

Guide to the Harry D. Lane Diaries, 1921-1978

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Harry D. Lane Diaries, 1921-1978

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-228-6688
<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

2011.009

Author of Finding Aid:

Suzanne Huggard

Creator:

Lane, Harry D., 1886-1980

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

5 boxes ; 1.88 linear feet

Abstract:

This collection contains 57 diaries of Harry D. Lane, a resident of North Hampton, NH, dated 1921 and 1923 to 1978. Lane never married, and lived on the family homestead with his sister and brother-in-law, working as an assistant station agent for the Boston and Maine Railroad for fifty-four years. His diaries contain notations about daily family life of the period as well as his work and leisure activities. There are many references to traveling easily to Portsmouth or Boston by train for shopping, ball games, etc., but little reference to current events beyond his local milieu.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Harry D. Lane Diaries were purchased by the New Hampshire Historical Society on February 15, 2011.

Processing Information:

This collection was first processed partially by an unknown person and then by Suzanne Huggard from September to December 2013. The finding aid was written by Suzanne Huggard in January 2014. This finding aid follows the standards set forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The volumes in this collection are all in good condition and may be used without restriction.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, Harry D. Lane Diaries, 2011.009. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

Harry D. Lane, son of Lewis K. H. (1856-1897) and Ida B. (Tarlton) Lane (1855-1923), was born February 19, 1886, and was a lifelong resident of North Hampton, NH, living on the family homestead with his sister, Louise L. (1888-1952), and her husband Leslie Lovett. Harry was a station agent for the Boston and Maine Railroad in North Hampton for fifty-four years. His diaries indicate that he also contributed to work on the family farm. A baseball fan, he frequently traveled to Boston to see ballgames. Harry D. Lane died August 29, 1980 at North Hampton.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

The Harry D. Lane Diaries consist primarily of individual yearly diaries written by Harry D. Lane of North Hampton, NH, covering the years 1921 and 1923 to 1978. There is no volume for 1922, and the last one included is 1978 which was two years before his death in August 1980. The content of the diaries is limited to the area of coastal New Hampshire where he spent his whole life. Lane lived on the family homestead with his sister and brother-in-law.

Harry D. Lane recorded his daily life activities with brief daily entries in his diaries. The people mentioned are largely his family members and co-workers, as well as neighbors and local shopkeepers. There are many entries telling of trips to Portsmouth for shopping, or to the shore for fresh lobsters and clams, as well as frequent train trips to Boston for baseball games. The short entries give a picture of how easy it was to travel by train in coastal New Hampshire and to Boston. There are few references to events and places outside this area.

Some notable entries include car purchases and his first license plate, family deaths, jury duty, a train robbery in 1926 where \$65,000 was stolen, income taxes, a 1929 forest fire in North Hampton, the demolition of the Batchelder Hotel, notes on the Mabel Johnson Smith v. Boston & Maine case in 1933 and 1936-1937, escaped prisoners from Portsmouth in 1934, the 1938 Hurricane, the sinking of a submarine in 1939, the bridge opening between Portsmouth and Kittery, the local effects of World War II, various local fires, the installation of dial telephones, his retirement, etc. See the appendix for a full list of notable entries.

In addition to the diaries, there are some loose papers that were removed from the diaries and placed (either originals or copies) in folders in the last box. These materials include photographs, programs, tax receipts, membership cards, some correspondence, retirement papers, and newspaper clippings.

Arrangement:

This collection is organized chronologically with loose materials found in the diaries in folders at the end.

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Box 1

- Volume 1 Diary, 1921
- Volume 2 Diary, 1923
- Volume 3 Diary, 1924
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- Volume 7 Diary, 1928
- Volume 8 Diary, 1929
- Volume 9 Diary, 1930
- Volume 10 Diary, 1931
- Volume 11 Diary, 1932
- Volume 12 Diary, 1933
- Volume 13 Diary, 1934
- Volume 14 Diary, 1935
- Volume 15 Diary, 1936
- Volume 16 Diary, 1937
- Volume 17 Diary, 1938
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Box 2

Volume 1 Diary, 1940
Volume 2 Diary, 1941
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Volume 4 Diary, 1943
Volume 5 Diary, 1944
Volume 6 Diary, 1945
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Box 4

Volume 1 Diary, 1967
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Volume 3 Diary, 1969
Volume 4 Diary, 1970
Volume 5 Diary, 1971
Volume 6 Diary, 1972
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Volume 8 Diary, 1974
Volume 9 Diary, 1975
Volume 10 Diary, 1976
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Box 5

