

*Note this is a partial transcription of the diary, with some run of the mill entries omitted

Dear Nina Winn diary readers,

I can't believe that it's 1923 already! Over the decades during which the diaries of George Wellington, Susanna Adams Winn, and especially Nina Winn have been painstakingly transcribed, annotated, and posted to the Arlington List, both the late Stu Galley and I have each made decisions to advance the narrative by skipping some years. Most recently, 1919 was skipped because there was no diary for that year, and selected episodes from 1920 were presented in flashback format in the 1921 diary. As regular readers know, 1921 and 1922 were transformative years for Nina, and following her each day of those years allowed for events to unfold in a sense of real time. In 1921, Nina lost her beloved Aunt Georgianna and dealt as best she could with how she and Aunt Susanna would relate, due to their different interests and temperaments. Not quite two months after Aunt Georgianna's passing, Nina was shocked by the death of Vida Damon, her lifelong friend. Vida drowned in Maine after suffering a heart attack while swimming. After Vida's death, their Christmas Club (the "C.C."), which had been such an important social feature in the lives of Nina and her contemporaries, simply vanished from the canvas without comment from Nina. It was perhaps a natural time for this letting-go of a dimension of her youth, especially once Nina settled into a new full-time working life in middle age. By the end of 1921 Nina had quit her job at the Somerville Public Library without having another one. The year 1922 literally took Nina new places, as she not only landed a new full-time position at the Waltham Public Library; she also lodged four nights a week in Waltham to be near work. Nina's former colleague from the Somerville Public Library, Anna "Stoney" Stone, was her house sitter and sometime housemate, who mostly fit in well with life on Summer Street. Nina sold her inherited rental property at 12 Russell Terrace that had become as much a headache as anything else. The sales proceeds gave her a nest egg to invest for her future and to spend a bit, with plans to fix-up her home with central heating and a modern bathroom, to include hot and cold running water for the first time, and a flush toilet. Electricity and telephone have not yet been suggested as home improvements at 37 Summer St. And of course, the death of Nina's cousin and dear friend, Eleanor "La" Prentiss, dealt yet another severe blow to her. The collective impact of Nina losing her two closest friends in little over one year is not something about which she has expressed herself, but it's an inescapable reality that Nina is grieving and lonely for their companionship. Nina stays active and carries on, but things just cannot be the same. Now is not the moment to introduce a gap of years in Nina's story, but given that Nina will live for another 35+ years (from 1923 to 1958), the time has come to try a new approach to take the plot forward at a quickened pace. In 2021, I'll continue to provide a daily transcription, starting with Nina's 1923 diary; however, not all days will be transcribed and the entries will rarely correspond to the same day in our modern calendar. Nina's story will progress in chronological order, but only days with significant and interesting content will appear. By now we all "get the picture" of Nina's routine days picking out school deposits at the library, a poor lunch at the Grill, a fair supper at the Waldorf, etc. The same goes weeks of swims and pitting cherries to make pies at Mashpee. The goal of 1923, 1924, and possibly even 1925 diary transcriptions this year will be to relate Nina's life, but with focus on Arlington and Boston history--whether it be food, fashion, transportation, customs, entertainment, or social relations. As we know, Nina all but ignores politics. During 2020 it was necessary for me to add a lot more outside

content than usual in the form of notes in the 1922 diary, to maintain a solid level of Arlington-specific relevance. Now Nina is going to do more leading; my supplements will complement what she writes, and I'll continue to offer additions to provide broader context, albeit on a more limited basis. I wish you all a happy and healthy 2021, and I hope that you will find the new approach to relating Nina's life satisfying and that you'll enjoy seeing many interesting glimpses of the past in your inboxes each day. Best wishes, Richard

Monday, January 1, 1923

Poured all day and walking fierce. No one out, but little cat to see me and stayed all day. No New Year calls. A bed all the morning and I felt so tired & sick. Nice way to begin the New Year. Dinner with Stoney at one, and Stoney & I had supper with Aunt Sarah. Henry & Eva [Robbins] [*] to see her in PM; brot wonderful fruit from California. Mrs. Milton Robbins. [**] Packed some in PM, wrote some notes. Bed at 10 & tired _out_.

[*] Henry P. Robbins, born 1855, is the nephew of Aunt Sarah Daniels Winn, by her sister, Ellen Daniels Robbins, the wife of Edwin Robbins. The Edwin Robbins farm on Eastern Avenue is today Robbins Farm Park (a.k.a. Skyline Park), and was run after Edwin's death by Henry's younger brother, Nathan Robbins. Henry P. Robbins's wife is the former Eva C. Hall.

[**] This is the first appearance of Mrs. Milton Robbins in Nina's diaries, and the mention of her name just dangles on the page. Working from the sequence here, I wonder if the fruit that came from California had been sent by her.

Tuesday, January 2, 1923 [*]

Up by 6:30 & Stoney beat me [downstairs]. Breakfast & we both came to Waltham, as she wanted to see the expressman. [**] Piles of snow everywhere. Library 9-6 & made up time in evening. Dog weary & glad to get to room. Haven't been so tired for a year. Bed by 10.

[*] An exciting police chase took place on Massachusetts Avenue on this date, in pursuit of a trolley car stolen from the Arlington Heights terminus and taken on a speedy joy ride towards Cambridge. The streetcar was stopped in Arlington Center, with one arrest immediately made, and one accomplice captured later. The thieves were fortunate to not also be charged with kidnapping, because two members of the cleaning crew were working aboard. When sentenced later in January, the pair were fined \$50 and \$20, the higher amount being levied on the thief who formerly had been employed as a motorman by the Boston Elevated Railway Co.

[**] An expressman in this context refers to a furniture mover. Miss Stone likely had placed her belongings into temporary storage after selling her late parents' home in Somerville (where she also lived), while she spent most of 1922 house-sitting for Nina and contemplating her longer-term living arrangements. Stoney has decided to buy a home in Waltham because her sister and nieces live there.

Thursday, January 4, 1923

A heavy snow but good paths, so got along. Library 8:30-12 & then home [to Arlington]. Had lunch at Blake's, a few errands, to library awhile. Stoney gone [had moved out] when I got home. Drew money from bank: \$75.00 & paid Mr. Holbrook rest of bill for painting house at 37 Summer. Aunt Sarah wants to stay until Monday. [*] Washed a bit, picked up, & dusted some. Wrote Helen Bashforth & Cousin Hattie. Mabel up in evening. Read & bed at 11.

[*] Without Stoney or anyone else to house-sit in Nina's side of the duplex, and with Aunt Sue spending the winter in Winchendon, 79-year old Aunt Sarah would be alone at home, which was not considered prudent for personal safety reasons. Thus, Aunt Sarah is having to make plans to be indefinitely away from the home in which she has lived since she was the 22-year old bride of Albert Winn, Jr.

Monday, January 8, 1923

Snow early. Quite a blizzard & pouring in torrents by noon & walking fierce. Up 6:15 & a grand rush to do fires, eat & close-up [house] for rest of winter. Left before 8; [at] library 9:30. Not very busy. Lunch & supper there. Read, wrote, & mended in evening & bed by 10:30. George [had been] up [to 37 Summer St.] to shut-off the water & fixed trap in sink. Aunt Sarah to the Swan's [at 22] Russell St.--went in pung about one. So we'll all be O.K. but little house must be lonesome. [I] sent another basket to 146. Missed my nice, warm bed at night. Had to walk to Central Square [in Waltham] to cross [Main] street. [*]

[*] Closing down her home for the winter is a first for Nina, so it's understandable that today's diary entry is a chronological jumble. Some background information will be helpful here. Aunt Sarah has traveled via horse-drawn sleigh to board until spring at the home of William Draper Swan, Jr., a 31-year old sales manager, and his 27-year old wife, born Gladys Elnora Kimball. Both are Arlington natives who were married here in 1916. Also living in the home is Almira D. Baker, a 38-year old housekeeper who recently arrived in Arlington from Needham. The baskets that Nina has sent to her brother's home at 146 Mystic St. likely contain valuables for safekeeping while her home is vacant. In Waltham the condition of Main Street after the snowstorm must have been particularly bad, because instead of a very short walk almost directly across the street from the library to Mrs. Scribner's, Nina had to walk east along Main Street to Lexington Street, cross over to the common and then walk west along Main Street to get home.

Tuesday, January 9, 1923

Cloudy & snow by evening -- not cold. Ate at Grill & library 8:30-6. Very busy in PM. [Library trustees] Mrs. Fulton & Mrs. Pugh in in AM to see about [farewell] party [for head librarian O.C. Davis]. Lunched at library & Nute & I across to the Chinese & had a fair supper & back to room & into better clothes & library at 8. Helped Mrs. Fulton with tables, candy, crackers, etc. Had it in children's room. Eats the best part [of the event]: coffee, pineapple sherbert [sic],* crackers. Mayor & most of trustees there. Very few introductions as usual in Waltham & a very stiff party. Staff

gave Mr. Davis a fitted bag & trustees had enlarged a picture [of him?] to hang here & a long, flowery letter to take with him. Home at 11, read, played cards & bed at 12.

[*] A note on Nina's spelling of "sherbet" as "sherbert." To optimize readability I usually try to avoid the use of [sic] in transcribing Nina's text by applying small fixes that don't change meaning; think of it as correcting unintentional typos. But "sherbert" is Nina's consistent spelling across the years; it had not yet come to be an accepted variant as it is today. In 1923, her insertion of the second "r" reflects a regional speech pattern often referred to as the New England "intrusive r," which exists in spoken speech and rarely carries over into written language. I like to think of the "intrusive r" as a cousin of the "dropped r" in words such as "park" and "car." A good example of a persistent "intrusive r" in Arlington can be found in the town signs that read "Albermarle St.," when the correct name is "Albemarle."

Thursday, January 11, 1923

Pleasant, cold early, warmer by noon. Breakfast in room. Library 8:30-12. Rang Mrs. Deshon & she asked me for the night; [I had] intended to [just pay a] call in P.M. In town & lunched at Tea Room with Helen Smith. Bit of shopping, slow [public transportation] service, & reached Mrs. Deshon [*] about 4. So cozy and nice with fire in fireplace, etc. Richard [Mrs. Deshon's bachelor son] back about 6. Steak supper in breakfast room & talked & bed about 11. Cloudy then & I left overshoes & sweater at Waltham.

[*] The Deshons have moved to 60 Stedman St. in Brookline; one unit of a two-family home: <
<https://www.google.com/maps/place/60+Stedman+St,+Brookline,+MA+02446/@42.3460809,-71.1232849,3a,75y,322.78h,96.75t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1s8vJWp0mh88h3XKPWKDRZMw!2e0!7i16384!8i8192!4m5!3m4!1s0x89e379c05ae8b58d:0x4220eb6639ca74cb!8m2!3d42.3461059!4d-71.1234282>

Friday, January 12, 1923

Snow, quite cold. Up about 8 and had breakfast with Mrs. Deshon. R.W.D. [Richard W. Deshon] went while I was dressing. We talked with Mabel & Aunt Sarah, and later I rang Rachel Johnson. Embroidered a bit, nice lunch: stew & dumplings. Word from Mrs. Stearns that [her daughter] Edith was burned to death [yesterday] --[she was] married last fall and living in Pennsylvania. [*] Left soon after 12. Some wait & slow going & library at 1:30. Not busy either afternoon or evening. Mr. Davis had gone--no goodbyes. Wrote here and read some & bed about 11.

[*] We have not heard about Mrs. Stearns (born Helen "Nellie" Pease) in many years. She, along with Mrs. Deshon (born Edith G. Westacott), was a schoolmate of Aunt Susanna Winn's at the Tilden Seminary in West Lebanon, N.H. During the years (1912-15) that Nina was living at 57 Summer St. with her Aunts Sue and Georgianna, we heard often of Mrs. Stearns. At that time Nina regularly saw the Stearns family and occasionally visited their home at 19 Central St. in Arlington. Mr. & Mrs. Stearns's daughters, Helen and Edith, attended Arlington schools. After Mr. Stearns's death, Mrs. Stearns and Edith moved in July 1915 to Somerville, then to Medford, whereupon they presumably remain part of Aunt Sue's life, but have no ongoing connection to Nina.

Edith Stearns Stillman was just 26 years old at the time of her death from "shock due to gown catching fire from an open gas stove; entire body burned."

[Note: On Saturday, January 13, Nina put in a full day of work and had supper at the library, after which she traveled to Arlington to be the overnight guest of her close friend, Florence Harris, at her home at 23 Academy St. Nina wrote: "Bed the most comfortable ever & slept so warm & comfy."]

Sunday, January 14, 1923 [*]

Cloudy & snow. Didn't wake until 8:30 & Florence had a nice breakfast at 9. Read some, [made] bed, and to [Unitarian] church -- first time for ages. Such a queer-looking choir. Young People's Sunday. [Pastor] Mr. Gill had the sermon, which was very good & Eleanor Hyde & Richard Davis the rest. Barbara there. Nice dinner, read, embroidered in P.M. by cozy fireplace fire. Up to the Winns' [at 50 Academy St.] for awhile. Read in evening. Began to snow in P.M., not hard. Supper at 9 & read until 11 & then to bed. Warmer by night--up to 30 degrees.

[*] On this date, the building of Calvary Methodist Church in East Arlington was formally dedicated. It was of instant architectural significance, as it was topped by the tower and cupola designed by renowned architect Charles Bulfinch in 1810 for the Boylston Market. When the market was taken down in 1887, the Bulfinch cupola was moved to adorn the Bunker Hill Breweries in Charlestown. Forced out of business due to national prohibition, brewery owner A.G. Van Norstrand arranged for the cupola to go to the Calvary Methodist Church. To see the Bulfinch cupola in its original setting and then atop the brewery in 1887 (not 1987 as cited in the caption to the photo in the second link below) visit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boylston_Market <https://brookstonbeerbulletin.com/historic-beer-birthday-alonzo-gilford-van-nostrand/>

Thursday, January 18, 1923

Cold--down to zero. Cloudy & warmer during the day. Up 7:30. Water frozen in room in vase, but room not so very bad. Library 8:30-12 & then in town. Lunch & to Mrs. Richardson's for hair & nails. Paid Chandler's bill & out to Belmont. Stopped at library but Rachel [Johnson] at branch, so on up the hill [to the Prentiss home on Prospect Street]. Dad out shovelling snow & Ma at Lorna's but telephoned to her. Glad to see me but so lonesome & hard for them. House full of flowers, all in bloom. Stayed to supper & until 9. Herbert not there--at Althea's. Waltham by 10: had some hot peppermint [*] for a gassy stomach & felt better. Wrote here, read a bit & bed at 11.

[*] This would have been most commonly known in 1923 as "peppermint water," a mixture of hot water and peppermint oil. Today essential oil of peppermint is still considered by some as a remedy for abdominal bloating and gas, as is peppermint tea, and even gel capsules with peppermint oil.

Sunday, January 21, 1923

Cloudy & warm. Woke at 7 but read an hour. Breakfast at Grill and home [to Arlington] by way of Lexington. [*] Piles of snow everywhere. Slippery & wet walking. Off at Mill St. In [to yard of Aunt Sue's house at 57 Summer St.] to see if snowdrops had started and then to my small house,

which I found lonesome but all right and not cold. Down to George's for the day: dandy steak dinner. Marion Buttrick in and later Mabel & I went over there [to the Buttrick home at 15 Swan St.] for ice cream & cake. Alice [Mabel Winn's sister and Marion's mother] to be operated on for goitre in a few days. Left at 8 & Waltham at 9. Wrote here, read, and bed by 10:30. Nearly a year since I came & first Sunday night here since last March or April.

[*] Nina's route took her from Main Street in Waltham to Lexington Center, via Lexington Street (in Waltham) and Waltham Street (in Lexington), on the trolley car of the Middlesex and Boston Street Railway Co. At Lexington Center, Nina transferred to an Arlington Heights car, then changed again at the Heights terminus to a Boston Elevated Railway Co. car to Mill Street. It's always a "three-seat" ride for Nina between Arlington and Waltham, whether traveling via Watertown, Waverley, or Lexington. "Derrah's Official Street Railway Guide" (1912) provides this description of a bucolic trolley car journey between Lexington and Waltham: "From Lexington [Center] a branch line runs off to Waltham. Taking a car from the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Waltham Street, the route lies through a pretty New England farming district, crossing the fine road constructed by the State Highway Commission [Route 2A / Marrett Road]. Then [at the junction of Bacon Street in Waltham] the car turns left on Lexington Street and is soon crossing the tracks of the Boston & Maine Railroad. Off to the right may be seen the shining waters of Plympton's Pond. Entering [downtown] Waltham the [fire] engine house is passed on the left and the terminus of the line is reached on Main Street opposite Waltham Common." Today in Lexington there is still extensive open space on the west side of Waltham Street approaching Route 2. And just beyond, the Wagon Wheel farm stand is another vestige of the agricultural era. The changes in Waltham were much more radical, with Plympton's Pond drained and filled to create athletic fields (such as were the destinies of some of Arlington's mill ponds), and the discontinuance of the Central Massachusetts Branch of the B&M railroad in 1980 (the Fitchburg line of the commuter rail line continues to serve Waltham).

Saturday, January 27, 1923

Pleasant, rather cold. Up 7:45, eats in room -- just grapefruit. Library 1-6 & quite busy. in P.M. Lunch at "Quality" (less). [*] Packed bag after 6, got 6:21 Waverly [**] car & to the Prentisses' by 7:30. They had waited supper & had the nicest beans and brown bread & then we sat by open fire & talked until 11. Althea & Herbert at a minstrel show [***] & in a little after 12. Althea & I together in Herbert's room & talked until 1:30. Slept in fits & starts, heard rooster crow, etc., but not awake for long.

[*] Nina is being witty here as she declares her meal at the Quality Lunch to have been qualityless. Nina is a good cook, she appreciates good food, and she routinely rates her dining experiences. On January 26, she wrote that she "had a sad, thin steak at the Waltham and an even sadder Sunday [sundae] at Farmer's." Farmer's (not related to the Fanny Farmer candy company) was a caterer and confectioner at 250 Moody St..

[**] Nina varies her spelling between Waverley and Waverly. Waverley has been the spelling of the locality in Belmont and of its public transportation stations. Waverly is the spelling of the U.S. Post Office branch, but in recent years the U.S. Postal Service has listed it on-line as Waverley, while

Waverly still appears outside the building. A few businesses also have used the Waverly spelling. Suburban land developer J.W. Wilbur (who got his business start in a very modest partnership in Arlington Heights in 1888 and grew to become one of the largest "real estate operators" in the United States) named a large Waverley subdivision as "Waverly Park," which furthered usage of the alternate spelling. This carried over into Arlington Heights, when in 1911 the Wilbur Co. created the "Overlook Park" subdivision; hence one of its streets morphed into the Waverly spelling.

