This information is a small part of the research done by archivists at the Southwest Harbor Public Library in support of the photographs in their collection concerning early summer resident Albert Wilson Bee II.

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