Folder 1	Loose papers, 1923-1929
Folder 2	Loose papers, 1930-1933
Folder 3	Loose papers, 1934-1939
Folder 4	Loose papers, 1940-1949
Folder 5	Loose papers, 1950-1955
Folder 6	Loose papers, 1956-1959
Folder 7	Loose papers, 1960-1967
Folder 8	Loose papers, 1971-1977
Folder 9	Loose papers, undated

Subject Terms**People:**

Lane, Harry D., 1886-1980

Organizations:

Boston and Maine Railroad

Subjects:

Baseball
Diaries
Farm life
Railroads

Locations:

Hampton, NH
North Hampton, NH
Portsmouth, NH

Occupations:

Farmers
Railroad employees

Related MaterialsArchives

Harry D. Lane diary, 1915, 2009.061 (m)

Appendix

This appendix lists, by year, entries of particular interest or importance, as selected by the archivist. It is of interest to note that at the back of most diaries, Lane made a list of what he considered the events of note for each year. There are chronological lists of one-line descriptions for each month. Also, at the back of many diaries he also kept a brief record of expenditures for the year.

1921

Hampton Beach: dances, card playing and dramas many nights of the week. A good place to meet friends and girls.

1923

September purchases new Ford Coupe for \$590; Mother dies Christmas Day

1924

Birthday Feb. 19th. Many blank pages this year

1925

Jury Duty, paid \$6.12 for one day. First license plate: has only 5 numbers

1926

Harry Cushman Orchestra plays in Boston for radio broadcast, people gather around radios to listen (barber shop); big train robbery in Stratham 7/29: \$65,000 taken; large whale washes ashore at Hampton Beach 9/22.

1927

Sold Ford for \$180; paid \$150 to have house painted; 'Great American Flyer' (Lindbergh) lands in Paris 5/02.

1928

3/15 Town Meeting day, voted but does not say for whom or what.

1929

Paid income tax of \$13.69; Taylor the 'Dancing Barber' executed at Charlestown Prison; forest fire near North Hampton 9/3.

1930

Batchelder Hotel on Little Beach Head demolished by wrecking crew 6/09.

1931

Big rain storm and flooding washes away several cottages, and floods the RR tracks $\frac{3}{4}$; Oct-Dec has last 6 teeth pulled and is fitted for both upper and lower dentures, \$33.

1932

Fire at Rye Center Schoolhouse 2/12; Roosevelt beats Hoover 'by a landslide' and 'lots of Republicans more than surprised'

1933

Former Pres. Coolidge dies suddenly, buried in Vermont 1/07; paid income tax of \$13.57 commenting that it was 'a lot of money to give away.' NH & MA banks closed today 3/4; all banks closed until further notice 3/09; went to Dover for the hearing of the Johnson & Smith case 12/04; 12/06 -14 went to Exeter to court and was on stand for 6 hours but does not say what the case was.

1934

Big fire in Newburyport 5/18-19, factories and homes burned; two prisoners escaped Portsmouth jail

1935

Income tax paid \$19.57 on 3/07; train #2917 hit auto at crossing in Portsmouth killing two men.

1936

1/14-17 at Exeter Court House for second trial of Johnson Smith Case; on 1/14 was on the stand as a witness for 5 hours. 3/12-21 heavy rains and flooding in northeast, worst floods in memory all over eastern US, much damage to roads & bridges. 10/29 new overhead bridges at Rockingham opened, crossings closed. Roosevelt re-elected 11/03.

1937

6/15-18 in court for Johnson & Smith case, was on witness stand 6/16 'about all day'; train wreck 8/16 west of Dover, eleven cars off track.

1938

Storm: 9/21 rain & strong winds brought down trees and wires all over New England, worst storm ever known here, ocean high, trains delayed due to water over tracks (storm later known as 1938 Hurricane).

1939

Submarine sunk off coast at Little Boar's Head on 5/23. Rescue party saved 33, 26 drowned. On 8/13 Southern Pacific Streamliner crashed in Nevada, 19 killed. On 9/10 engine 3666 and one car went through Portsmouth Bridge into river, engineer and fireman drowned.

1940

Airship went down at Hampton Beach, man killed, 7/23. On 8/18, Roosevelt came by special train and visited the Navy Yard. New bridge between Portsmouth and Kittery opened 11/08.

1941

Submarine boat on test run sunk near Isles of Shoals. Yankees win World Series from Brooklyn 10/06. Received pay increase of 10 cents/hour on 12/31.

1942

Went to Portsmouth and registered for Army Draft on 44-65 year-old men 4/27. Gasoline ration in effect. Fourth of July very quiet, no fireworks, no bonfires due to war.

1943

Joined the Red Cross March 4. Big fire in Portsmouth burned all stores from Kearsarge Hotel to Montgomery Ward. March 31, daytime air raid. Got a little meat at 'Paul's' but no butter 9/24.