[***] The Wikipedia article on the minstrel show is excellent (and, of current interest, it mentions Ma Rainey's involvement in such performances). I call attention to a 1910 photograph that gives an idea of how the cast may have appeared on stage at the show attended by Herbert and Althea. But the article is mistaken in describing amateur minstrel show performances of the early 20th century as being primarily a phenomenon in the southern U.S. states. In Greater Boston in the 1920s, minstrelry was quite popular, with shows produced by fraternal and charitable organizations, church and school drama clubs, and other community groups. The comedy elements, while utterly racist and spreading negative stereotypes, still had to be delivered well. The music performances of minstrel shows also was taken very seriously, whether singing classic (or sometimes faux) "Negro spirituals" or more lighthearted material. In the era, critics were untroubled by the racist core of the shows, and focused on the caliber of the performances. Live blackface performance in Greater Boston diminished as other entertainment interests pushed it aside, but there were still performances in this region into the 1960s. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minstrel_show

Sunday, January 28, 1923

Cloudy, snowed some in P.M. Napped & up at 9:20 -- both Althea & I. Such a good breakfast with Herbie; others had eaten earlier. Just talked & read all day. Talked a lot of La & Joe & it seemed as if they must come in any moment. Dr. McKay down for awhile about dinner time & later Elsie & Ned were there for supper. Dad not feeling very well in P.M. -- tummy bad. Left soon after 9. Light snow then, but cleared soon after I reached Waltham at 10:15. Have been here a year tonight.

Wednesday, January 31, 1923

Pleasant & mild. Up by 8:45, had grapefruit & then to library & had toast and coffee. Walked up to see Stoney. Met Mrs. Alcock on the way. Glad to be in the country & hear the bluejays & chickadees & see how brown the willows are turning. Went over [toured] Stoney's house -- a delightful little place. Needs repairing but cozy & nice. [*] Walked back & good & hungry. Had to borrow money for lunch, as checks didn't come until P.M. & I was down to 15 cents. Library 1-9; supper there. Ice cream with Marie. Talked awhile downstairs, bath, wrote here, read paper & bed by 11.

[*] Miss Stone's home was at 37 Clark Lane, exactly one mile by foot from the Waltham Public Library, past Pympton's Pond. In 1923 it was a short walk from bustling downtown Waltham to the countryside. The home still exists in a lovely setting as a charming c. 1910 bungalow (although the exterior "permastone" treatment probably dates from the 1960s) and can be seen via Google Maps street view.

Thursday, February 1, 1923

Slippery. Clear & fine & warm -- regular February thaw. Rain in evening. Up 7:30. Library 8:30-12 (cashed check first). In town & lunched with Helen Smith at Marston's & back to her office for awhile. Then looked for suits & fell for a brown duvetyn [*] with beaut fur collar at Chandler's. Marked to \$59.50 from \$125 (so they said). Few other errands & home [to Arlington]. Blake's & Mabel came in so had ices, to library & Barb there so home together & to 37 for sheets, etc. & stayed the night at 146. Mabel & I to Baptist church for Arthur [**] & then to rehearsal at Florence Harris's of Historical [Society] play. Crowd there: Edith Winn, Uncle George Allen, Homers, Dallins. etc. Enjoyed it. Home at 10. Slept in front room & nearly roasted.

[*] Duvetyn (or duvetyne), with a "v," is the correct spelling of what had been identified on December 28, 1922 as "duretyne," with an "r." The incorrect spelling exists in a published reference work on silks, but this would seem to stem from a cursive "v" and a cursive "r" looking alike in the middle of a handwritten word and then set into type. Duvetyn is a low-nap plush fabric originally made of silk that was used in women's fashion in the 1920s, but which fell out of widespread use by the 1930s. Indeed, duvetyn was advertised for apparel in later years chiefly in connection with Santa Claus suits! It is manufactured today of polyester and cotton, for primary use as a blackout material, mostly in theatre and cinema sets where dense black backgrounds are sought.

[**] Arthur has not converted from Unitarianism to becoming a Baptist. I believe that he is a member of the Boy Scout troop sponsored by the First Baptist Church.

[***] Cyrus and Vittoria Dallin need no introduction. But the Homers are a family from Arlington's past who are remembered by just a few older residents of Arlington today. The Homers were extremely prominent and merit a short introduction here. In 1923, the matriarch was Mrs. Horace H. Homer (born Georgian Gray), the daughter of George H. Gray, who in 1858 was a founder of the first high school in Arlington (Cotting Academy, acquired by the town in 1864 to become the public Cotting High School, an earlier name for Arlington High School). In 1860 Gray was a founder of Arlington's first bank (West Cambridge [later Arlington] Five Cents Savings Bank). Mrs. Homer raised her large family in the Gray mansion that stood at 143 Pleasant St., the lands of which once extended up Gray Street as far back at Lincoln Street. Her memories of Pleasant Street form a core document to understand many key aspects of the origins of Arlington's civic and institutional development and growth in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Homers (who incidentally were related to artist Winslow Homer and composer Sidney Homer), along with their relatives the Grays, were known for their charitable works, broad-based service to the community, and for their deep devotion to preserving and sharing Arlington history.

Friday, February 2, 1923

Pleasant & still warm. Slept when I should have been awake, so not up until 7:30. Boys had gone & Barb went soon. Nice breakfast. Did dishes & Mabel & I made beds. Up [to chicken coop] for eggs, carried fish to the farm cat (looks fine), in at 37. Aunt Sarah over just before I left at 11. Joined Christmas Club \$1.00 a week. [*] Waltham 12:30. Rush lunch. Library 1-9; very busy in evening.

Helen Smith asked me for Sunday dinner but said I wouldn't; wanted to have new suit for it. Marie & I had ices later. Wrote here, read paper & bed by 11. Rain in evening.

[*] This is not Nina's old Christmas Club ("C.C."), which was the gathering of female friends of her youth that continued until she was 44 years old. The very last act of the Christmas Club before it quietly disbanded was to send a basket of yellow roses to Vida Damon's funeral in August 1921. Today's reference to a Christmas Club is a savings account offered by banks, with a coupon book for making regular periodic payments that earned interest and was paid-out in a check issued at the start of the Christmas shopping season. These were so popular in the 1920s that Boston department stores frequently included in their advertising that they welcomed cashing the club checks. The Arlington National Bank advertised its Christmas Club on the front page of the Arlington Advocate during January and February. Christmas Clubs will be remembered by many readers (my siblings and I had them), although they are likely to be unfamiliar to under-40 readers. These types of accounts, typically just called "Club Accounts," still exist in some community banks and credit unions, pitched as a vehicle for holiday shopping, saving for a vacation, or other special event.

Sunday, February 4, 1923

Cloudy & cold -- only 10 degrees all day. Woke soon after 8. Dozed & read & up at 9:30. Orange & coffee in room. Tried on suit & showed it to Mrs. Scribner & Hester -- it is a beauty. Left about 11:30 & to Florence Harris for dinner. Read & talked. To Town Hall forum [at 4:00 p.m.] to hear Rabbi Weiss [sic] * -- mighty interesting. A good deal of Armenia. Praise for [former President Woodrow] Wilson & dislike for [U.S. Senator Henry Cabot] Lodge], but a very magnetic speaker. Went with Gannetts. Over with Aunt Sarah later. Left Florence & to 146 awhile then to 37 for mail -- quite a bunch. Back for supper with Florence. Waltham by 10. Talked awhile, wrote here, and bed after 11. Still very cold, but not windy.

[*] Nina attended a lecture by Rabbi Stephen Samuel Wise (not Weiss), under the auspices of the Arlington Woman's Club. Wise was the founder of the Reform Free Synagogue in New York City, which today bears his name. He was a noted Zionist and Progressive, and was among the founders of the NAACP. The Wikipedia article linked below discusses his life and career in detail. Immediately below is an excerpt from the Arlington Advocate's article about the rabbi's speaking engagement. The writer's convoluted prose and run-on sentences are typical of many newspapers of this era. This possibly calls for reading it twice, to get a better sense how Rabbi Wise fared in the newspaper's review of his address. The final comma speaks volumes. Arlington Advocate, February 9, 1923: "[Dr. Wise] was introduced by Chester A. Moody, superintendent of Arlington schools, in a pleasant manner, reminding the audience of the speaker's worldwide reputation and importance, especially among his race, and enumerated some of the words that of late had been uppermost in our thoughts, among them being Americanization and that the speaker would take for his subject 'Americanization: True and False.' Rabbi Wise chose to leave the platform and speak to the audience from the floor, as he put it, so as to get over that barrier of aloftness that characterized a New England audience. Rabbi Wise said instead of speaking on Americanization he should take the word 'Americanism: True and False.' Of course the theme of the whole lecture was the [post-war] conditions in Europe and America's great part in it, for Rabbi Wise is of the opinion that only through America will Europe be saved from utter ruin and it may be also the saving of America as

well. Our relations to Europe were pointed out as [these were] viewed by the speaker, but that many [in the audience] differed with his point of view was shown, when at the close of his lecture, an expression was asked for by the presiding officer as to a willingness to write to our president and representatives in Congress to help save Armenia [whose independent republic established in 1918 had been taken over in 1920 as part of the U.S.S.R.]. Rabbi Wise told the truth, but not all the truth. He is a magnetic and fluent speaker, but many times sarcastically tongue-lashing some of the men of our country, who have for many years been foremost in its international and political life, especially our senator from Massachusetts, but couched in language that showed in language that showed his oratorical ability and a reason for his popularity, as a public speaker."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Samuel_Wise

Thursday, February 8, 1923

Pleasant & cold early -- down to zero; warmed up later. Up by 7:30 & out for eats. Library 8:30-12. Aunt Elizabeth rang & asked me for over Sunday. Aunt Mame there. In town & met Mabel & we had a nice lunch at Filene's & shopped some. Bot stockings (wool) and handkerchiefs for George. Out with her to supper & on car with Helen Damon, so had a nice visit. Alfred Swan spending day with George. [*] Mabel to a precinct meeting. [**] Over to see Aunt Sarah [who is boarding at Draper and Gladys Swan's home at 22 Russell St.] & then to Boy Scout Rally in Town Hall. Mabel there later. All seats filled. Arthur in a hiking episode. Home 10:30 & to bed very soon.

[*] Alfred Skelton Swan (1848-1933) lived with his brother and his brother's family at 67 Pleasant St., on the northern corner of Maple Street. The home was razed in 1954 to make way for the New England Telephone exchange building that now belongs to successor company, Verizon.

[**] Mabel Hartwell Winn was in the first group of women in Arlington to be elected as town meeting members in 1921, the first year that Arlington had moved from open town meeting to representative town meeting. It was also the first year that women could vote for, and run for election to, all municipal offices (they previously had been limited to voting for, and serving on, school committee). To launch a long-term system of one-third of TMMs being elected in the annual town election, the 1921 election had evenly divided groups of candidates who stood for one of three-year, two-year, or one-year terms. Mabel was elected in the two-year contest in her precinct, and her husband, George, was elected in the three-year group. Nina was not a registered voter (by her own apparent disinterest), so she was not able to support her brother and sister-in-law in their bids. At that point in history, Arlington was divided into six precincts, with 36 members each, for a total of 216 TMMs. Today Arlington has 21 precincts with 12 members each, for a total of 252 town meeting members.

Friday, February 9, 1923

Pleasant & quite warm. Up soon after 7. Nice breakfast with the family, did dishes & Mabel & I made beds. Left soon after 9. Deposited \$2 on Christmas Club. Waltham by 10:30 & to [dressmaker] Mrs. St. Onge's to try on brown duvetyn. Back & wrote to Aunt Sue, had lunch & library 1 - 9. Busiest day for quite awhile & alone more of P.M. Very tired by 9 but up for dresses.

New drop skirt on brown crepe-de-chine & brown slip of silk muslin. [*] Wrote here, read a bit, & bed by 11.

[*] Nina has had the brown crepe-de-chine dress she bought in April 1921 remodeled into the latest drop waist style of 1923. Since the skirt was dropped to the hips it couldn't be fastened as before, so typically a lightweight chemise-style undergarment would be sewn to the skirt so that it would be held up by the wearer's shoulders. Although this style is closely associated with young, boyish-figured flappers who were fashion icons of the Roaring 20s, the drop skirt was worn by young and middle-aged women of all shapes and sizes.

Saturday, February 10, 1923

Snowed most of A.M. Cleared by noon. Up 7:45, breakfast at Grill, library 9-6, rather a mean crowd later part of P.M. & very tired. Can't say I liked not having a winter vacation -- too strenuous and am getting weary of junior room & some of the workers. Caught 6:25 car to Waverley & to Aunt Elizabeth's by 7 & such a gala time. [*] Aunt Mame there & [first cousin] Holly & [Aunt] Altannah in & if we didn't _talk_. Bed about 11, in sewing room under a wonderful down puff -- light & _very_ _warm_.

[*] Nina's maternal aunt, Elizabeth Bacon Potter Hittinger, was widowed from her second husband in 1921. Her widowed older sister, Mary Alice ("Mame") Peabody, has been living with her at the Richard Hittinger home at 21 Elm St. in Belmont, along with Elizabeth's only child from her second marriage, 23-year old Richard Hittinger, Jr.. Altannah Hardy is their other surviving sister; she was widowed at age 36 and currently works nearby as housekeeper to Charles Hittinger, Elizabeth's brother-in-law. Nina's relationship to these aunts is rather like one might expect to find her to have with older cousins of her generation; thus, much different from her relationship with her elderly Winn aunts. When Nina was born, Mame was just 15 years old, Elizabeth was 13, and Altannah was just 10. The Hittinger Fruit Co. farm (which grew both vegetables as well as fruit) occupied 40 acres of fields and extensive greenhouses. The following links to a document with a 2016 photograph of the Hittinger home where Nina is visiting, and includes a historical description, as well as historical photographs of how the home likely appeared at the time of Nina's visit. It also includes maps that depict the farmlands and greenhouses. < https://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf2801/f/u741/elmst_21.pdf>

Sunday, February 11, 1923

Dozed until after 8. Cloudy then cleared later, not so cold. Had the nicest day with the two aunts & of course fine meals. Altannah & Holly in after church & Altannah for the evening. Had a bit of washing & ironed hankys, read paper & of course mostly talked. Elizabeth & Herbert White in and out & later in PM Elizabeth Hardy & whatever-his-name-is -- mighty nice chap -- came out. [*] Tea & toast in the kitchen & left about 8:45. Altannah, Elizabeth and _him_ to car with me. Waltham by 9:45 -- mess of drunks, etc. on last car & horrid. [**] Room cold: not quite 60 degrees. Wrote here, read a bit & to bed by 11.

[*] Holly Hardy is the eldest of Altanah Bacon Hardy's three daughters. Her birth name was Anna H. Hardy. Altanah was widowed in 1902, and by 1910 she was living at 241 Mystic St. in Arlington, keeping house for her widowed brother, Arthur Bacon, and his daughter, Dorothy. Altanah was able to bring Holly with her, but Holly's younger sister, Helen, had gone to live with Aunt Mame Peabody, and youngest sister Elizabeth Hardy was living with Aunt Elizabeth Hittinger. Elizabeth White (age 12) is the granddaughter of Elizabeth Hittinger, by her late daughter Alice Louise Potter White, and Herbert Merry White. I tend to think that the Herbert White mentioned by Nina today is Aunt Elizabeth's grandson, Herbert Delmar White (age 11). The Whites live at 89 Townsend Rd., just a very short walk from Elizabeth Hittinger, at 21 Elm St. in Belmont.

[**] Poor Nina! I can visualize her dismay on the last leg of her trolley car journey back to her frigid room in Waltham, carrying her overnight bag along with a head or two of lettuce given to her by her Aunt Elizabeth. The variety of lettuce "Hittinger's Belmont" was developed on the Hittinger farm and was a wintertime market favorite in Boston, as it was well-suited for "forcing" in greenhouses.

> There is a Hittinger Street in Belmont, near Clay Pond and the High > School, where many of the greenhouses used to be. > Richard Duffy replies: While there is a Hittinger Street in Belmont, and it extends from Brighton Street towards the shore of Clay Pit Pond, it is incorrect to state that this was the location of the Hittinger greenhouses. The Hittinger greenhouses fronted on School Street in Belmont, starting at the present-day junction of Bacon Road (named for Aunt Elizabeth's maiden name), and extended north. Not far from this location, to the west, is Elizabeth Road, also named after Nina's Aunt Elizabeth. The Hittinger Fruit Co. lands extended on both sides of School Street, and the very large parcel partly occupied by greenhouses, plus fields and orchards, went all the way to Grove Street. Most of the Hittinger lands are residential subdivisions today, but a section still exists as open space: the portion of the Grove Street playing fields that are west of its junction with Huron Avenue. To bring this back to Arlington, Hittinger Street in Belmont was laid out (but not built) in 1855, four years before the incorporation of Belmont. So it was once located in Arlington (at that time named as the independent municipality of West Cambridge). Jacob Hittinger (who was renowned in the ice-cutting and shipping business) likely acquired the Hittinger Street parcel not for agricultural purposes, but for its proximity to the Fitchburg railroad line. This offered development possibilities of an industrial character (which was its destiny adjacent to the tracks) and/or for suburban housing (its destiny on other side of the street). Hill's Crossing Station was located a short walk away on Brighton Street. The Arlington connection ends there; the Hittinger agricultural holdings of which I have been writing recently were in the section of Belmont that previously belonged to Watertown.

Wednesday, February 14, 1923

Valentines -- had four Didn't wake until 9:30, such a fine sleep. Made coffee & Mrs. Scribner gave me some nice hot donuts with cheese & with an orange & I had a combination breakfast & dinner at 11. Telephoned Aunt Sarah; Gladys Swan is _very_ sick. Out soon after 12 for a paper, met Stoney & bot her a chocolate Valentine, back to room with her to see suit. Library 1-9. Fairly busy in P.M. Another nice salad for supper, orange, date & cheese. Paper from Mr. Viley with news of the death

of Mrs. Hatch in Hannibal, Mo. Much colder in evening & not much coal in house & room only 52 degrees using some wood. [*] Wrote here & to Miss Hatch, read paper & not abed until after 11. [**]

[*] Nina writing about the lack of coal at Mrs. Scribner's would make it seem as if this were an isolated issue; however, during the winter of 1922-1923 the U.S. was suffering through a coal shortage that began in May 1922, following the strike begun on April 1 by the United Coal Workers. The impact was particularly severe in Greater Boston, where the winter was one of the coldest and snowiest for years. It turned out to be a good thing that Nina and Aunt Sarah had closed their duplex at 37 Summer St. for the winter. Even though Nina's uncle, Warren Peirce, is Arlington's largest coal dealer, his firm could not supply what it was not receiving--only about one-third of the usual quantities were being delivered, and high-grade hard coal was especially difficult to come by. To make matters worse, there was cheating by some coal wholesalers and retailers. An Arlington resident, Jacob Adams of 336 Mystic St., was a coal and wood dealer in Somerville who faced criminal charges for fraudulently selling unidentified 25-pound bags of "coal" for 27 cents that turned out to contain just 6.5 pounds of coal and 18.5 pounds of shale. By late February, Massachusetts Attorney General Jay R. Benton appointed former Arlington selectman and state representative Jacob Bitzer to examine the situation. Bitzer commented that the Commonwealth was "being flooded with low-quality coal, slate, and other non-inflammable materials. I found black rock, which wouldn't burn if thrown into Hell, is being sold in bags to poor people at 32 cents per." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_Bitzer>

[**] Miss Hatch is Sallie Hatch, a friend of Nina's from Missouri. Nina made an extended trip in 1911 to stay with her cousins in Griggsville, Illinois, which is about 40 miles from Hannibal, Missouri. Sallie Hatch is not to be confused with Miss Helen Hatch, a resident of 32 Norfolk Rd., who operated Hatch's Cake & Candy Kitchen at 608 Massachusetts Ave.

