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AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN

The Carey House Chronicles - The Bird Still Soars and The Bell Still Rings - came about several years after starting a historic walking tour in 1998. In 1996 when I was then VP of the Milford Historical Society and needed a "cause" to champion and since I always wanted to take an historic walk around downtown, I decided to research and start one. So, in 1997 I got out my old "Ramsdell Town History" and started reading it from page 1 and when an interesting fact or story came to light, would start a page on that subject on my computer. This research took about one full year to complete. There were self-guided walking tours available in pamphlet form but never a real live person doing a guided walking tour. The tours were started in the Spring of 1998 on every Monday evening the first year and continued on for several years. Every High School class celebrating their 50th Reunion, called to have their own private tour, and went on for several years. I also did tours on a Saturday morning during "Pumpkin Festival week-end. Also, I had been writing stories for the Milford Heritage Commission and the Milford Historical Society's newsletter, for over 10 years that were in addition to the walking tour history of buildings around the Oval. In 2007 I was looking for something in my papers and not finding it said out loud, "I should write a book". Thus, this book of 34 very historic stories about Milford came into being, taken from my research of over 10 years. The book starts with the barter system; our men who fought in the American Revolution; our Paul Revere Bell; how the "Band Stand" came about, and ending with the building of the new Milford Police Station. Two of the stories were written with permission from other authors to give the reader a "real" feel for life in the past. The intent of this book, written for the Milford Historical Society, was to give new residents some historic facts about Milford and how important our town was during the formation of this area, once called Dunstable, MA.

THEY CALLED HER CATE (1863 to 1884) and RISING WATER (1885 to 1899) - I first became aware of Cate Langdell's diaries in 1978 when my Mother, Constance L. F. Wheeler, received them from her Brother's estate. My mother regaled me with stories of Cate's life and I was immediately hooked but did not see the diaries for another 20 years. 1998 was the year I acquired them and another 10 years, 2008, before work began on Cate's diaries. Now here in front of me I realized while reading through and transcribing my Great Grandmother Cate's diaries, which took four years non-stop, that here was a story that most people knew nothing about except by word of mouth and needed to be told, a woman's first-hand experiences of life in a by-gone time. The diaries cover the years 1863 to 1930, 67 years of a woman's life, and give us a glimpse into life with no electricity, running water, TV, telephone or conveniences of any kind. Cate had to make her own soap, washing fluid, "try" the fat from the pig to make lard for pies. Family meant everything to these people, they visited relatives for a week or two at a time as they never knew when they would see each other again. Cate had a strong faith in God that got her through life. Medicine was almost non-existent and the spreading of sickness was not known to them. Many times, while transcribing the diaries onto my computer, I would holler out loud "Cate how could you do that". Finally, into the 20th Century Cate got many "modern" conveniences, her favorite being the "radiola". Reading Cate's diaries makes me thankful for what I have today and that the "good old days" were trying, hard work and dangerous. How they ever survived at all is amazing to me. "From Ox Cart to Auto", "Working My Cornfields", "Crisis, Crossroads and Milestones", "The Radiola, Victrola and Other Inventions" along with many other books will continue Cate's life further into the 20th Century.