1944

Stewart Everett Rowe, former Mayor of Portsmouth died 4/21. Big fire at neighbor's property, destroying all buildings except part of house, spreading into woods and fields. Armistice Day 11/11, nearly all stores closed. 12/9 last dance at Country Club due to gasoline shortage.

1945

Roosevelt died 4/12. On 5/08, war in Europe officially over, but war in Japan still on. War over on 8/14. Roads & cities crowded with people celebrating. Crowds everywhere.

1946

Voting on racetrack in town 3/12, good turnout at town meeting. On 5/23 all trains stopped, trainmen and engineers on strike. Strike over on 5/25. Election Day: Republicans sweep country 11/05.

1947

Well very low due to lack of rain, lots of people without water. Trucks hauling water pass house all day. The Freedom Train went to Dover at midnight. Stayed at station and saw it go through. Many local fires, forest fires in Maine. Babe Ruth died today 8/16.

1949

Listened to radio broadcast of inauguration of President Truman 1/20. 8/29-30: 40 hour week, weekends off, signals now automatic.

1950

Big fire at Hampton Beach, lots of buildings burned 7/14. Bad train wreck on Long Island 11/22, 70-100 killed.

1951

Harry's Diner installed Television 7/10. Railroad Station at Greenland closed for good 11/16. Had a television set up at home 11/26.

1952

Sister Louise died 3/20. Electric stove set up 6/03. New sink in kitchen 7/02, washing machine set up 7/08. President Truman in Portsmouth 10/16. New oil burner going 10/18. Eisenhower elected 11/4. Three new radiators hooked up at house 12/18.

1953

Last day of passenger trains on Manchester & Lawrence branch 7/10.

1954

New train service Concord to Boston started Jan. first; bank at Durham robbed 3/17; explosion at Navy yard, two men killed.

1955

...little of note.

1956

Dial telephones in effect in area starting 4/15; fire destroyed Stratham Town Hall 8/10; 9/02 received pin for 50 yrs service to RR; Retired at end of year.

1957

Begins retirement 1/01; on 8/20 begins job at schoolhouse.

1958

8/27 purchased second-hand television.

1959

Church at Rye Center burned 3/19; first social security check \$211.80; 10/30 paid real estate tax \$190.

1960

4/23 Ocean Wave Hotel burned; 6/07 inherited \$1000 from cousin Carroll Fogg; 8/14 big fire at Hampton Beach; 9/12 hurricane, much damage; 10/04 airship fell into Boston Harbor, fifty killed.

1961

Bomber crashed at Pease 1/04, four killed; Social Security raise to \$40.00, 9/5; Styles Bridges died at Concord 11/26; Dr Simmons put our pet dog to death, we miss her, she was ten years old 12/01; 2 feet of snow 12/25.

1962

Allen Hotel at Hampton Beach gutted by fire 1/18; bought new Chevrolet car for \$1200 on 9/13, 'a nice looking car.'

1963

Submarine lost at sea in very deep water 4/11, all crew lost; center church struck by lightning 7/09; President Kennedy shot and killed in Dallas 11/23, whole country mourning

1964

Fire at Hampton killed man and two children 1/17; plane crashed (at Pease?) killed five airmen 11/05; tanker ashore in Portsmouth River 11/05; first snow 1.5 inches 12/03.

1965

1/27: new auto plates NH 9037; 7/29 bought new lawnmower \$14.88; contractors work on school addition 9/01.

1966

1/11, big freight wreck at Exeter; 11/16, started new Christmas Club.

1967

1/02, watched Rose Bowl Parade; 1/05, had tooth put in upper plate \$8; 4/27, killed 2' striped adder, first snake of season; 6/30, last passenger trains for New Hampshire, B&M has taken them off; 7/12, North Hampton Bank held up, \$25,000 taken.

1968

5/06, North Hampton Inn burned.

1969

4/26, horse had colt; 8/29, Nancy got new Chevrolet.

1970

6/24, four men killed at Portsmouth on bridge; 12/15, fire burned Pete Fuller's breeding barn, one horse killed, two escaped.

1971

1/27, bought 1964 Ford Falcon \$650; 6/08, new swimming pool installed; 12/31, Nancy rode her new snowmobile.

1972

12/26, President Truman died.

1973

6/17, John had big horse show here; 7/31, bad plane crash, 88 killed; 12/15, Nancy took dogs to see John in Portsmouth Hospital.

1974

2/04–3/27, in hospital or rest home (no diary entries), Nancy came to see me every day.

1975

2/28, John Carter died at Boston Hospital; 12/29, the W.T. Grant store closed.

1976

10/18, had second flu shot; 11/27, Branton "Pinky" Carter died (nephew).

1977

3/03, story about me in the papers.

1978

2/07 last entry.