Thursday, February 15, 1923

Pleasant & down to 0. Windy & cold all day. Room like a barn & very sorry I'm back in it tonight. I have sweater-coat and overshoes on -- 56 degrees. Up 7:20, had a bite in room. Library 8:40-12, lunch there & did a bit of washing. To Arlington in time to go to bank & pay up on Christmas Savings Club. Went to 37; all O.K., no mail. To 146 & saw the crew. [To Robbins] Library & had a nice chat with Edith Rice & Jennie Frost & on to the Winns' [at 50 Academy St.] to a nice supper. Miss Cherney [*] there just for eats. Thought I'd better get back to Waltham, so left by 8. Not cold coming, but brrr -- wish I'd gone to 146 & been warm. _Fierce_ _here_.

[*] Emma Chenery lived in Belmont, and is a contemporary of Mary Prentiss Winn, who grew up there. Miss Chenery was the daughter of David Chenery, from a family with roots in the Watertown section of Belmont, and with branches in Belmont that are commemorated today in the names of the Winthrop L. Chenery Middle School, and Chenery Terrace.

Wednesday, February 21, 1923

Clear, cold. Rotten old laryngitis developed today & voice is fierce now at 10 PM & nose feeling just a bit off. Up soon after 8 and eats in room & left at 9:30. A nice _undertaker_ came along and drove me to Mount Auburn. Cold waiting there & very cold in town. Did some errands for tomorrow, gifts for the children, etc. & out [in Waltham] by one. Fairly busy PM & evening. Over river to supper, as I had cheese to get. Met Mr. Little, the new librarian -- not very much prepossessed; looks too easily influenced. [*] Home, packed bag, did up George's presents, bath & bed by 10:30.

[*] Mr. Leslie T. Little came to Waltham from the Social Law Library, located at the John Adams Courthouse in Boston's Pemberton Square, where he had served as assistant librarian. Unprepossessed or not, Little served as head of the Waltham Public Library for 33 years until his retirement.

Thursday, February 22, 1923 [Washington's Birthday, a public holiday]

George's __fiftieth__ birthday. A busy day. Up by 8 & packed. Felt mean: laryngitis, very hoarse, nose by night. Breakfast at Blake's & then to 146 & busy. Had quite a lot of washing & ironing in PM. Mabel and I to [Aunt Sue's?] cold house -- fine for me. Decorated table in P.M. with flags, place cards, & patriotic napkins. Grace & Ed [Kelley] sent red pinks -- looked very nice. Aunt Sarah here by 2:30 & Aunts Eliz., Mame & Altanah by 4. Bro't all sorts of good things and _2_ birthday cakes, Mabel had scalloped oysters & I had the ice cream. George opened some _1873_ elderberry wine. Jr. played some [music] in evening. Talked, etc., and they went by 9. Arthur abed all day but dressed for supper; he has laryngitis. Quite a lot of presents. I gave woolen stockings & 8 handkerchiefs.

Friday, February 23, 1923

Too sick & throat too sore to think of library, so Mabel telephoned over there -- they were _rather_ short. Abed all day; no eats, just some water. Telephoned to Dr. Percy & he came about 6. Temperature of 101 & [he] said to keep quiet. I rather apologized for making him come but he said I needed him as much as anyone he had to see today. [*] Slept quite well & sweat a lot for a wonder. Feather bed a bit hot - slept downstairs.

[*] Arlington was experiencing an especially bad flu season in the winter of 1923 -- what was referred to as the "grippe." It was widespread (hence, Dr. Percy and his colleagues must have really been on the go making housecalls), and the recovery period for this flu tended to be longer than in an ordinary flu season.

Saturday, February 24, 1923 [*]

Felt feverish & horrid all day. Sat up in chair some, in sitting room. Ate a little toast. No such thing as library at present. Voice hoarse & throat very sore & a mean time. Not dressed, of course -- too

weak & sick. Telephone busy & kept poor Mabel on the jump. Aunt Sarah over in PM. Mabel & Barbara into the theatre to see "Blossom Time" -- Schubert's life.

[*] On this date a crime was committed in Arlington that the Boston Globe couldn't resist reporting, under the headline "Trio of Gypsies Held on Larceny Charge." Frank J. Smith, owner of a gasoline station located at the corner of Medford Street and the Mystic Valley Parkway, filled the tank of a customer. The three occupants of the car, a man and two women, went into Smith's office and told him his fortune. Smith said that they next offered to show him "a wonderful trick" and told him to hold all his money tightly in his hand. When they left, Smith realized that \$14 was missing from his roll of cash. The police apprehended the trio, who claimed to be from Newark, N.J. They pleaded not guilty. Bail for each was \$500, so they were held in custody until their hearing on March 3, when the man was discharged, and each woman was fined \$20 each. The perpetrators were identified as "gypsies" in the sense of racially identifying them as Romani or Roma people, versus some informal use of the term to describe traveling people without a permanent place of residence. One of the women had the unusual surname of Butch, which is one that is used among the Roma. Gypsy was acceptable terminology in 1923 but is considered pejorative usage today when describing Roma people. As for the gas station, it is today the site of the Arlington branch of the Winchester Savings Bank. Some readers who have lived in the Arlington area for a long time will remember it as the Jenney gasoline station (followed by Citgo, after Cities Service Company's acquisition of Jenney's retail gas and oil businesses). The station once belonged to a gentleman familiar to many: Bruce Greene, of Bruce's Tire on Dudley Street.

Sunday, February 25, 1923

Felt some better, but very weak. Breakfast in bed and sat in sitting-room to read paper & had some steak, etc. there for lunch & crawled downstairs for crackers & cheese in evening. Aunt Sarah up again in PM [*] & I was exhausted. Dr. Percy here -- said temp was normal & that I might go to library last of week. Mabel to a rehearsal at Homers' in PM.

[*] Aunt Sarah made the short walk both this day and the day before to 146 Mystic St. from 22 Russell St., where she is boarding for the winter at the home of Gladys and William Draper Swan, Jr.. What is deeply surprising is that there is no mention of the fact that Gladys Swan, age 27, had died on February 24. The cause was endocarditis. On the day she died, Gladys delivered a premature baby girl who lived for just five hours. Gladys and her unnamed infant daughter were buried together at Mount Pleasant Cemetery. With such a tragedy in the household of which Aunt Sarah is a part (recall that Aunt Sarah had informed Nina on February 14 that Gladys was "_very_sick"), I am left to wonder if Aunt Sarah spared Nina such distressing news while she was ill. Nina, even writing retrospectively in her diary, captures minute details of her days, so this makes me lean towards Aunt Sarah having kept mum on the subject, versus Nina being too "out of it" to have recorded such shocking news.

Tuesday, February 27, 1923

So achy & sick that I just groaned to myself all day & every hour seemed a day. Can't imagine much worse. Family very nice to me. [Crossed out: Mabel in town in PM (?).] She has laryngitis, is using Musterole [*] & didn't go to bed. Arthur still feeling very mean. [**]

[*] Musterole is a vapor rub that is still sold today. The ointment contains mustard-seed oil and menthol among its ingredients. Its advertising of the 1920s emphasized that it was "better than a mustard plaster," because it "will not blister." Mustard plasters were home remedies made of dry mustard, flour and water worked into a poultice that was applied to lightweight cloth (thus creating the "plaster") and placed upon the chest to "draw out congestion" -- part of a notion of using heat to "sweat out" an illness. If not watched carefully, a mustard plaster could cause the unpleasant side effect of a chemical burn of the skin, often with blistering. Musterole was more convenient (it came in a jar) and was buffered with beeswax and was otherwise not as harsh as the mustard plaster.

[**] Nina has been diagnosed by Dr. Percy as having the grippe. Her temperature shot to 102 degrees yesterday, her glands were swollen, and she coughed all through the night. If we look at her nephew Arthur still getting over his bout of what I presume to be the grippe that was making the rounds of Arlington, things don't look encouraging for a fast recovery for Nina.

Wednesday, February 28, 1923

Breakfast in bed. Not so achy so sat up awhile but very weak & good for nothing. Dr. Percy came while I was up -- said to be quiet & gave me a sleeping pill as I was so exhausted; haven't slept for four days & asked him if there was _any_ sleep left in the world. Temp still 100 degrees. Edith Rice up to see me but had to go downstairs awhile, as Miss Fisher, the district nurse, came to give me a [bed] bath and -- oh -- it felt good & she was nice. [*] Then Edith came back awhile. Had a bit of toast for lunch -- no desire to eat. Not quite so achy today. Rested but no sleep until night & I took the pill at ten & a more delightful sensation than feeling the sleep approach I can't imagine.

[*] Ethel M. Fisher was a 41-year old registered nurse who lived at 16 Wyman Terrace with two other nurses. A district nurse is what we term a visiting nurse today. In 1923 it was common for nurses to attend to acutely ill patients in their homes. Visiting nurses also supported well-baby care and education, post-operative/postpartum care, and convalescent nursing cases. Depending on severity and/or length of a medical condition, some families engaged a nurse to live-in. The classified advertising section of the 1923 Arlington directory lists 41 women available to undertake such private duty cases. Some women who provided home nursing had informal practical experience only, but increasingly graduate nurses from approved hospital-based training schools (and registered by the state) were serving Arlington. One interesting point of etiquette of the era was that a registered nurse who lived-in was to be treated as a member of the family, take her meals with the family, etc., whereas an informally trained nurse typically had the social status of a servant. Schools for practical nursing were relatively new, and licensure for practical nursing was still about 20 years into the future.

[Nina seemed to say it all when she wrote "Oh -- you grippe" on March 2. Her progress through this illness has been miserably slow. She came to her childhood home to celebrate for her brother's 50th birthday party and stay for just a single overnight, but she still hadn't left two weeks later. Nina has been looked after with great care, noting that "Mabel sends up such dainty trays, and I clean them, but water tastes best for drinking." On March 3 she remarked "I still look as if I'd lost my last friend, and then some." March 4 was a bit of a red-letter day in that Nina started with "breakfast in bed but managed to crawl downstairs in PM and put on some of my clothes for the first time since February 22nd." By March 7, Nina was "down for all meals . . . food begins to taste good, except for coffee. . . . Don't remember much about these days. Know I went to bed quite early & still have that awful parched mouth at night."? Nina was at last improving, until a new disabling health problem was confirmed the next day.] March 8, 1923 Up at 7 & downstairs but leg very lame & sore. Mabel off for the day -- sewing -- but [she] fell down [the] stairs part way in PM & foot pained her, so she had to come home in a taxi. And my leg was so bad I telephoned Dr. Percy. Vein bad, as I expected, and [it is] in my fairly good _left_ leg. Sent over for Marion Buttrick's ice bag & have to keep quiet, etc. [Made] lunch for all of us & boys later; pretty tired & bed awhile. We were a done-up gang. Mabel & I to bed early. George & Barbara did the dishes at night.

Monday, March 12, 1923

Stormy, I think. At any rate, leg was still bad & I stayed upstairs most of AM. Limped & made beds. Mabel & George washed [clothes] but couldn't hang things out. Down to lunch & supper & to bed early as usual with ice bag. Mabel to Alliance in PM. [*] Washing machine broke in AM but George had another by Wednesday. \$90.00 -- [it had] been used for demonstrating. [**]

[*] I think that this would refer to the Social Alliance at the Unitarian Church, which met on Mondays at 2:00 p.m. Mabel also belonged to the Arlington Woman's Alliance, where she held the office of treasurer in 1923. Mabel was very community-minded. After completing her two-year term as a town meeting member, she was re-elected to a full three-year term on March 5. Monday was the day of the week for the annual town election, and the polls were open from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

[**] Operating an electric washing machine with a wringer, at least for handling linens and larger items, would have been better done as a two-person job. The most popular brand of electric washing machine was the Thor, which was sold in Arlington by the Edison Electric Illuminating Co. appliance store at 600 Massachusetts Ave. The Thor retailed for \$125, so a \$90 price for the floor model would represent a solid discount. In 1923 dollars \$90 would be about \$1,400 today, adjusted for consumer inflation. We don't know that George purchased a Thor; perhaps he went to R. W. LeBaron's at 474 Massachusetts Ave., who was an agent for another popular brand, the Eden washing machine. My favorite name for an electric washer of the era is the descriptively branded Gainaday.

Wednesday, March 14, 1923

Quite pleasant -- bit snow about noon. Upstairs most of AM. Usual nice breakfast Mabel in town and I got the lunch. Made an omelette for George, Barb & I, & another for the boys & they

vanished. Rested in PM & some sleep but the phone kept me busy, as everyone went out. Jr. left Arthur locked in bathroom & we had quite a time finding a key. Mabel back about 5. She had made quite a lot of buys, including material in brown for a dress for herself. Nice supper & bed early, as usual.

Thursday, March 15, 1923

Down to breakfast for the first time for a week & seemed good. Met Arthur bringing up tray but we went back again. Helped all I could, beds & darning, etc. Mabel to Woman's Club in PM. [*] Had a nap & then my first walk, to 37 Summer. Everything fine there & not very dusty. Bit weary. Mabel home first & thot I "flew the coop" she said. Bed early. Leg felt better than it has at all & could walk on it quite a lot; still using ice bag.

[*] The Arlington Woman's Club (1895-2000) was a very important organization in Arlington history. The following link provides an excellent summary of the club's history and work, as part of a finding aid to the club's archives located at Robbins Library, written by Arlington historian Doreen F. Stevens. http://www.robbinslibrary.org/assets/AWC_FINDING_AID2.pdf

Friday, March 16, 1923

Poured most of day. Cloudy early and began to pour around 11. Down[stairs] at 7:20. Breakfast, dishes, beds, & dusted some & finished mending. Jr.'s last day at dancing school. I wanted to go [to the recital] with Mabel but so wet I didn't dare to, so went to bed & slept like a log. Usual nice supper, read awhile & up to bed early. Leg is feeling much better. Poor Aunt Mame not feeling at all good; heart troubles her a good deal. [*] Jr. to a dance at Winchester Unitarian Church.

[*] During her recent stay in Portsmouth, N.H., Aunt Mame came down with the grippe. She is back staying at her sister Elizabeth Hittinger's home in Belmont.

Saturday, March 17, 1923

Pleasant. Up by 7:30. Dishes, etc., and helped all I could. Mabel very busy all day. Barb did the beds, Jr. cleaned, Arthur in [gas] station some. Naps in P.M. We let telephone ring. [Into the bath] tub for first time. Over town at four -- first time for 3 weeks. Mabel & I. Ices at Blake's, cards at gift shop & over to see Alice [Buttrick] and return ice bag & not home until nearly 7. I made an omelette that they said was only a sample. Read in evening. Rather tired & bed felt good. George in town. Richard Hittinger married to Doris Fairbanks of Fitchburg at 6:30 p.m. [*]

[*] Richard "Dick" Hittinger, Jr., is Nina's first cousin. He is the son of Aunt Elizabeth.

Sunday, March 18, 1923

Clear & fine & warm & snow fast disappearing. Woke early so read awhile & up soon after 8 & made a 7-egg omelette for breakfast & had to make another 5-egg one. Mabel to church. Made beds & then read & rested. Aunt Sarah back to dinner. Daley drove me to doctor's at 3 & I walked home -

- rather hard work. Edith Rice here; nice call. Aunt Sarah went about 4:30 when Mabel went over to Agnes Wellington's. Packed, supper 7:30. Marion Buttrick in, so over town together & had ices for which Dave paid & left for hated Waltham at 8:40. Mrs. Scribner, Hester _&_ Polly glad to see me. Room comfortable but bed had not been _changed_; paid for it just the same. Tired and bed early.

Monday, March 19, 1923 [*]

Poured early; colder & windy by night. Up 7:30 & Mrs. Scribner asked me to have breakfast with her, which was _so_ _nice_. Library at 9, greetings, etc. Books to do & in reading room awhile, some weary but not so tired at 6 as I feared I'd be. Lunch at Grill & greeted like a long-lost friend. Slept until 3. Called Mabel up first. Library 3-6, light supper there, wrote some here & then to bed, reading until 10:30

[*] In March 1923 the Arlington club of Rotary International was established.

Tuesday, March 20, 1923

Clear & cold. 9 degrees above zero. Woke feeling better than for a long time & worked from 8:30 to 6 with a short rest in P.M. Had breakfast & lunch at Grill. Miss Morton sat with me at lunch and the Burrages' niece from Weston spoke as she went out & sat for awhile. Picked out deposits in A.M. & finished in P.M. Mr. Rossbach [*] in & talked with me or to me for over half an hour & was intensely interesting -- on his son -- the supernatural & religion -- Unitarianism. Fairly busy in P.M. Supper at library. Talked with Aunt Elizabeth, wrote here, & a line to Cousin Jennie & read some. Miss Goodnow in to see me a moment. Bed at 10:30.

[*] The Rev. Mr. Adolph Rossbach was pastor of the First Parish (Unitarian) of Waltham. It's unusual for Nina to express herself with such vivid sarcasm and it's very amusing to visualize her trapped at a desk in the library with the minister prattling on.

Wednesday, March 21, 1923

Official Spring Pleasant and nice & much warmer than yesterday, tho not entirely warm. Up 7:30, asked for _fresh_ sheets, as I felt bit hoarse. Breakfast at Grill & lunch at library. Worked 8:30-12. Telephoned Annie Prentiss but she was going to Boston. I couldn't get Mrs. Deshon, so had a chat with Mabel, then rested, into good togs and down to surprise Aunts Mame & Elizabeth & had such a good time. Everything quite upset in some rooms. [*] Howard, Elizabeth & Herbert [White] all there & mighty nice youngsters. Cozy supper at a small table & left by 8. Howard [**] to car with me. Had to wait at Waverley nearly 1/2 hour. Here by nine, talked a bit, read & bed by 10:30.

[*] Richard Hittinger, Jr., was very recently married, and he would be bringing his bride to live at the family homestead of the Hittinger Fruit Co., which he operates. I infer from the statement "Everything quite upset in some rooms" that there are changes taking place to accommodate the newlyweds moving in with furniture, etc. and otherwise establishing themselves in their home.

[**] Howard S. White is Aunt Elizabeth's grandson; he is a son of Nina's first cousin, the late Alice Potter White. Howard is to turn 16 in April. He is a brother of Herbert and Elizabeth White, who previously have been introduced to readers.

