

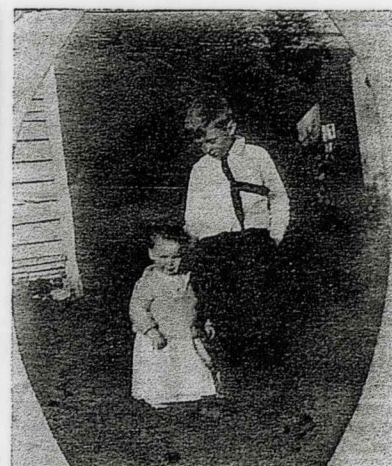
The Burr Farm has existed in Worthington since my great-great-great-grandfather bought the land in the year 1800. My grandparents, Franklin Henry Burr and Helen Marr [Gilmore] Burr ran the farm, and my dad Franklin Gilmore Burr and his sister Mary Persis [Burr] Hitchcock both grew up on the farm. My Parents met at UMass and married in 1942, I was born in 1944 and my sister Martha followed in 1947. We lived first in Greenfield, then in Dalton as my father was working for UMass extension service. In the late '40s my aging grandparents asked my dad, to move back to Worthington to help on the farm.



Frank and Helen, My grandparents.

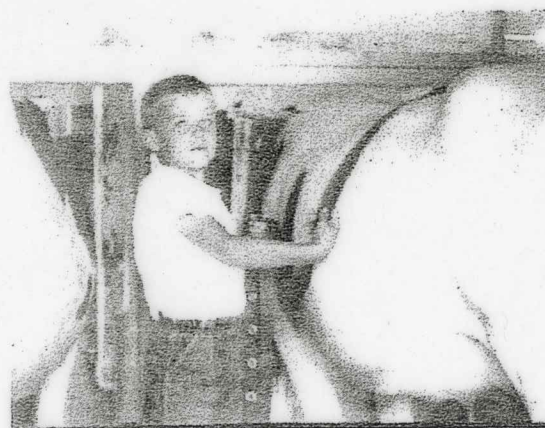


Mary Persis Burr.



Franklin and Mary about 1920.

My dad had a masters degree in chemistry and didn't really see himself as a farmer, but dutifully, we moved to Worthington when I was five and crowded into the old farmhouse. I loved the farm and the animals, and I especially loved driving the old 9N ford tractor, starting at age six. Just imagine what Child services would say now if they saw a six year old driving a tractor and raking hay.



Andy milking.



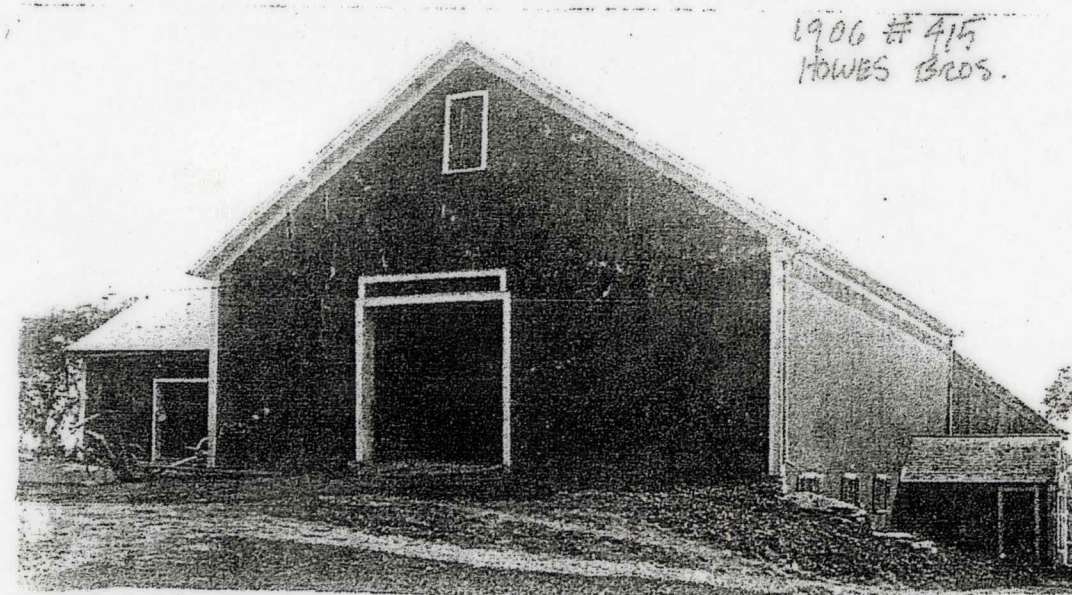
Harriett and a collie.

It was soon apparent that a small New England Dairy farm was a very difficult way to support a family. My mother, Harriett Andrus Burr was a city girl from Springfield who had met my dad at UMass. The story is told that on one of her first visits to the farm she took one of the Collie cow dogs for a walk on a hot summer day. She arrived back at the farm carrying the dog because it had been panting and she thought it must be exhausted or having a heart attack. However, she soon adjusted to the farm and loved it as much as any of us. In 1955 my grandfather died and my dad quickly shut down the farm, selling the cows, chickens and pigs, and took a job as a chemist with Strathmore Paper in Woronoco. My mother Harriett worked as an elementary school teacher in Russell for many years and Martha and I attended Conwell school here in Worthington when it was a grade one through eight school. My dad served a couple of terms as a selectman and was on the original committee that built Gateway Regional High School.



Seventh and eighth grade in 1957. In front, Andy Burr and Dan Dunlevy. Second row, Norman Hollowell [principal], John Stevens, Bonnie Albert, Carol Hathaway, Sue Fowler, Brenda Donovan. Back row, Allen Moran, Robert Myrick, Kathrine Bartlett, Larry Mason, Bonnie Bartlett, Judy Magargal, Henry Bartlett. Missing, Gary Granger, Patricia Myrick, Bobby Haskell, Betty Brooks, perhaps others...?

We moved away from Worthington in the 1960's when my dad took a job at Fitchburg Paper and my mother worked as a teacher in Ashburnham. I was in college at Williams, and my sister at Wellesley and the farm was unoccupied and fell into serious disrepair. All nine elm trees around the house succumbed to Dutch Elm and the big old [1840] dairy barn collapsed when the frost heaved its stone foundation.



This was a sad occasion, but it did open a nice view to the south.