Friday, March 23, 1923

Spring-like at last & think I heard a bluebird. Woke at 7 & read awhile, put cold compress on leg for an hour. Out to breakfast about 9:15. Read paper & sat by open window and mended. Lunched at Delicatessen with Marie. Library 1-9. So hungry I had supper at Grill & part way through "razzle-dazzles" started & I had to go to room & rest until after 7. Had been too strenuous in P.M. Bath & cold compress. Felt rather punk. Bed by 10:30. Talked with Helen Smith & with Mabel in evening. Latter said Aunt Sarah _thinks_ she will be there tomorrow & stay days at 37. [*]

[*] While Nina's half of the duplex at 37 Summer St. remains unoccupied, it appears that Aunt Sarah will spend her overnights at George and Mabel's home at 146 Summer St., but otherwise, Aunt Sarah is ready to be back in her own home. Inauspiciously, Aunt Sarah departed her home by pung in the midst of a snowstorm on January 8, to spend the winter as a "paying guest" at the 22 Russell St. home of William and Gladys Swan. Gladys and her premature baby girl would be dead by February 24. Over the past month the atmosphere at the Swan residence likely was quite somber. Epilogue on the Swan family: William Draper Swan, Jr. moved away from Arlington, his home since birth, by the end of 1923. He was remarried on January 2, 1924 to Bessie Nutt. Although Bessie was officially the stepmother to Bill, William's three-year old son with Gladys, she was from that point forward always referenced as being his mother. William and Bessie would have three sons of their own, and 12 grandchildren. William Swan came back to Arlington after his death in 1963, for burial at Mount Pleasant Cemetery with Gladys, their eldest child, Lyman Kimball Swan (1917-1919), and their unnamed infant daughter (1923). Bessie followed in 1989. Son Bill (1920-2017) was not interred at Mount Pleasant, but a small footstone-like cenotaph saying simply "Bill Swan" stands on the edge of the family plot.

Sunday, March 25, 1923

Palm Sunday. Clear -- quite cold and sharp, but _good_ air. Up at 8 after some reading in bed. Into glad things, breakfast at Grill. To Harvard Square with Mrs. Everett. [In Arlington I] met Mabel & Aunt Sarah on their way to church & Marion going the other way, so up together to house [146 Mystic St.] & she in for awhile. Put beef in at 12 & then walked to 37 & fixed fires for building [*], carried silver back, to 57 for snowdrops & got weighed. 154 pounds, so enough, but a 10 lb. loss. Good dinner as usual and talked & read in P.M. Mabel to centre with me about 8 and we had waffles & Sundays [sundaes]. Waltham by 9:30 -- read awhile.

[*] This does not mean that Nina was heating the "building" that was 37 Summer St. Rather, it describes getting the wood and coal arranged in the stoves to be ready for the fires to be "built" (i.e., the process completed by igniting them). Nina is preparing to resume staying at her own home in the coming weeks, and with the house occupied in the daytime by Aunt Sarah, it's apparently safe for the silverware to be kept there once again.

Thursday, March 29, 1923

Home again. 2 below 0 and windy. Wrote that top heading too soon: [it is] so cold Aunt Elizabeth couldn't come [to stay at 37 Summer St.] & may not for another week. Library 8:30 to 12. In town & had hair treated & nails done & a nice visit with Mrs. Richardson. Down to S.S. Pierce's & the girl put me up the nicest looking box of candy I've ever seen, to send to Grandma Sturgis who is 92 on Sunday. Few errands at [Arlington] centre & home at 4. Met George on way, who had been up to [to 37 to] build fires, so house was comfy. I dusted & brushed & dry mopped some & brot bedding downstairs. No water as yet, so down to George's & washed 29 handkerchiefs -- mostly rags. Had supper with them. Aunt Sarah there. Back [to 37] & fixed fires & to Florence Harris's for night. Bed soon after 11.

Saturday, March 31, 1923

Cold & windy & a regular March lion of a day. Up 7:30, eats at Grill. Library 9-6. Alone in P.M. & gave out 200 books. Hustled into brown suit & on car & found I'd left money, so back to house. Arlington at 8. Bank for Christmas Club deposit & with change-bank [*] & supper at Blake's. Few errands and [to Robbins] library about 9 & [head librarian] Miss Newton talked about an awful Miss Simmons for 20 minutes -- poor thing. No room & no place. Rather cracked (I'd say). She slept on a _leather_ couch at Carrie Peirce's. [**] I got away at 9:20, called at Gannetts' and found Florence had left key, so went in, had hot lemonade & read in bed. Annie in by 10:45 & entertained me. [***] Florence not home until _12:30_. All hands to bed then.

[*] A coin savings bank, sometimes referred to as a piggy bank, even if not shaped like a pig.

[**] I am not sure if Nina is saying that the elderly and obviously upset Miss Newton is the "poor thing" or if it is the apparently homeless and possibly mentally ill Miss Simmons. Carrie Peirce (born Sarah Caroline Winn), age 71, is the first cousin of Nina's father, and the paternal aunt of Edith and Amy Winn; she lives at 14 Court St. Please don't ask me how she managed to get involved in hosting the unfortunate Miss Simmons.

[***] Annie W. Munroe is a 55-year old roomer at Florence Harris's home at 23 Academy St.

Sunday, April 1, 1923

Easter. Christine Oakley made a cake for Grandma Sturgis with 92 candles on it. Very cold. 10 degrees above 0 early & not warm at all during day. We didn't wake until nearly 9 & Florence had to rush the eats. Washed 2 much-needed union suits. Florence & I to church. A lot there. Most depressing sermon: "Where Are the Dead?" -- all on death; nothing to inspire or remember. [Unitarian Church pastor] Mr. Gill, of course. Over to 37 while Florence got the dinner. Song-sparrows on Summer St.--much warmer there. Some of Aunt Elizabeth's things came yesterday. House cold but not freezing. Down to 146 a bit & back to Florence's by 1:30.. Read a bit in P.M. Rang Aunt Elizabeth & [she] said she might be over tomorrow [to stay]. To pageant at four at church. Packed [with spectators] & very good music. Mabel, Barbara, Florence, and I to Blake's & then I called at the Gannetts'. Marion Peirce & Carrie there & Esther home. Had very nice afternoon

tea. Edith Winn in later. We went to Florence's about 8. Beautiful full moon -- air sharp & tingly. Read awhile & up to bed at 10:15 & at 10:45 the bell rang. Florence crept upstairs & did not open the door & we watched that awful Miss Simmons go down the walk, suitcase, bundles & all & we went to bed -- the sinners. [*]

[*] This diary passage was hard to wrangle, because Nina wrote in margins, and on a blank facing page of the book, so the narrative transcribed here has been edited to assemble the parts in chronological order. I have deciphered the final word as "sinners." This neatly fits a narrative in which they might refer to themselves as sinners for not having performed a work of corporal mercy, such as cited in the description of the Last Judgment in the New Testament of the Bible (Matthew 25:31-46); specifically, to "take in the traveler," or to "take in the stranger"--in modern Bible versions this is phrased to "shelter the homeless". The same concept also appears in the Old Testament (Isaiah 58:7) ". . . that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house."

Thursday, April 5, 1923

Home again. [*] Rained early & late & some misty during day. Up 7:30, eats, etc., and into best bib and tucker & met Clara Sharp at 9:10 train into city. Boston Public Library to a Round Table. Saw a number from Somerville: Olive Gleason, Rachel Johnson, etc. Mr. Frenty, creator of Uncle Jeb, spoke & was very good. Walked down to Winter St. with Sharpie, lunched & then had a shampoo, bot a book for Jr. & out to Arlington by 3:30; few errands & home. Aunt Elizabeth there & it was so good & how nice the house looked: all clean & happy & shiny. Had to talk a lot. Had a nice supper, of course. Aunt Sarah home too. Poured in evening, with thunder & lightning. Bed at 10 but read awhile & bed felt mighty good to me.

[*] Nina's 59-year old maternal aunt, Elizabeth Bacon Potter Hittinger, has moved from Belmont into Nina's home. Her son, Dick Hittinger, is very recently married, and it seems that Elizabeth has decided to turn over the family homestead so that the newlyweds can establish their own household. The Hittinger house would have had modern conveniences (it was built in 1897), compared to Nina's rather primitive abode (no central heating, no telephone, kerosene lamps, and an outhouse). Aunt Elizabeth, known as "Lizzie" in her youth, was born and reared in Arlington on Mystic Street, so she is made of the sturdy Yankee stuff that thinks nothing of working with what she has available, and succeeds in making it "all clean & happy & shiny."

Friday, April 6, 1923

Clear & glorious. Up at 7, a bit after Aunt E. Men here and had us going before 8 & then we had breakfast & such a good time together. Dishes & had some washing, of course, & helped Aunt E. with (empty) cases [suitcases?]. All up to attic. Rhubarb starting up nice & pink. Lunch at 11:30 & on car with Ed McKay to Harvard Square. Library a bit late as I had to change dress. Quite a busy afternoon, as the bird house exhibit was on, as well as a storytelling at 4 Fairly busy in evening, too. Wrote here, read a very few moments & bed at 11.

Saturday, April 7, 1923

Clear & glorious. Up 7:30, eats at Grill, made bed. Library 9-6 and felt quite tired -- legs very achy still. Had 53 birdhouses in the room at library & an interesting sight. Florence rang up about 4:30 & came over for me at 6 & we had a nice ride home through Lexington. [Birds] piping & sounded nice & springy. Down by Hod Peirce's [*] house & at centre by 6:25. To [Robbins] library & bank & met Aunt Elizabeth, Mabel & Barbara at Blake's at 7:30 for supper. Did a lot of errands later. Barbara & Mabel left, or Barbara did, as she was tired, tho very dressy in a new hat, goat, & gloves. Home at 9 & bed _very_ soon.

[*] Horace Winslow "Hod" Peirce is Nina's 33-year old first cousin (the son of her late aunt Jessie Bacon Peirce, who was married to Warren A. Peirce). Hod and his wife, Rose, have just moved to 62 Wollaston Ave.; however, they settle by 1925 at 18 Hillside Ave. where they will reside for many years.

Sunday, April 8, 1923

And my __46th__ [birthday] -- can't believe it. May look it but don't feel it, except from ankle to knee: old veins. Clear & fine early & _poured_ in PM in showers. Up soon after 8 and had such a nice day. Cake from Aunt Sarah (applesauce) and an angel [cake] from Mabel, 2 lbs. chocolates from Jr., 1 lb. caramels from Arthur, salted nuts from Barb & 6 handkerchiefs from Mabel. Check for \$2 from Aunt Elizabeth, a handkerchief from Josie Prentiss with her tatting on edge. Edith Rice came way around on her way home from church & brot candy from her & her mother. Florence at door. Had a most beautiful bouquet of pink sweet peas & mignonette from Aunt Sue -- a wonderful thing. Barbara to dinner & supper. Boys in & up for ice cream -- treat from Aunt Elizabeth -- Jr. [went] over for it. Marion Buttrick here in evening. Elizabeth Hardy and Edgar (Abt) during day. Fine eats with Aunt E. as cook. Had to wash & iron some. Up for snowdrops, fed cat, & got some of Aunt Sue's pictures. Mabel up a while in PM. Aunt Sarah in & out. Bed at 10 & read paper. Wind blew a gale in A.M. Robin in lilac bush.

Monday, April 9, 1923 [*]

And Jr.'s 15th birthday. Gave him [Rafael] Sabatini's novel "The Snare" & \$3 put in as bookmarks. Clear & fine, bit cooler. Up soon after 6 and Aunt E. much earlier and we had a nice breakfast together & I left at 7:30. Library 9-6; quite busy -- a lot of bird houses brot in & more taken away. [**] To Mrs. St. Onge's [dressmaker] in evening to try on old brown silk (made over). Wrote to Aunt Sue & Josie Prentiss & here, didn't read much & bed soon after 10.

[*] On this date Arlington Town Clerk Thomas J. Robinson, who had served in that office for 20 years, died suddenly of cardiac disease at age 56. He came to Arlington as a young child, and at the time of his death resided at 5 Webster St. Robinson was a founding member (and Grand Knight) of the Arlington Knights of Columbus, and of the Arlington Lodge of Elks. "Robinson Rock," located at the junction of Gray Street and Endicott Road, was dedicated with a plaque by his friends and

fellow town leaders who were trustees of the "Lockeland" real estate development, which had recently begun construction at the time of Robinson's death.

[**] Building bird houses was all the rage among young boys in Greater Boston in 1923. One of Arlington's Boy Scout troops had a feature article in the Boston Globe that spring about their accomplishments in creating shelters suitable for songbirds of many varieties. Although game shooting remained popular, there emerged an increasing understanding of the need for the conservation of species, lest they be hunted to extinction.

April 10, 1923

Clear & nice; bit cooler. Grass growing quite green. Up 7:20. Library 8:30-6 & busy. Miss Olson [*] in in AM and interesting as usual. Had a razzle attack but kept going. Lunch at Delicatessen. 68 bird-houses in at 6 o'clock. Ruth Burckes there in evening, so talked a bit after supper & then up to Mrs. St. Onge's for made-over brown faille dress -- looks very good. Wrote here, bath & read a few moments.

[*] Hilda N. Olsen (Nina misspelled it as Olson) is 26 years old and is a landscape gardener. She boards at 212 Bacon St., the home of Bradford W. Drake, retired principal of the North Junior High School in Waltham. Also living in the home is Drake's 33-year old daughter, Martha, who is a school teacher. Miss Olsen is listed as part of this household (then numbered 146 Bacon St.) in the 1920 federal census as having been born in Norway, immigrating to the United States in 1896, and becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1915.

Sunday, April 15, 1923

Cold, pleasant _early_ but a sleet storm late in PM & evening. Up soon after 8. Jr. got us some cream & we ate about 9. Mabel up awhile. Dishes & beds & Aunt E. & I to farm & then to cemetery. Carried some snowdrops and planted them by Vida's stone. Bot a geranium at Sztobbe's and carried for Papa -- fear the poor thing froze later. Rather weary but Aunt E. did most of dinner & I ironed & [did] dishes & [was] just resting when Howard & Herbert White [Aunt Elizabeth's grandsons] & a friend arrived & stayed an hour. Aunt E. to Belmont to Dick's, but I was too tired. Mabel up in evening to say that Henry Daniels had died at 7:20 -- Aunt Sarah's brother. [*] Aunt E. back by 9 -- a bit damp so warmed up by fire, but I went to bed early.

[*] Henry Clay Daniels (1842-1923) was an Arlington native who lived his adult life in Newton, where he was a merchant, livery stable owner, and city assessor. Aunt Sarah often spent holidays at his home, most recently this past Christmas of 1922.

Thursday, April 19, 1923 [Patriots Day]

Cold but pleasant. Woke early & read in bed. Up at 7. Had to wash a bit. Made pie crust & an apple pie & then worked an hour in garden and Aunt E. ha such a nice dinner at _one_ o'clock & how we ate. Dishes & so tired I went to bed and slept an hour & then Aunt E. & I went to walk. Up to Paris & across lots to honeysuckle hill & home by four. [*] Had an attack of dazzles while ironing later.

Both [of us] to bed by 8:30. Expected Barbara but she didn't come. Mabel & George & Arthur at Mashpee. To 146 in AM. Saw Jr. & telephoned to Annie Prentiss & Edith Rice.

[*] The tradition of giving names to the different fields of a farm goes back to England and Ireland. They are ephemeral parts of Arlington history. Some field names were purely descriptive, referencing the crops grown there or literal characteristics of the land. Others were fanciful, such as Paris, and the origins of these choices are usually lost to history. In some cases a plot plan of a farm in Arlington was filed at the South Middlesex Registry of Deeds that displayed the subdivision of the land. There we can discover field names and locations for lots given names such as Upper Michigan, Oregon Swamp, and others. Most field names and locations were not formally recorded. Sometimes a farm field or lot name survives in an Arlington street name, including Homestead Road, Orchard Place and Orchard Terrace, Upland Road (for Upland Meadow), and Steep Rock Road (for Steep Rock Pasture), Field Road, and Blueberry Hill Lane. The section of Columbia Road between Upland Road West and Frost Street originally was laid out as Highfield Road; however, the name was changed to prevent soundalike confusion with streets such as Highland Avenue and High Haith Road. Longmeadow Road is likely derived from the name of a farm lot, whereas Fox Meadow Lane probably is a mid-20th century invention that was chosen for its picturesque quality.

Friday, April 20, 1923

A hot day at last and clear. Up soon after 7 and Aunt E. had a very nice breakfast. [Did] dishes & talked & raked-up yard a bit & over town at ten. Paid Dr. Percy & left \$2 at bank for [Robbins Library Head Librarian] Miss Newton's fund & in town. Paid last [credit installment] on winter suit, lunch & Waltham by 12:40. Library 1-9, busy & very tired & this darned room [at Mrs. Scribner's] is hotter than it has been all winter, with radiator _very_ hot: up to 87 degrees -- bit late in the season to start in after I've been so cold here every night. Bed soon after 10. Nice new moon. Wrote Aunt Sue. Scilla at Mt. Auburn very beautiful. [*]

[*] En route to Waltham from Harvard Square subway station, whether via Watertown or Waverley, Nina would have passed by Mount Auburn Cemetery in the trolley car.

Sunday, April 22, 1923

Clear & warm & beautiful early, but cloudy & colder & some showers by night. Up at 7. Aunt E. up much earlier. Made omelet and baking powder biscuits, later a mince pie & cooked chicken for fricassee. Worked in garden for a half hour & tended [?] the closed gentian. Lady cat down for food; she has babies hid in the hay in barn. Aunt E. to Belmont with Arthur Bacon [*] to carry a birthday cake to [her son] Richard. Back to a 2 o'clock dinner. Just eating when Mrs. Damon & Fred came to take me for a short ride -- worse luck and I was dying for a ride, too. Dishes & a nap & later Aunt E. & I over town for ice cream. Mary Winn called on Aunt Sarah. [Nephew] Arthur [Winn] up about 9 with some mayflowers. Just back from Mashpee. Bed by 10. Nice Airedale with us most all day.

[*] Arthur Linden Bacon is Nina's maternal uncle, thus the brother of Aunt Elizabeth. Nina's late brother Arthur was named after him, and Nina's nephew, Arthur, in turn was named after his uncle

(Nina's brother). Arthur Bacon, age 58 at this time, is a widower who lives at 241 Mystic St. He is a masonry contractor, as were his father and uncle in Arlington.

Thursday, April 26, 1923

Clear & glorious. Up soon after 7. Library 8:30-12. Rushed into suit & in town. Met Helen Smith & lunched at Schrafft's on West St. & gossiped. Told her of Miss Woodman's trip to Europe & she told me that Sue Curtis is engaged to a Mr. [Frank W.] Jennings of Framingham & a [library] trustee, widower & her father's age. Went to Codman's & [was] measured for two elastic stockings. To Dr. Bailey's to make an appointment & home by 3. Out with Marjory Allen. [Robbins] Library awhile & home. Aunt E. in from a ride with Dorothy [*] & in a few moments. Helen Hardy & Helen Ward came and surprised us and we had a nice time and Aunt E. had a mighty good supper. All a bit sleepy in evening & they left by nine & we went to bed.

[*] Possibly Dorothy Bacon Shoemaker, the niece of Aunt Elizabeth and Nina's first cousin--she is the daughter of Arthur Bacon.

Sunday, April 29, 1923 [*]

One hour lost. Showers & quite cold. Old daylight savings [sic] time started so it was _9:30_ when I got up. Nice breakfast & a __big__ dinner & felt stuffed. Bit washing in PM & cleared out some bureau drawers for Mary Alice [Aunt Mame] who comes tomorrow. Made a shortcake for dinner. Very horribly tired in PM & abed for quite awhile. Aunts Sarah & Elizabeth for a walk & then Aunt E & I over to farm -- found some snowdrops, star flower & saxifrage. Bit of supper & then went up to see Florence Harris. Mabel Kimball rooming there. [**] Home 9:30 & we all went to bed about 10. Aunt Sarah rather done up. Barbara up awhile in AM.

[*] Crime and punishment in Arlington in April 1923: An Arlington High School student was found to have pulled a false fire alarm. He was "sentenced" to two weeks' duty polishing the brass at the town's fire houses. And there was a lot of brass in those days.

[**] After Florence's mother died, Florence began to rent rooms to unmarried ladies in her very large home at 23 Academy St. This explains why "that awful Miss Simmons," who made a brief appearance in two recent diary entries, appeared at Florence's front door late one evening with her suitcase. Poor Miss Simmons must have been asking around for lodgings; however, unlike a hotel or a general boarding house that accepted transient guests, those who rented rooms in their private homes typically sought roomers with whom they felt there would be compatibility. In "rooms to let" classified advertisements of the era in Arlington (and elsewhere), it was not uncommon to see things such as "seeking Protestant" or "seeking American" -- code language generally intended to exclude applicants who were immigrants.

Tuesday, May 1, 1923

Up 7:20, ate at Grill [sitting] back to back with Royce Taylor. Library 8:30-6. Mildred still out. Had a nice day but not very busy. Dinner at Grill [*], into silk at 6, to Arlington. Light eats at Blake's &

to [Robbins] Library. Reception to [Head Librarian] Miss Newton in honor of her 50 years in the library. [**] Mr. [Charles F. D.] Belden [head librarian of the] Boston Public Library, [Rev.] Mr. Bushnell [former pastor of Pleasant Street Congregational Church] & Judge [James] Parmenter spoke. Reading room cleared & chairs in & all full. Flowers, music, & Mr. [Cyrus] Dallin [a library trustee] made a speech about rainbow spans & pot of gold & gave her a purse of \$1,000 in \$50 gold pieces. Saw Mrs. Addie Flanders Ahern -- first time for years. Mabel there & we had ices at Blake's. Home about 10:40. Aunts had gone to movies with Uncle Arthur so waited for them & had to talk awhile of course. Aunt Mame over now for keeps. Bed about 12.

[*] Two meals at the Grill in one day for Nina today, and possibly more of this pattern in the future, because April 28 was her last time at the Delicatessen; the owners moved their business to Worcester.

[**] Elizabeth "Lizzie" Newton was the sister-in-law of famed American novelist and poet John Townsend Trowbridge of Arlington, who served for many years as a library trustee. She lived with her sister's family in the Trowbridge home, still standing at 152 Pleasant St. Miss Newton oversaw tremendous advances in Arlington's library that brought it into the modern era. She wrote a lengthy and detailed paper on the history of the library that is particularly interesting as it is an eyewitness account to much of its transformation. The paper can be viewed here:

<https://arlingtonhistorical.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/1923.13.8.pdf>

On May 1, 1923, Nina Winn wrote in her diary <snip>: >> Saw Mrs. Addie Flanders Ahern -- first time for years. <<

I received an off-list inquiry about this lady and decided that it was interesting, and so deeply specific to Arlington that I would share the reply with the entire List. Ada Elizabeth Flanders was born in Vermont in 1854 and came to Arlington as a small child. Her father was Moses Flanders, who was a baker working for Jesse Pattee, located on the site of town hall. The Flanders family resided on the premises. (See link below for an image of the building.) Ada, known as Addie, began teaching at age 19 at the Russell Grammar School on Medford Street (part of whose building is still standing as a section of Arlington Catholic High School). Nina attended the Russell School. Addie Flanders taught fifth grade there for several years (it was the school that she herself would have attended) and then was promoted to "general assistant" (not the level of an assistant principal but sort of a floating senior teacher role to leverage the principal). In 1894 Addie married widower Maurice J. Ahearn (note the variant spelling of what Nina wrote as "Ahern"), who was 18 years her senior. The Ahearns lived at 10 Milton St. in Cambridge. Addie Flanders Ahearn was widowed in 1921 and by 1926 went to live at the home of her younger brother, Asa Flanders, at 29 Russell St. Addie Flanders Ahearn died in 1947. In researching Ada Flanders Ahearn I read the obituary for Maurice Ahearn that was published in the Cambridge Chronicle. It offers a good example of the importance of trying to look at as many different types of records as can be conveniently accessed, because sometimes obituaries contain substantially incorrect information; humble beginnings can be obscured and other times can be exaggerated, depending on desire to put forth a particular narrative. In this case, a major part of the life story of Maurice Ahearn described him as having been of "American parentage," born in the U.S. in 1836 and whose parents (natives of Ireland) traveled with him back to Ireland when he was an infant. The reality is that he was born in County Cork, Ireland. He immigrated via New York (in the steerage section of the ship) at age 6, a few years prior to the

Great Famine. In 1868, Maurice Ahearn became a naturalized American citizen in Massachusetts. He was a hotel manager and later went into real estate. Many members of the Flanders family are buried at Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Arlington. Addie Flanders Ahearn rests with her husband (and his first wife) in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Lynn.

Image of the Pattee bakery (whose upstairs hall was home to the Bethel Lodge of Masons):

<https://arlingtonhistorical.pastperfectonline.com/photo/599800BF-3A0B-4C49-90F4-384331704812>

Image of Russell School (as viewed from what is today's Russell Common municipal parking lot):

<https://arlingtonhistorical.pastperfectonline.com/photo/744287CB-7885-4F26-9A1E-500638259710>

Richard Duffy

Response to > It is amazing that Cyrus Dallin was at the library event and gave \$1000. > in \$50 gold pieces to Miss Newton! Wish we had his speech about > the rainbow. & the pot of gold. > I lived at 152 Pleasant St. years ago. (I also lived on Trowbridge St. > which I believe was named after John Townsend Trowbridge? I > find that through Nina Winn's diary I want to find out more about these > folks who lived in our town. Time for more research for me. > Thanks for sharing these diaries! > Cheryl

Thanks for writing. To make clear, although Cyrus Dallin presented the gift of \$1,000, the money was raised privately by the donations of many people. Nina wrote in a diary passage published to the List a few days ago that she had gone to the bank to contribute \$2 to "Miss Newton's fund." As for the naming of Trowbridge Street in East Arlington, it was part of the 1910 "Squire Park" subdivision. The origins of that name are obscure. It's possible that it honored John Townsend Trowbridge but so far nothing has turned up in printed records to support that. Trowbridge was a big celebrity in Arlington (indeed, he was known throughout the English-speaking world) and I would have expected to discover some reference in the Arlington Advocate or elsewhere to describe such an honor.

The link below is from a postcard with an image of his home, in which his portrait is in vignette.

<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:gh93hc983>

And following is a link to an image of Miss Lizzie Newton:

<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:m613n3772> Richard Duffy

Response to query about Nina's work situation:

Originally Nina was working just part-time at Robbins Library. In 1917 she had applied to be the librarian for the newly established East Branch (renamed the Fox Branch in 1969) library, but she was not the successful applicant. Nina had only been working briefly as a library assistant by that point in time, and of note, she also had never completed high school. During 1918 Nina gained more experience, and picked-up many additional hours covering for vacations and other staff absences. She became interested in pursuing full-time work, and she had financial demands once she was taking care of her own home. At the end of 1918 Nina worked part-time at Robbins Library and part-time at the State House library while she was applying for a position at Somerville Public Library. To give a frame of reference, in 1918 Arlington had a population of about 17,500, whereas Somerville had over 90,000 residents. So there were better opportunities for Nina in the latter.

Despite not having been able to continue at Robbins Library in a capacity that fit with her goals, Miss Newton, the head librarian of Robbins Library who had known Nina since she was a child, was a career mentor to her. Nina and Miss Newton stayed close throughout Miss Newton's life. Nina quit her job in Somerville (a place she never really enjoyed or felt well-treated), but the experience she had gained was in high demand and she was soon offered her current job in Waltham. As a general rule in the era, women who married left the workforce to keep house, so there would be personnel turnover that created job stability and even advancement opportunities for Nina, even as there was increasing job-market competition from professional librarians holding degrees in library science.

Wednesday, May 2, 1923

Rather cool & cloudy. Mabel & Barbara to Masphee. A.H.W. (nephew Arthur) went Monday. [*] Up about 8 & we 3 [Nina, plus aunts Elizabeth and Mame] breakfasted together & then dined at 11:30 -- both good eats & jolly talk & morning _flew_. Left before 12 & Waltham at one. Not nearly so tired as first of week. Library 1-9. Just comfortably busy. A big surprise was sprung: Marie Henderson [**] has resigned to go to Indiana to Mr. Davis's library. Down for ginger ale at corner & nearly bumped into Royce Taylor on his crutches. Bath, wrote here & read a few minutes & bed about 10:45.

[*] I don't know if the spring school vacation schedule in 1923 was the week of May 1. The 1923 Annual Report of the town doesn't display a calendar for the academic year and microfilm access to the Arlington Advocate is restricted at present. I would be surprised that the Winn children would be taken out of school to go to Mashpee, so I am going to assume for the moment that they are on a regular break.

[**] For most of Nina's time at the Waltham Public Library, Marie has been a regular supper companion. Her departure will be yet another significant tear in the social fabric of Nina's life. She obviously is delighted to be sharing her home with aunts Elizabeth and Mame, but Nina has had to confront a diminishing circle of friends in very recent years (the deaths of Vida Damon and Eleanor Prentiss; disbanding of the "Christmas Club," etc., plus the isolation of being a four- or five-night a week roomer in Waltham). Nina is very much a social animal and although she accepts change, Marie's departure will leave a void.

Thursday, May 3, 1923

Clear & fine. Up 7:30. Had to mend stockings, etc. & not much time for eats, but had usual toast & coffee at Grill. Royce Taylor there. [*] Library 8:30-1 & then in town, lunch, & had hair and nails done; bot a couple of French nighties for \$3.25 each at Chandler's & down for elastic stockings, but [they were] not ready, ---- it. Home. Signed-up for a telephone at last. Left word for Mr. Hughes to call at library a bit & to house. Henry Whittemore there, and yard looked fine. Aunts busy -- Elizabeth with eats & Mame with ironing. Filet of sole for supper & _good_. Talked awhile and all hands to bed by nine. Read an hour.

[*] I think that Nina sort of has her eye on Mr. Taylor, who is 39 years old and a salesman for a lumber company. We were introduced to him in Nina's diary of June 2, 1922: "Mr. W. Royce Taylor in to register [for a library card?] in evening -- the one good-looking man at the Grill (for eats) & just divorced."

Monday, May 7, 1923

30 years since Arthur died [*] Clear & glorious -- a day for the wood or the shore and rocks. Up soon after 6 & we 3 ate soon after 7 & I left at 7:30. To post office with package for Aunt Sue, down to see plumber & at Waltham by 9. Library 9-6. Marie & I lunched at Grill. _Nicely_ busy day. Miss Olsen in with flowers. Supper with Nutey. Up to see Mrs. Price at the [Waltham] hospital. Had a nice visit & later saw Edith Marden for quite awhile. Poor Mrs. Price has _cancer_. [**] Down at 9, bath, wrote here, did a bit of mending & bed at 11.

[*] Arthur Harold Winn [November 6, 1875 - May 7, 1893] was Nina's second-oldest brother. He was just 17 months older than Nina [born April 8, 1877] and they enjoyed a close sibling relationship. Nina was the youngest of the four children of George Prentiss Winn and Melissa Bacon Winn, the eldest being George Albert Winn [b. 1873], and a sister who Nina never knew, Edith Lily Winn, who died in 1874 at four weeks old. The day before this anniversary of Arthur's death, Nina purchased a begonia plant at Sztobbe's and brought it to his grave at Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

[**] Mrs. Price went to live with Aunt Sue Winn as a companion, following the death in 1921 of Aunt Georgianna.

Tuesday, May 8, 1923

Clear & fine. Up 7:30. Ate at Grill, lunch at library & supper at home. Library 8:30-6. Not busy with children but had a lot of books to do and tried to mark flowers in our little exhibit in PM. Miss Olsen in a couple of times. [Trolley] cars seemed extra noisy and shaky and I was dog-weary when I got home at 7:20. [*] Aunts had finished [supper] but Aunt Mame helped me get some eats. Aunt Elizabeth down [at George's house] telephoning. Norton, the manager at [Hittinger] farm, dropped dead last night. [**] We talked and read in the evening & bed by 10.

[*] It is a day such as this on the streetcars that we can understand why Nina spends four or five nights a week in Waltham, rather than commuting to Arlington. It's a three-seat or even a four-seat journey: Starting in Waltham to either Waverley or Watertown; from there to Harvard Square; then a transfer to an Arlington car; and (rarely) a transfer to a Mystic Street car (this last streetcar line served the route to Winchester and ran infrequently).

[**] Michael Francis Norton, the son of Irish immigrants, was 44 years old and was the manager at the Hittinger Fruit Co. in Belmont. He lived at 431 School St. in Belmont. He left a widow and a teenaged son and daughter.

Thursday, May 10, 1923

Clear, cold -- rather breezy. Up 7:20. Ate at Grill with little Miss Howe with whom I've had a bowing acquaintance lately. [*] Rushed out as Mr. R. Taylor came limping in, so opened the doors for his highness. Library 8:30 to 12 _and_ busy. Miss Olsen in early & Stoney later. In town, lunched at English Tea Room with Helen Smith & then to Dr. Bailey's for first time in over a year. Expected piles of work but not so bad after all; filled-up quite a few small places, etc. in about an hour. Home, [Robbins] library a bit, errands & house about 5. Nice supper & Aunt E. to farm in evening; got some flowers, cut some asparagus, etc. Aunt Sarah in in evening & we were all in a gale. [**] Bed about 10.

[*] In more modern times, we would tend to say "nodding acquaintance," indicating a slight acquaintance with a person or some subject matter (e.g., a nodding acquaintance with French). Even that expression is considered "old hat" in the 21st century.

[**] To "be in a gale" was to be in a state of merriment or hilarity. The expression was used in England and in the U.S. it was chiefly a regionalism in New England. It was already on the decline in 1923 and it is considered archaic usage today. Today we might hear the expression to be in "gales of laughter," where the term gale refers to a burst of sound.

Friday, May 11, 1923

Clear, down to 34 degrees. Warmed up a bit during day. Up 7:30. Aunts up some earlier & had a kitchen fire. Nice eats. Aunt Mame did dishes & I wiped. Worked in garden quite awhile & then to farm for yellow violets & to feed puss. Bit of a wash & some ironing & then time to dress. Aunt Mame to city so Aunt E. & I had lunch together at 11:30. Waltham by one & library 1-9. Not a rush. Good story hour. Wrote here, mended a bit & bed about 11. Marian Hammond, one of our nice little children, was run over and badly hurt yesterday; she is on danger list at hospital. [*]

[*] Marian Hammond was eight years old in 1923. She will recover and live to be almost age 82.

Sunday, May 13, 1923

Mother's Day Cloudy and dull early; clearing later, then quite cold. Aunt E. up at 7. M.A. [Mary Alice = Aunt Mame] & I about 9. Eats. Aunt E. to cemetery with Aunt Sarah. M.A. & I read papers & I started dinner. So sleepy all day I was a disgrace. Salmon for dinner. Elizabeth & Herbert White over to see Aunt E. & she went back with them to Belmont. Rested for awhile, then Josie Prentiss wanted to see me & in a few moments. Marjorie Moore, Ernest & Viola came & later Florence Harris. Mabel at Aunt Sarah's & Mary Winn, so a houseful. [Plumber] Mr. Button here & his figures for work on bath & [central] heat are \$1,135. Went to ride with Florence, up to see Mrs. Cook. Birds everywhere & country wonderful. To Florence's for waffles. Mabel Kimball there. Home about 10. Talked awhile with aunts & then bed.

Monday, May 14, 1923

Up soon after 6. Aunt Eliz. had eats almost ready but I made muffins & coffee. Aunt Mame goes to Portsmouth today for awhile. [*] Left 7:40. Library 9-6. Busy picking out school deposits. Miss Olsen in with a lot of new flowers & I managed to label them late in P.M. Lunched at library and Marie & I had supper at Grill. "Crutches" [**] there looking _most_ cross. Marie in [to Nina's room at Mrs. Scribner's] for a half-hour's gossip. Wrote here, some mending to do, read a bit & bed. Clear & fine all day: just hated to stay in during the evening.

[*] We occasionally read about Aunt Mame going to or coming from Portsmouth. She goes to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to visit her 36-year old son, Charles A. Peabody, and his wife, Ella. Charles is a wholesale grocer who has lived in Portsmouth for several years.

[**] "Crutches" is Nina's nickname today for Royce Taylor, who is recovering from a recent foot ailment.

Tuesday, May 15, 1923

Cloudy, some sprinkles, rather cold, especially indoors. Up 7:20 & eats at Grill. To bank & then to the library 8:30-6. Rather a strenuous day, with school books, flowers, etc. Lunched at library & had supper at the Grill & then to this ---- old room & read & wrote here. Rather pretty things at the library. Blew myself to a box of chocolates. [*] Wrote to Grandma Sturgis. At library again in evening awhile. Bath, read a bit & bed soon after ten.

[*] From context we can infer that Nina is saying that she treated herself to a box of chocolates when she wrote "blew myself." Recently, in a diary passage that was not published, she wrote "blew myself to a steak supper at the Grill." The expression "blew myself" originates in the 1870s and has long vanished from American slang usage. "Blew myself" conveys a stronger sense of spending that is unaffordable or of poor value (e.g., Nina's steak was thin and light) than does "treated myself." Although "blew myself" as a reflexive verb is not modern usage, we still have related expressions such as "I blew nine bucks on a beer from the hotel minibar," or "I'm not going to blow twenty-five dollars on a so-called gourmet pizza."

Wednesday, May 16, 1923

Cloudy, but nice & warm. Up 7:20, eats, & left on 8:51 [trolley] car for Wellesley with Clara Sharp. [Library] group meeting & very delightful. Prof. Marshall Perrin [*] spoke on the "Education and Libraries of China" most delightfully & gave us a lot of unusual information. Miss Masters had the Round Table on new books. Mr. Little [head librarian at Waltham] an hour late; waited for cars and got generally lost.. All up in cars to Mrs. Bradford's for the most delicious lunch served at small tables & _very_, _very_ dainty & nice. Saw [library colleagues from other places] Hayes, Curtis & Gleason & Orpha Matheson. Sat with E. Louise Jones & Miss Masters. Reached Waltham about 3 & library until 9 -- not very busy in PM; more so in evening. Wrote here, bit reading & bed 10:30. Telephone installed at home.

[*] A short biographical sketch of Marshall Perrin's very interesting life can be read via the below link: <

<https://wellesleyhistoricalsociety.worldsecuresystems.com/documents/Individual%20and%20Family%20Finding%20Aids/Perrin%20Family%20Findind%20Aid.pdf> >

[**] The term "dainty" in this context does not mean that the food was light or served in tiny portions; rather, it was an expression of the era to talk about something that was attractively prepared and served; that the table presentation reflected excellent taste and refinement.

Thursday, May 17, 1923

Clear, very windy, warm. Up 7:30, breakfast at grill & to library 8:30-12. [To Boston.] Hair & nails done, lunch & a couple of errands & a bit late for Dr. Bailey's 3 o'clock. [He] took off old gold crown & getting it (root) ready for tooth on _pivot_. Home, few errands & house 5:30. Nice supper as usual; just Aunt E. & I. In evening we went up to feed hens & walked across fields & into Cutter's [today's Cutter Hill Road vicinity & found wild cherry, celandrine, barberry & mustard & honeysuckle. Mr. Button in to ask about plumbing. [I] held off a bit -- waiting for other figures [bids]. Tried telephone for first time. [Rang] Prentisses' and got Herbert. [*] Mabel up until after ten. All tired and ready for bed at 11.

[*] Nina's telephone number was "Arlington 1172W." The "W" suffix indicated that she had a party line. Up to four parties could share a single telephone line. The letter suffix indicated the distinctive ring pattern for each telephone subscriber (all telephones on the line rang at once). The suffixes were J, M, R, and W because none of these letters sounds like the other. Although dial (also known as "automatic") telephones were being introduced in Boston, Cambridge, and other nearby communities in 1923, telephones in Arlington were manual: a user would lift the receiver, an operator would come on the line, take the number and connect the call. Dial telephones did not come to Arlington until 1955, whereupon the old ARLington exchange name (by that time expressed as AR5-) changed to MIssion (thus Arlington's 643, 648, and 646 prefixes; 641 was added after exchange names had been replaced by all-digit dialing). Nina entered her telephone number into the personal information page at the front of her diary; otherwise we wouldn't know it. Arlington directories listed only business telephone numbers. Residential numbers did not appear in local directories until 1930.

Sunday, May 20, 1923

Clear & warm & wonderful. Up 7:30 -- bit washing, etc., eats & made bed. At ten Florence came with Mabel Kimball & Etta Smith & I went with them to Hollis, N.H., through Lexington, Concord, Acton, Groton & Pepperell. A beautiful ride & perfect day. Lunched by a nice brook where I found many flowers: mitrewort and dwarf ginseng among them. Home practically the same way, arriving at 5. Mabel at Aunt Sarah's & in later. Aunt Eliz had gone to Belmont with (Uncle) Arthur to [his daughter] Dorothy's & got back about 10. Read & talked & bed by 11.

Monday, May 21, 1923

Raining & raw. Up 6:20 and hard work to do it. Rang [plumber] Hughes; his price surprised me at \$926 & I told him to go [to work on the job], too. Hurried eats & goodbyes. Waltham by 9 & library until 6. Quite busy. Miss Olsen in with a lot of flowers & tried to do names for them. Ate lunch with Marie at Grill & Nutey & I ate at library at night. To 722 and into goodish dress. Miss Rooney down in car about 8, over for Miss Murphy & Sharp & to Mrs. Jones's where Marie was invited to supper. Surprised her completely. Had a nice chat with good eats later and a [farewell] shower for Marie. Mostly things to wear & all so pretty. Gave her a nighty. Mr. Will Rooney up for us about 10:30. Read a bit & tried to rest. Light out at 12.

Wednesday, May 23, 1923

Clear & nice So tired that I stayed abed reading & eating until 11:15 & even then I was sleepy all the afternoon. Lunched at Grill. Library 1-9. Kept busy but didn't seem to accomplish [much]. Hilda Olsen in a couple of times with flowers, etc. & wildly raving the last time with whole heaps of leaves f rom the lady's slipper that _women_ had pulled up & left. [*] Marie & I for sodas after 9. Bath, read a bit, wrote here & bed about 11.

[*] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cypripedium_reginae#Conservation

Friday, May 25, 1923

Clear & hot. Up 6:45 [in Arlington]. Nice eats & off at 8:15. Left Mabel there. To Dr. Bailey's & then shopped. Bot a brown fuzzy coat at Jordan's. Hope I'll like it -- had it sent. [*] Lunched early & in Waltham by 12:30. Library 1-9. Miss Olsen in with a few flowers & in evening Mr. Mayall in with a couple of "goose" pictures for me. Fairly busy, but not nearly so tired as I've been rest of the week. Wrote here & bed at 11. Room perishing hot & quite a contrast to last winter. Telephoned Uncle Warren early A.M. & at last found him. [**] Barbara's recital tonight in town.

[*] The coat was camel's hair with stitching; when modeled by Nina the next day, all the aunts "liked it very much."

[**] Nina was anxious to reach her uncle because she wanted to sell a matured share in the Arlington Co-Operative Bank to fund her home improvements that were underway.

Sunday, May 27, 1923

Clear & glorious. Up about 8:30, eats & dishes & proposed the woods, so we went to Mr. Sztobbe's first for an hour & engaged [ordered] flowers for Memorial Day & soon after 12 we 3 [aunts Elizabeth and Mame] started, across farm as usual & just wandered & rested. Found plenty of Canada mayflower, some violets, buttercup & barberry. Filled out basket & hands. Had crackers & cheese & an orange apiece on the Overlook Rock. [*] Home soon after 5. Uncle Warren, Philip &

Myrtle called. [**] Light eats, mended some. Not so very tired & enjoyed every bit of it. Mabel up awhile in evening. Up to bed by 9:30 but read paper.

[*] I am not certain of the location of "Overlook Rock." It is possible that it is in the vicinity of Overlook Road, which was laid out in 1911 as part of the "Arlington Terrace" subdivision, and would have been a bit of a mile away and thus a reasonable walk. Nina capitalized the O and R of "Overlook Rock," so I tend to think that she was naming a specific place rather than a generic spot from which to enjoy the view. Perhaps in a future diary entry she will provide additional information to determine the location. One thing that helped with a rock offering an overlook is that there were many open fields before subdivisions and shade trees defined the landscape.

[**] Philip Cook Peirce was age 15, the son of Warren A. Peirce by his second wife, the former Ruth Cook. His first wife, born Jessie Bacon, was a maternal aunt of Nina's and a sister of aunts Elizabeth and Mame. Myrtle Ruth Peirce was the adopted daughter of Warren and Ruth Peirce, and age 5 in 1923.

Monday, May 28, 1923

Clear, cool & frost early, so Mike [farm worker] said. Up 6:15, eats & off by 7:40 & over town with Junior. Waltham by 9; up from Watertown [on trolley car] with Mr. Little. Library 9-6 & day fairly flew. Miss Olsen in with dwarf cornel & cow lily and I carried marsh cress, pink corydalis & everlasting. [*] Marie & I had our last supper together over the river. Talked a bit with Mrs. Scribner & Hester, wrote here, read awhile & bed in good season.

[*] A "bonus" of the accelerated narrative of Nina's 1923 diary is that we are treated to frequent descriptions of marvelous local wildflowers at a point in the year 2021 when the high temperature was below freezing. The variety of flowers we have been reading about recently is remarkable; it is rewarding to look these up using Google Images. Nina always has had a tremendous passion for flowers and trees (and birds, except that live birds don't lend themselves to creating a library exhibition, and taxidermied specimens likely would dismay Nina). Hilda Olsen, a landscape gardener, is frequently at the library and is someone who can deeply engage with Nina in their shared passion for flowers.

Wednesday, May 30, 1923

Memorial Day. Clear & cool. Up 6:45. Aunts & I to cemetery before 8. We had 2 beautiful bouquets of sweet peas from Mr. Sztobbe's, and wildflowers: one of lilacs for Uncle Will's. Aunts had basket of pansies & wildflowers. Met some people we knew. Flowers (real ones) were beautiful, but artificial wreaths were fierce. [We were] all weary. Met Mabel there. Had breakfast at 10 o'clock. Washed some & had time to sit in room & mend. Worked in garden for an hour -- everything growing wonderfully well. Just a nice day. Aunt Eliz. to Belmont & Aunt Mame & I had dinner about 5. In evening she & Aunt E. went to movies with Arthur Bacon. Bed by 9 after visiting with Aunts Sue & Sarah awhile. A wonderful day.

Thursday, May 31, 1923

Clear -- cold enough for a frost early; some warmer during day. Up just after 6 & left by 7:30. Aunts had a nice breakfast at 7. Over town with John Caniff. Library 8:30-12 & then in town. Met Helen Smith. Poor lunch at Schrafft's. [*] Few errands & to Arlington too late for banks for checks [**] but to Cooperative [bank] & received a check for \$1,100 for 5 shares of Coop stock to pay for heat and plumbing at 37 Summer St. (\$1,000) -- Mr. Hughes's cost estimate is \$928. Home, did some washing & ironed brown muslin. Nice dinner at 6. Mr. Hughes busy in cellar. Aunt Mame & I in orchard in evening. Planted some water-arum. Mrs. Scribner telephoned that a package had arrived for me marked "perishable" -- asked her to open it and she said it was a wonderful bunch of lilies of the valley from the Collinses at Mashpee. Bed early & read. Aunt E. to see Mabel & then in at Aunt Sarah's. Read until 11.

[*] The Schrafft's chain had multiple locations in Downtown Boston, on West Street, Washington Street, and Summer Street. Although the Schrafft candy company was headquartered in Charlestown, the Schrafft's establishments were much more numerous in New York City. [**] Banking hours at the Arlington Five Cents Savings Bank were 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and the same core hours were in effect at other banks in Arlington except for the Co-Operative Bank, which was open on weekdays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Each bank had a different focus in the services it provided; hence, the different hours of operation. Nina's relationship at the Arlington Co-Operative Bank is as an investor, so she does not negotiate her checks there.

Friday, June 1, 1923

Cool early, but very hot by night. Up at 7, and a hectic morning. Did dishes, made bed & went over town. Paid Christmas Club dues at [Arlington Five Cents Savings] Bank, and deposited my \$1,000 to a checking account at the Menotomy Trust Co. [*] Paid \$15 to Frank Wellington for insurance on house at 37. Plumber: Made a check to Hughes for \$322.00 for heater and radiator. Read paper, talked with Aunt Sarah & Frank Whittemore. Aunt E. to Belmont and Aunt Mame had a delicious dinner ready. Elizabeth White over just as I left. Library 1-9. Pat & I in the evening. Not busy but a rush latter part of PM. Cones, wrote here, bath & bed about 10:30. Room hot. Valley lilies from Mashpee very beautiful.

[*] The Menotomy Trust Company was a state-chartered trust company that converted in 1912 from its original national banking charter as the First National Bank of Arlington. The Arlington National Bank then opened as an unrelated de novo institution with a federal charter. Prior to 1974, Massachusetts savings and cooperative banks were not authorized to offer interest-bearing NOW accounts or business checking accounts, so Nina has her checking account at Menotomy Trust Co., where her uncle Warren Peirce is on the board of directors. The Menotomy Trust Company was located at 655 Massachusetts Avenue. All four banks in Arlington were headquartered in the town until Menotomy Trust was acquired by Cambridge-based Harvard Trust Company, in 1947. Through a series of mergers and acquisitions it would become a branch of BayBank, Bank of Boston, Fleet Bank, and today, Bank of America.

Saturday, June 2, 1923

Hot, clear -- very yellow early. Library 9-6. Miss Olsen in and fixed the herbarium -- had pitcher plant & sundews, etc. Lunched at Grill. Ruth Burckes in so sat together -- nice child. Home in evening & carried ice cream and had supper with Aunt Mame. Arthur there so had some cream with us. Aunt E. in Belmont. Talked and to bed soon after 10. Furnace installed in cellar, radiator in yard, bathtub at foot of my bed, and [toilet] bowl & seat in the bathroom but not _set_ up.

Monday, June 4, 1923

Hot all day. Cloudy in PM but no rain & some cooler in evening. Up 6:20. Mary Alice got the eats & I packed, etc. & luckily wore the brown muslin Waltham 9-6. Very hot & _quite_ busy in PM & alone. Mildred at other desk. Had lunch in room. Mrs. Jones invited me there to supper -- quite a wait for Stow Street [trolley] car. [*] She has some beautiful iris & such a variety of other things. Saw her fruit trees, etc. & then to his [Mr. Jones's?] mother's to see the milk room & all in for ice cream. House is on side of hill; big rock in back & many wonderful trees. Back on car about 10. Bed by 11 or soon after.

[*] This is likely the home and farm of Arthur Jones, then numbered 261 Weston St. Located just before the split of Route 20 (Weston Street) and Route 117 (Stow Street); about one-third of a mile from Route 128.

Thursday, June 7, 1923 #

Rain at last. Overcast & cooler -- very comfortable. Aunt Elizabeth up by six & I a bit later. No milk & [milk]man late, so we watered & weeded a bit. Left 7:40. Library 9-12:20 & busy all the time: overdues, filing, flowers, etc. At room a moment & wrote to Bessie Boardley [in Mashpee] & then in town. Lunch, errands & Dr. Bailey's at 3 for last work -- and _some_ work: pulled out an old back root that stuck & took about 20 minutes. No pain, but quite a strain. Novocaine, of course. Put in a new one in place of a crown, etc. Up from Harvard Square with Emma Hesseltine & glad to borrow an umbrella, as it began to rain. Poured in evening; just a fine [rain] walking. Cellar a network of interesting pipes. Aunt Sue at house & had supper with us -- very talkative. Aunt E. & I to 146 in evening. Played cards awhile with Mabel, Barbara & Jr. & George treated us [to ice cream?]. Home at 9:30, # [menstrual period began] & bed.

Friday, June 8, 1923

Cloudy & cool -- a driving mist. Up 7:30 & a hectic morning. Aunt Sue with us for eats. Wrote a note to Florence Harris, etc. Got some things for packing [to go to Mashpee]. Broke the news to Mr. Hughes that Aunt E. & I are going away. Hated to interrupt his work as he has so much done & as busy as can be. Up to feed kittens with Mike's help; gave them bread & milk. Grand rush & had a glass of milk & met Mabel (I was 10 mins. late) & to Russell School to the sewing exhibit [*] & left for Waltham at 2. Library 1-9 & a bit weary. Reading Room part of PM. Had an arethusa for

[flower] collection that George gave me, much to Miss Olsen's delight. Wrote here, read awhile & bed 10:30.

[*] The Russell School in 1923 was an elementary school on Medford Street with grades one through six, two "sub-primary" classrooms, and one "special" classroom. When Nina attended this school it was a grammar school through grade eight, as junior high schools did not exist in Arlington until 1916.. At this moment in time, Barbara Winn is an 11-year old sixth-grader at the Russell School. Arlington experimented for a few years with including "manual training" for boys and sewing for girls, in grades four through six. After the 1922-1923 school year it was decided that more time was needed for academic subjects, which led to phasing-out shop and sewing in elementary grades. The Russell School closed after the Thompson Elementary School opened in 1956, allowing for significant re-districting of Arlington Center and East Arlington students. The bottom two floors of the Russell School were incorporated into Arlington Catholic High School when it was built in 1961. The old Russell School section (which dates from 1872) is best viewed from the Russell Common municipal parking lot.

Monday, June 11, 1923

Clear & glorious. Up at 7 & we had breakfast at 8. Henry Whittmore up doing the lawn & clearing out the lilac bushes. Mr. Hughes [in] later to put in the radiators (from the lawn) with help of John & Eddie [laborers at the Winn farm?]. Aunt Elizabeth & I up and fed kittens & in to see Aunt Sue. Left for Mashpee at 11:20. Saw George and Mabel first. Had lunch at South Station. Down on the 12:25 [train], or 1:25 our time. [*] Mrs. Pocknett met us. Did some errands. Signs of the big fire all around Sandwich. Found everything [at Mashpee cottage] all right but quite dirty and _stove_ very rusty. Ate on piazza. Bessie in later & we went to see Grandma Sturgis. Bed soon after 10. Quite cool. Very hot for Boston.

[*] "Our time" refers to Daylight Saving Time, which was in effect in Massachusetts. In 1923 railroad schedules operated on Standard Time year round, so passengers and freight shippers/receivers needed to be attentive to the one-hour's difference during Daylight Saving Time, although the consequence of making an error would mean showing up too soon, rather than missing one's train.

Thursday, June 14, 1923

[Note: On June 13, Florence Harris, Carrie Peirce, and Aunt Sarah arrived for an overnight stay.]

Clear & nice -- quite cold early. Slept fine & Florence & I woke at 7 & talked awhile. Eats at 8 on piazza & Carrie P. & Aunt S. did the dishes. Wrote some cards & about 11:30 all off for "Pop" [Popponesset]. Had a fine time there. Too cold for a swim, but Florence & I waded & walked on beach & the rest rested & then picked ladies' slippers and wild strawberries. Saw a seal off shore. Stopped at Mr. Bugbee's but house closed. Home 3:30. Baked mackerel, etc. & they left at 5:15. Missed them very much. Dishes & read some in evening & Nannie in until 10. Tried to sleep on piazza but woke around 3 & finally went upstairs.

Friday, June 15, 1923

Rained early & part of AM. We didn't get up until after 9 & had late breakfast of course. On piazza most of day. Over to see Grandma Sturgis awhile -- found her quite comfortable. Had our second and last meal about 5 and then went downtown. Called on all the Collinses. Yard at Clara & Annie's was like a picture. Their mother not feeling well and had gone to bed. Marian home from normal at Hyannis -- only 18 & ready to teach. [*] Home at 9:15 & bed quite soon & read a little while.

[*] This refers to the Hyannis Normal School, later renamed the Hyannis State Teachers College. In 1921, some Massachusetts normal schools started conferring the bachelor's degree after a four-year course of study; however, there were still shorter diploma courses of study, especially intended for those planning to teach kindergarten and grammar school grades. At the high school level there also were normal-school prepared teachers; however, to provide a college preparatory course, high school teachers tended to have college degrees. Marion Wismer Collins was born December 26, 1904, which means that she'll turn 19 in another six months. So I expect that she would have taken a two-year diploma from Hyannis Normal. For more about the school, click the link below: < <https://www.capecod.com/lifestyle/hyannis-state-normal-school-a-piece-of-cape-cods-history-you-likely-dont-know-about/> >

Saturday, June 16, 1923 [Mashpee]

Clear & fine -- our best day so far. Water wonderful & greeny-blue & air better -- warmer but a good breeze. Up 9:15. Aunt Elizabeth up earlier. Nice eats. Did some washing & ironing & sewing. Had quite a lot of letters. Over to see if Bessie could take us to ride, but she was too busy. Who should be here when we got back but [nephew] Arthur, with [Arlington neighbors] Nelson J. & Pauline Crosby (who went on) and said rest of family were _on_ the way, ---- it. Jr. came with Laurence Collins about 6 & we had supper: some of Bessie's nice beans. Was just going downtown when [arrived] Mabel, Barbara, Mr. & Mrs. Chambers & their 2 children -- all very nice. Latter family had a tent, etc., & camped out back of the barn. Aunt E. & I downtown. To head of pond for milk, library, store & back about 10. Dainty slender new moon. Bed by 11.

Monday, June 18, 1923

Clear & glorious -- good breeze [in Mashpee] & hot in Arlington. Up 7:30 as Mabel got up early; good eats, etc. I did dishes while the rest cleaned up. Bit wash. Over to see Grandma Sturgis to say goodbye. Merwin had roses for us to wear home. Out fishing with the 3 girls. Caught a few small ones & then Mrs. Chambers drove us to the head of the pond where Jr., 3 girls & I had a swim. Water cold but good. Nice dinner on piazza. Lake was beautiful. Over to see Nannie & at 4 Bessie, Will & Merwin came for Aunt E. & I. Arthur staying down Jr. up with Laurence Collins. Mabel & Barbara with the Chambers. Ed McKay up with us from Sandwich. Train slow & dirty. Cherry pie at South Station. [Saw] Anna Stiles & Mr. Home about 9. Met Cassie for a chat. Opened up, everything O.K. & house nice and cool. Bed 10:30.

Tuesday, June 19, 1923

Up 7:15, eats & then washed, fed kits, saw Aunt Sue & Ella Burrage who is there for a week. Began to grow hot and kept it up. Early lunch & off by 12. Library 1-9. Just wilting weather. In children's room both PM & evening. At Mrs. Scribner's to say "hello" & eat a sandwich. Room was 88 degrees so came home at 8 to find it many degrees cooler & a nice breeze. Brot some ice cream for Aunt Elizabeth & I & we were both ready for bed. (I got here at 10.) Eddie, the nice Italian who has worked here [on the Winn farm] for years was murdered in Burlington yesterday -- fight over a 15-year old girl. [*]

[*] Following are transcriptions of two articles about the death of Eddie Lanzillotti, with explanatory notes regarding names and spellings below. Boston Globe, 19 June 1923 MAN'S HACKED BODY FOUND IN WOODS: LANCELOT VICTIM AT BURLINGTON. FRIEND, CUT AND BLEEDING, CAN'T EXPLAIN MYSTERY Special Dispatch to the Globe Burlington, June 18--Behind the phrase, "Me no understand," mumbled through his swollen lips, Lugio [sic] Nicolo, aged 30, of 11 Dudley st [sic], Arlington, perhaps has the real story of Burlington's most baffling murder mystery--if it be murder. Nicolo is at the Choate Memorial Hospital [in Woburn] with numerous wounds on his face, shoulders and scalp. Arra Lancelot, with whom he lived, is dead. Lancelot's body was found, badly cut up, in the woods off the Wilmington road, near T. L. Reed's place. The matter came to the attention of the police when Dr. G[eorge] G. Rogers notified them that a man, severely wounded, had applied for assistance. This man proved to be Nicolo. He staggered down Wilmington road covered with blood. Blood was caked all over his face and clothing. The doctor [a dentist] was working in his garden [at 46 Wilmington Rd.] when he was hailed from the road. He went out and saw Nicolo leaning against an automobile, in which were a man and a woman. The woman had become frightened by Nicolo's appearance and had cried out. The doctor took Nicolo into his house and attended him. He then telephoned the police and they sent Nicolo to the hospital. He there told the following story and stuck to it: Any question aimed to clear up some of the mysterious details was answered by the phrase, "Me no understand." He said that he and Lancelot had come to Burlington from Arlington on bicycles this morning. He said they went into the dense undergrowth, where Lancelot's body was later found. He heard a shot. He turned to look in the direction from which the sound came. Someone smashed him over the head with the butt of a revolver. He also said that he thought he had been shot. Beyond this he would not go. Constable Pollock called on the State Police for help. He, the police and Medical Examiner Winsor Tyler of Lexington went into the woods. There they found Lancelot's body. Beside it were a 32-caliber automatic and a razor. Over the battered face was found the man's own coat. He was blood from head to heels. Also, near the body, the police found two bicycles. Medical examiner Tyler said late tonight that Lancelot had received a bullet wound near his left eye. He said this caused death, but didn't express any theory as to who caused the death. Amelio Lancelot, a cousin of the dead man, visited the Woburn police late tonight and scouted the idea that Nicolo and Lancelot had had any trouble. He said that they were the best of friends and had slept in the same bed last night. He said that they left their home in Arlington in a friendly mood this morning. [END OF ARTICLE] Boston Globe, 20 June 1923 LUIGI NICOLO HELD IN BURLINGTON MURDER WOBURN, June 19--Luigi Nicolo, aged 30, of 11 Dudley St. [sic] was arrested early this morning by officer John Stokes and others of the State police in connection with

the death of Arra Lancelot, who was found lifeless in the woods at Burlington, near Wilmington road, with several wounds on his body. Nicolo was taken into custody at the Choate Memorial Hospital, this city, where he was being treated for injuries received in the alleged encounter with Lancelot, with whom he passed the day. Nicolo was charged with murder, and arraigned in the District Court. He was held without bail for a hearing June 29. [END OF ARTICLE] NOTES: It would appear that Nina had insinuated as to the supposed source of a dispute between Eddie and his friend Luigi, and knew that the charge was murder before it hit the newspapers. Enrico "Eddie" Lanzillotti was 28 years old. He immigrated from Lattorico, Italy, to the United States, via New York, in 1913, and made his way to Arlington with his brother, Giuseppe. Eddie made a trip back to Italy and returned via Naples to Boston in 1920 (where the passenger lists reflected the understanding of the name of their ultimate destinations in the U.S. -- on one ship's manifest Arlington appeared spelled as both Orlington and Harlington). According to the True List of Residents, Eddie lived in 1923 at 4 Dudley Court (variously known at 4 Dudley Street Place). The 11 Dudley St. address given in the newspaper report seems erroneous, as there are no dwellings listed there in 1923, either on the True List or in the 1923 directory. Lastly, although the name Enrico typically would be anglicized as Henry or Richard, it also occurred that adopted "American" names were derived from the first letter or sound of the original name. In this case Enrico became Eddie; sometimes a Giuseppe (= Joseph) would end up as a George. I believe that Nicolo's Italian-accented pronunciation of "Eddie Lanzillotti" was initially misunderstood as being "Arra Lancelot." Eddie was laid to rest at Mount Pleasant Cemetery. .

Wednesday, June 20, 1923 [*]

Hotter than ever. Up at 6. Pressed dress, watered some, eats & off at 7:30. Library 8:45-6. Busy with odds & ends. Up to see Miss Olsen's school garden in PM & saw Miss _____ also. Garden full of all sorts of nice things. Miss Rooney and I lunched at the Grill. Glad to come home, as [it was] hot here tonight & I am wasted now. Aunt Elizabeth and I had bread, berries & ice cream. Did some watering, up with bread & milk for the kittens [which are] quite a lot tamer. Telephoned Rachel Johnson. Wrote here & to bed at last before 10. Clothes wringing wet. Roses out in garden and first coreopsis.

[*] On this date, the Arlington Gas Light Company began dismantling the buildings of its original plant (except for the distributing gas holders), which it built in the late 1850s under the name West Cambridge Gas Light Company. The plant was located off Mystic Street in what is now the section of Mount Pleasant Cemetery nearest the bend of Mill Brook. The private utility company manufactured gas from coal, and quickly expanded to serving Belmont and Winchester. Demand for gas grew in the 20th century. Despite a move from gas to electricity for lighting purposes, gas for cooking, water heating, and space heating opened new markets for the fuel at a time when Arlington's population was growing rapidly. So in 1914 a much larger and modern gas manufacturing plant opened on Grove Street (presently occupied by the town DPW and Inspectional Services), which also supplied gas to Lexington at wholesale. In 1930, improved transmission of gas using higher-pressure pipes led to the end of local gas manufacturing, and Arlington began to be supplied from Boston. In the 1950s, Arlington (by then merged into the Mystic Valley Gas Co.)

switched from manufactured gas to natural gas. Eventually only one Grove Street "gas tank" stayed in use for distribution purposes; it was dismantled by Boston Gas in 1975.

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Thursday, June 21, 1923

Hot-hot-hot. Up soon after six, light eats & off at 7:30. A scorcher of a day. Busy until 12 & then in town to pay Chandler's, lunched with Helen Smith at Huyler's, few errands in Arlington & home soon after 3. Soaked, so stripped and on floor by low window where breeze came in & later into B.V.D.s & a big apron & did some washing, ironing & had a shampoo. Ella Burrage down for awhile. Had supper outdoors & just going up to feed the kittens when Arthur Bacon came & took us to ride: Winchester, Lexington, Lincoln, Weston, Waltham & home thru Belmont. _Then_ fed the kittens at 10:30 & they were ready for it, too.

Friday, June 22, 1923

Better breeze & much cooler during day & later our old friend east wind arrived. Up by 7, did quite a lot in garden & watered, fed kittens and had time to sit out and mend some. Had breakfast & lunch outdoors. Florence came at 12 with her cousin & drove me to Waltham, which was mighty nice. Found the [children's] room [at library] a mess, books to card, write-up, etc. & had a _very_ busy,

hectic afternoon & was more tired than I've been in a long time. Nice little Marie Bettye drowned yesterday trying to save another girl. [*] Supper at Grill & a bit rest in [staff] room & carded [books] all of evening. Home [to Arlington] by 10:30. Big fire in auto building as I left. Aunt Elizabeth at movies. Bot ice cream & ate in bed.

[*] Marie Livinia Bettye had just turned 12 years old on May 31. She perished in a pond in Weston.

Wednesday, June 27, 1923

Clear & very windy, Up soon after 7 & still tired. Ironed some. Aunt Elizabeth & I up with food for kittens but found only the black one. Sewed a bit & wrote here & left by 12. No Mr. Hughes up to 10:30 but he came soon after 11 -- had been to a funeral. Aunt E. had the nicest dinner but I had to eat in a rush & then leave. Library 1-9 & a busy PM & evening. Had desk for first time in evening and enjoyed it. Mr. Little in reading room Telephone strike on and girls in Waltham picketing & noisy. [*] Slept in Waltham for first time for three weeks -- seemed noisy & close. Bed about 11.

[*] The telephone operators at New England Telephone & Telegraph Co. voted to strike, effective at 7:00 a.m. June 27. But there was no region-wide support for the labor action. Most of the strikers worked in larger, industrial cities. In Waltham and Newton, 100% of the operators walked off the job, but in places such as Lexington and Winchester, there were no strikers. Arlington was badly affected, with 70% of the operators on strike. Still, in some larger cities, the percentage of operators on strike could vary significantly by neighborhood. A reporter for the Boston Globe gathered data on the impact of the strike with a handful of nickels: he would attempt to place calls at pay phones around Boston that were connected to different exchanges. If the nickel was ejected from the telephone, the conclusion was that the disruption to that exchange was severe. New England Telephone filled vacancies by hiring either new employees or by temporarily recalling former operators who had left to get married. Many business leaders encouraged their peers to use the telephone as little as possible to avoid burdening the understaffed system, or in the parlance of the era, to deal with the "lack of girls to man the board."

Saturday, June 30, 1923

Clear & glorious & cool. Up 7:30. Eats at Grill -- fair. Library 9-6. Right leg pretty bad by end of PM and worse in evening, confound it. [*] Fairly busy day; alone in Children's Room all of it, as Mildred Partridge was at main desk In PM. Home [to Arlington] in evening. A few errands. Elizabeth White [a granddaughter of Aunt Elizabeth] here & she had brought the two kittens from the farm -- 3rd [kitten] too wild to catch. Had a nice supper. Aunt Mame here later. Fred H. brot her & Holly & Altanah along for a few moments. Elizabeth stayed all night. Both aunts over town about 9:30 & Elizabeth & I to bed. Kittens quite scarey [scared] but better when the mother cat is with them & quite at home in living room. Bathroom & furnace well long but not finished yet & cellar in a turmoil. Going to be mighty nice when it is done. Have paid for most of it already.

[*] Nina's "auntie" -- her menstrual period -- had begun the day before. Nina frequently experiences a flare up of the vein problems in her legs in conjunction with this.

Sunday, July 1, 1923

Clear & glorious. Leg bad, so kept quiet all day, to my disgust. Had breakfast at 9 with bathrobe on & back to bed. Dressed at one but on couch most of PM. Elizabeth [age 14] under or in apple tree and aunts [Elizabeth and Mame] both busy. Aunt Sarah back from White Horse [Beach] at 11, so had dinner with us. Edith Rice here in late PM for a short call. Mabel in in AM awhile. Elizabeth & I to feed cat -- couldn't find him but I did late in evening in cider mill & left food. Kittens a bit tamer. Mrs. White [*] over for Elizabeth about 6. Bed by 9. Aunts to call on [their nephew] Arthur Peirce in evening.

[*] Maedytha White is the wife of Herbert White, widower Aunt Elizabeth's daughter, Alice Louise. Maedytha White was born Maedytha Allard and was married to Arthur Woodbury Cate, with whom she had four children before divorcing. She married Herbert White in 1917 and by 1923 they had a blended family of nine children (her four children from her first marriage, Herbert's four from his first marriage, plus a daughter they had together). Maedytha White is over a year younger than Nina; nevertheless, Nina refers to her as "Mrs. White" because to be on a first-name basis with someone indicated a level of familiarity that was reserved for close personal relationships. To cite a similar example, during this era, the parents of pioneering aviatrix Amelia Earhart were divorced and her father was remarried. Amelia always referred to her stepmother as "Mrs. Earhart."

Monday, July 2, 1923

Pleasant & nice. Up 6:30. Very light eats. Off 7:45. Felt lame & so all-in at noon. Went to [my] room [at Mrs. Scribner's] and on bed nearly an hour (had a sandwich). Felt better in PM but had a headache, so ate some supper at Grill & then went to see Stoney. Up on 7:15 [trolley car] & back on 9:15, and had the nicest time. Grounds are full of flowers, beautiful trees, pines, larch, etc. and house is very homey and nice. Attractive cretonnes, etc. [*] Read on bed awhile with a cold compress on and light out at 11.

[*] Cretonne is a heavy cotton fabric, often with a floral print. In the 1920s the average American woman was quite familiar with the many different types of domestic textiles by their names, largely because most women sewed both clothing and articles of home decor, as well as embellishing towels and linens. Men also were familiar with the names and characteristics of fabrics used in tailored clothing, as well as those for outerwear. This knowledge of basic materials has gone away as more casual dress has come to prevail, and as most home furnishings are purchased already manufactured and intended to be used and eventually discarded. By contrast, in the 1920s there was much attention given to the care of items, to include re-making or re-upholstering them. This required a deeper understanding of the details of textiles beyond the broad categories of wool, cotton, or synthetics.

Tuesday, July 3, 1923

Rained most of the day and cloudy and quite cold all the time and a relief after all the heat. Up at 7:30. Library 8:30 to 6. Leg better but cramp at times. Eats at Grill. Alone all day in Children's

Room. Just a nice, busy time. Home [to Arlington], met Jr., who carried my box. Bot peas & some raspberries. Aunt Elizabeth in Belmont. Aunt Mame & I had a nice supper together. Up with food for other little kitten but didn't find it anywhere. The two here much tamer & playing in the kitchen. Aunt Sue with Aunt Sarah. Mr. Tout died suddenly yesterday [in Winchendon]. Cesspool dug on Aunt Sarah's side & will cost me ___\$80___. Some price, but Family off to Mashpee today: [just] Mabel & Barbara. Jr. working at [his father's gas] station.

Wednesday, July 4, 1923

Partly cloudy & cool. Light showers in PM. A very quiet Fourth; not much noise anywhere. Up about 8 & we had a nice breakfast at 9 & then the aunts were busy with dinner, etc. and I did odds & ends. George, Jr., & Uncle Arthur with us. Salmon, peas, beans, beets, cukes & strawberry shortcake & fruit punch. Dishes done at 4. Bit rest & Aunt Mame hung my dark gingham & then had to rush and dress & to Winchester with Uncle Arthur to hear the band concert & see fireworks. [*] Both fine. Home soon after 10 & to bed.

[*] The concert and fireworks took place on Manchester Field, on the Mystic Valley Parkway, to the rear of the present McCall Middle School, which had not yet been built in 1923. (Incidentally, that 1932 building was designed by R. Clipston Sturgis, the architect of Arlington's town hall.) A typical fireworks display of the era consisted of two parts: "aerial pieces," which is how we enjoy fireworks today; and "set pieces," where stationary fireworks were lit on large frames, to create images of the American flag various patriotic themes, and other entertaining designs.

Thursday, July 5, 1923

Clear & hot again but not so bad as it has been. Up 6:30. Nice eats & off 7:30. Library by 8:45 & busy till 12. In town, had hair & nails done, bot a beauty white voile dress at Chandler's & out by 4:30. In to see Uncle Warren about coal, the estate, etc. To [Arlington Center railroad] station about tickets & home soon after 5. [*] Aunt Mame in town but out before six. Aunts liked my dress. Mended some & Aund E. had a fine supper about 7. Aunt Sarah with us. Aunt Sue went to Mr. Tout's funeral in Winchendon. Mother can took kittens back to farm, so up in evening & found all 3 and fed them. Wrote here & a line to [nephew] Arthur [**]. Rang Rachel Johnson and bed by 10. Nice sunset & bit cooler.

[*] I am often asked why Nina almost never takes the train on her travels between Boston and Arlington. The answer is convenience and cost. In 1923, Arlington Center was served weekdays by 11 trains outbound from Boston, departing between 6:35 a.m. and 11:35 p.m. Frequency was poor during the afternoon hours, and since Nina spent her time either in the downtown or Back Bay areas, she would have needed to take rapid transit to get the train, and then pay a separate fare. Nina could travel efficiently by rapid transit and trolley car to Arlington for just five cents (Arlington was the limit of the "nickel fare" zone). The train fares in 1923 from Boston were: 21 cents to Lake Street Station, 23 cents to Arlington Center, 27 cents to Brattle, and 29 cents to Arlington Heights. The cost differential between trolley and train is obvious; to add context, the 23-cent train fare represented about a half-hour's pay for Nina. The train to/from Arlington was convenient and affordable as routine public transportation, but mostly for commuting businessmen.

[**] Since Mabel and Barbara are at Mashpee, and George and Jr. are in Arlington, it's my guess that Arthur likely is away at overnight camp and his aunt Nina is sending him a postcard or note.

Saturday, July 7, 1923

Changeable. Showery & sunny & cool. Up 7:45. Library 9-6 & some weary. Lunched at Grill. Packed last of things to bring to Arlington. All alone [at library] & busy all day. Miss Olsen in awhile in P.M. & tired out. [I] looked like a new immigrant when I came home to Arlington by 7. Met Jr. on way so he helped me along. The aunts had a nice supper ready: beans, brown bread & cream pie. Aunt Elizabeth over town & Aunt Mame & I did the dishes. Up to feed cat & 3 kittens-- little black one back in barn; rest outside. Wrote here, washed stockings & up to bed soon after 9. Jr. up in evening with steak for tomorrow.

Sunday, July 8, 1923

Clear and glorious. Up soon after 7 and had a busy day. Washed & ironed & pressed and aunts were busy with a fine dinner: steak, potatoes, beets & onions, fruit salad & coffee. George & Jr. up and brot ginger ale & sarsaparilla. Mrs. Damon called in PM. Mended some and packed trunk; very little rest. Fed kits about 9. All 3 there. Aunt Sue at Aunt Sarah's & they had a lot of callers: Gert Crocker, Gannetts & a Miss Grover. Wrote here, read paper & bed soon after 10. Autos flying by as usual. [*]

[*] Sunday pleasure drives were becoming increasingly popular, and Summer Street had become an especially busy thoroughfare for drivers seeking to bypass Arlington Center--not only to avoid the congestion of built-up areas, but also to not have to deal with trolley cars, the railroad crossing, and pedestrian movements. Summer Street was a modern highway in 1923, but by the 1930s would be surpassed by the new Concord Turnpike (Route 2).

Monday, July 9, 1923

Clear & nice -- as fine as yesterday and warmer. Up at 6 & trunk off at 7, checked to Gloucester. Eats & dishes, cut flowers, fet kits. Mr. Hughes busy. Dressed & left at 7:30. Met Rachel & Annie (latter not very well) at 10:30 at North Station & on 11:45 train. Ride seemed very short. At Colby Arms by 12:30 & to my delight had room in annex, 2nd floor & 2 beds & share dressing room for two days & then to my last year's room -- 13 or first floor. Met a few new people & saw a lot we knew last year. Nice meals as usual, sat on piazza with "Aunt Lou" some of PM. Unpacked trunk & then went sound asleep. Rachel & I on rocks awhile in evening. To store & over to room about 9. Most everyone at movies. Wrote here & to aunts & read & bed 10:30.

Wednesday, July 12, 1923

Clear & fine, warm, but quite cold in evening. Up 7:30. Rachel & I to Gloucester by ferry and did a bit of shopping. Met Ida Fredrickson. When we returned autos were lined up and a crowd of people on the beach -- a little boy -- 12 years old -- had been drowned -- worked over him for hours

without success. Rachel & I [had] met him & his parents at the Beechcroft on Tuesday. First time it ever has happened here. [*] Talked, sewed, read on piazza most of PM & had a nap. Same in evening & bed about 11. Cards to Jr., Arthur, Aunt Sue, F. Harris, E. Deshon & E. Rice.

[*] If the numbers of drownings were even one-tenth today of what they were in 1923, it would be considered a major public health crisis in Massachusetts. Under the auspices of the Arlington Police Department, swimming lessons were offered to the young people of Arlington for the first time in the summer of 1923. The lessons took place in the Mystic River, at the foot of Beacon Street. The conditions were problematic, in that pollution from the tanneries and chemical plants along the Aberjona River in Woburn and Winchester made its way down into the Upper Mystic Lake (the swimming at Sandy Beach in Winchester posed a frequent health hazard) and eventually flowed into the river. In later years, it was decided to occasionally truss open the dam at Medford Square so that once again salt water could find its way to Arlington at high tide, thereby reducing the levels of pollution. The swimming lessons proved to be so valuable, that adults were also invited to participate and there was serious discussion in Arlington of establishing a supervised bathing beach.

Wednesday, July 18, 1923

Barbara's 12th birthday. Sent Barb a cross stitch purse [*] with a check for \$4 towards a bicycle, and some molasses kisses, and hope the youngsters had a nice day. Hot here, but so cool in evening that heavy coat was necessary. Up 7:30. Rachel to Gloucester with Miss McCoy. Embroidered hat most of AM & some of PM. [*] Rachel, Mrs. Azarian & I to Sunday Rocks -- beautiful flowers, blueberries & piles of mosquitoes. Mr. & Mrs. Streeter asked me and Rachel to ride in PM at 4. Rockport & Annisquam & just fine. Cards in evening. 1 game of 500 & Mrs. Baron & I beat Dr. Williamson & Rachel. [***] Mrs. Maenche [from Waltham] in in AM. Ices at 10, some talk & to bed.

[*] Nina spends a fair amount of time on her Gloucester vacation visiting gift shops, especially those of arts and crafts artisans of the renowned Rocky Neck art colony.

[**] Creating one's own millinery was a popular vacation activity. On July 17, Nina wrote that she and Rachel "bot materials for hats of frame & crepe: hers flame colored & mine white. . . . [In PM] Rachel working on hat, so started mine -- fascinating to do." Some models of hats and other works of art in different media by Edith Wimsby Stevens (not to be confused with Edith Briscoe Stevens), who lived for many years in Arlington and was a pioneering female newspaper cartoonist, can be seen on the following pages of a website dedicated to her career. Note some of the designs from 1923: <https://www.edithstevens.com/fineart> <https://www.edithstevens.com/creativity-at-work>

[***] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/500_\(card_game\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/500_(card_game))

Thursday, July 19, 1923

Clear, fine, quite cool. Up at _8_. Sewed some & then Annie, Rachel, Miss McCoy & I went to the exhibit of North Shore Arts. Some fine pictures and bronzes; 2 of latter by Mrs. [Gertrude Christian] Fosdick [*] & 3 former by Mr. [J. William] Fosdick [**] were both finely done & interesting. Went to a few gift shops, mostly. Dog weary. Better in PM & finished embroidery on

hat & at 3 o'clock went sailing. Tame mostly & in harbor, but one good spin at end when breeze came up. Piazza & a short walk in evening. Up to bed 9:15. Miss Hayes in with her hat in Mrs. Gibbs's room, so it was 10:30 before we parted & then read paper. Cards to Aunt Elizabeth, Elizabeth White, and Mabel.

[*] Gertrude Christian Fosdick (1861-1961) was a leading woman artist who was part of the summer Cape Ann art colony. Of note, Edith Winsby Stevens of Arlington, whom I discussed yesterday, also spent much time on Cape Ann during the 1920s, learning an array of techniques and media from fellow artists and pursuing her own highly creative approaches. For more information about Mrs. Fosdick, see the link below.

[**] J. William Fosdick (1858-1937) had a varied career as a painter, illustrator, and even interior architectural designer. His work of Joan of Arc is in the collection of the Smithsonian. Fosdick specialized in works involving pyrography (controlled wood burning). In the following "e-museum" site appear many of his works and biographies of him and his wife, Gertrude. The site is unconventionally organized, so visitors must scroll down a bit in the Fosdick "salon" to get to the biographical details and better works of art than the black-and-white photographs that start the piece: http://pyromuse.org/jwfosdick_3.html Edith Winsby Stevens of Arlington, whom I mentioned yesterday, studied in the 1940s with another famed artist of the Cape Ann colony: http://pyromuse.org/jwfosdick_3.html https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aldro_Hibbard

Friday, July 20, 1923

Clear & bluest of blue skies. Had a delightful morning on the rocks, writing and looking. Annie & Rachel to Sunday Rocks but Rachel with me later. Sewed on hat in PM, finished it with a lot of help from Mrs. Colby & wore it with white voile [dress]. We 3 to see Mr. Fosdick's pictures of Joan of Arc -- very beautiful & wonderful & a person could look at them for hours [*]. Annie & I on rocks for sunset & then I went alone to the movies -- very good, but too long, 10:30. Talked a bit, read paper & bed about 12.

[*] This is an earlier work (1896) by Fosdick, depicting Joan of Arc. It was a gift made in 1910 to the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the following link shows the work in its collection, along with explanatory notes on the significance of Joan of Arc as the subject: <https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/adoration-st-joan-arc-8500>

Sunday, July 22, 1923

Cloudy & much cooler -- needed sweater on piazza. Read paper, packed trunk, etc. in AM. Some to church. Felt rather bad as to "innards" so on bed until 12:30 & then dressed. Rachel and I on rocks [*] most of AM. Harbor full of sails. [The Rev.] Dr. Williamson had a service at 7:15 but everyone said good-bye beforehand and seemed sorry to have me go, and Mrs. Williamson kissed me good-bye. 7:53 train & home at 10. Cool ride; out with a pleasant Brookline woman who had been to Rockport. Aunts up & we talked an hour and I used the bathroom for first time, but not in tub. Had a mighty nice vacation but do not feel rested.

[*] Nina was staying at the Colby Arms in East Gloucester. The "rocks" don't appear to have a proper name (such as do Bass Rocks, Sunday Rocks, etc.), so I imagine that "the rocks" are simply a spot that would have been a short stroll from the Colby Arms guesthouse.

Wednesday, July 25, 1923 [*]

Poured early and most of the day but the sun came out about seven and now it is blue & clearing. Up 6:30 [in Arlington], late at library and worked 9-6, so [I] owe 1/2 hour. Lunched at the small Delicatessen & supped at the Waldorf, walking over with Mrs. Jones. On way back an auto backed-up; proved to be W. Royce Taylor, who had some overdue postcards & a clear library card he wished me to take to library, as he knew I worked there. [Went to my] room [at Mrs. Scribner's] & read & wrote here & a check to Chandler's & bed fairly early (11 PM).

[*] To catch-up readers on some of the "doings" in Arlington while Nina was away on vacation straight back to work in Waltham the next day: On July 13 the town voted to build a new elementary school on Park Avenue North (now called Park Avenue Extension), which would become the original building of the Peirce School. On July 21 the cupola on the old town hall (which stood where the Uncle Sam Plaza and part of Mystic Street are today (see below link for image of building in context) was struck by lightning and caught fire. On July 23 the Selectmen made a bold move to modernize the heating plant at Robbins Memorial Town Hall by switching from coal to oil; it would not be until the very early 1970s that the last town buildings would stop using coal for heat and hot water. And during the waning weeks of the New England Telephone operators' strike, the Arlington exchange was reported to be running well, with two-thirds of the "girls" having returned to their posts, and the one-third of strikers replaced by new hires. To view an Old Town Hall postcard (back when it was the only Town Hall) click the link below: <
<https://arlingtonhistorical.pastperfectonline.com/archive/60CFC3E6-2ED3-42BD-B298-468736247017>

Thursday, July 26, 1923

Clear & fine & cool. Up 7:30. Met Stoney so she came to Grill with me and we had a good chat. Library 8:30-12. Did shelf list most of time. In town, lunched at Acorn & up to Dr. Bailey's but didn't find him. To Pohlson's for calling cards: only 50 and \$2 -- a blow. [*] Home by 3 & washed dresses, stockings, etc. Aunt E. had done most of the underwear for me. Florence Harris called and I went to ride with her in evening after a rush supper. Aunts cleaned attics & closet & were done up. Drove to Woburn by Mystic Lakes & Horn Pond & around to the Cooks' & home by 9. First bath in tub & bed soon after 10.

[*] Unlike a society matron who lives in the city, Nina is not making ritualistic calls on homes and leaving her card on a silver tray. She actually makes visits with the intention of seeing whomever she has called upon, and only if they were not in might she leave a calling card. She probably used calling cards mostly as a gift enclosure, when sending flowers, or similar purpose.

Friday, July 27, 1923 [*]

Clear, cool, but warmer. Library PM or in Waltham, anyway. Up 7:30. Mr. Hughes rang up for some money but I had to tell him nothing doing: haven't had time to examine the work. Up to feed kittens & then ironed until 11:15: brown muslin, pink linen & voile, neckwear, underwear & hankys. Bath & a bite & off at 11:45. Library 1-6 only, and alone. Ella Burrage in a few moments. Over the river with Mrs. Jones & had supper at the Waldorf. Did wish for a ride or _something_ but no one came (as usual). Talked with Mrs. Scribner & Hester awhile, wrote here & read & bed.

[*] On this date occurred the shocking death of Eliza Parker Robbins, one of the three iconic "Robbins Sisters" of the family whose various branches, including their own, were deeply engaged in civic life and remarkable philanthropy in Arlington. They resided in the Whittemore-Robbins House, the Federal-style yellow mansion that stands to the rear of Robbins Library. While on a motoring tour in the Bernese Oberland, near the capital city of Berne, Switzerland, the chauffeur failed to negotiate a sharp corner and the automobile plunged into the river Simme. Eliza was drowned, but her sisters Caira and Ida survived. Eliza was 59 years old.

Sunday, July 29, 1923

Cloudy & damp & rest were rather cold. Up to feed kittens twice & had them up in lap but they were very squirmy. Up at 7 & _ate_ too much all day. George, Jr., and [first cousin] Warren Peirce, Jr. & Aunt Sarah [*] to dinner. All hands (we 3) helped. Mended some & more in PM. Marian Buttrick in. Dressed very late. Aunt Sue & Susie Watson at Aunt Sarah's in evening & in for a few moments & then we had crackers & tea. Lit the [new] Ruud [water] heater [**] & Aunt Elizabeth & I had hot baths & bed by 10:30.

[*] Aunt Sarah Daniels Winn turned 80 years old on July 19, when Nina was in East Gloucester. As for Aunt Sarah, she became an octogenarian while on vacation at White Horse Beach.

[**] Ruud was a popular brand of water heaters in the early 20th century. They were manufactured in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Monday, July 30, 1923

Cloudy most all day, some clearer by night. Up soon after 6, eats & off 7:40. Fuse blew out on Watertown [trolley] car, some delay, so library at 9:15. Mr. Little back from his vacation & had a fine time (auto). Mr. Landers also back & happy. Busy all day. To Waldorf for lunch with Miss Nimms [*]. Supper in basement with Nutey & then up for sodas and saw W. Royce Taylor a glimpse. Wrote here, card to Arthur, read some & bed by 10. Aunt Elizabeth to [her son] Dick's for a week while [her daughter-in-law] Doris is at Harwich. Aunt Sarah says she will give me \$100 towards house improvements which will lift quite a load from my shoulders.

[*] Miss Nimms is a new colleague of Nina's who started when Nina returned from vacation. Miss Nimms is a recent graduate of the Westfield Normal School (today's Westfield State University) where she would have taken the two-year "teacher-librarian" training course.

Thursday, August 2, 1923

Fairly cool early, much warmer by night. Up by 7:15. Breakfast at Grill with Miss Nimms & library 8:30-12. In town to lunch & bot a nickel [plated] soap dish for the bathtub. To Dr. Bailey's at 2 & he _worked_ for an hour on my teeth. Home, stopped at [Robbins] library to wish them all pleasant vacations. Everybody at home at movies. Fed kittens, bit wash & rested. Aunt Mame back at 5 & over town with her at 6: she to Blake's [*] & I was invited to Florence's with Aunts Sue & Sarah to see Fannie Willis. In to see Aunt Sue's lights [**] & they are all _fine_. Home 9:45. Had a hot & cold bath & bed at 11.

[*] Blake's ran this display advertisement on the front page of the Arlington Advocate in the summer of 1923: HOT WEATHER SPECIALS at our Soda Fountain ----- Fresh Fruit Orangeade see it made ----- Blake's Draft Gingerale Old Fashioned Root Beer ----- BLAKE'S Arlington and Lexington

[**] "Aunt Sue's lights are all fine" is perplexing. I am wondering if Aunt Sue recently had electric service installed in her home.

Friday, August 3, 1923

President Harding died last night in San Francisco [*] Very hot, especially in Waltham. Up soon after 7. Telephoned Hughes, did dishes & a bit washing & some mending. Fed kittens and in to see Aunt Sue. Aunt Mame did all the cooking. Left 11:50. To Harvard Square with Marian Buttrick, and who should be in Watertown car but Mrs. Gibbs and her daughter, so we had a nice chat. Library 1-6. To Waldorf with Mrs. Jones for a very light supper: fruit, iced tea & blueberry cake. Back to room--hot, and I was steaming. Telephoned in AM to have telephone service changed. Cold tub and bed at 9:30. [**]

[*] Nina would have heard this news from the newspaper, or it reached her by telephone (directly or through someone who learned it that way). This is a good moment to mention that I am struck by the fact that not once have we heard Nina say anything about radio (frequently referred to as "the wireless" in this era). Radio was in its early broadcast years, but had advanced to the point that there was regular programming, there was a daily column in the Boston newspapers about it, etc. I wouldn't expect Nina to have a wireless set at home (broadcast radio perhaps would be better described in 1923 as a hobby than a common feature of ordinary life). Back to President Harding: He was the first president whose voice was heard live on broadcast radio (see link below); his successor, Vice President Calvin Coolidge (previously governor of Massachusetts) was the first president to make an address specifically intended for the radio audience. For an interesting look at Harding's debut on broadcast radio visit: <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/06/14/this-day-in-politics-june-14-1922-636844>

[**] Now, about that cold bath! Nina would be used to this; however, utility companies, such as the Arlington Gas Light Co., sought to encourage use of both their appliances (e.g., water heaters) and consumption of their fuel. Here's the text from a display advertisement in the Arlington Advocate in the summer of 1923: A Warm Bath is More Refreshing Than a Cold Plunge -- and better for you, especially when you're overheated and exhausted as you'll probably be many times this summer. A warm bath is no rude shock. It lowers the body temperature gradually and gently, opens the pores to the cool air, and soothes and quiets the nerves. In summer, more than ever, you need a gas water heater. Special terms -- only 10% down on any style heater and 12 months -- a full year -- to pay! Heaters from \$15.00 up. Get your order in now for quick installation. Come in today or telephone Tel. Arlington 2000 ARLINGTON GAS LIGHT CO. "If it's done with heat -- you can do it Better with GAS!" -----

Saturday, August 4, 1923

A very hot day. Up at 7. Ate at Grill; lunched in library. Mildred not in. Library 8:30-6 -- quite busy. Home in evening. Flags at half-mast [*] everywhere. Met Charles Gannett who drove me home from the centre [of Arlington]. Had ice cream for dessert & Mary Alice [Aunt Mame] had a fine potato salad. Up to feed kittens, on piazza awhile & read some. Into cold tub & bed 10:30. Hot, but a breeze in my window, so slept fine.

[*] Flags were lowered in mourning for the death of President Warren G. Harding. "Half-mast" is supposed to be reserved for flags flying on ships, whereas "half-staff" is to be used for flags flown on land; however, the expression "half-mast," as we can read here, was used commonly. It is rarely heard today.

Sunday, August 5, 1923

Hot again -- very, but cooler by night. Up by 9. Aunt Mame earlier, so had eaten. Did quite a lot of washing & ironing, resting between, so not tired. Marian Buttrick in for a bit. Fed kittens & again in early evening & found the cross-billed hen had hatched her chicks -- 7 of them. [*] George up for dinner. Aunt Mame got most of it and did dishes. Salmon, green peas, etc., tomato stuffed with cream cheese, salad, cold tea & lemon pie. On bed rest of PM. Into pink voile but nowhere to go. Miss Goodwin into Aunt Sarah's and Aunt Sue there. Down to George with lemon pie he couldn't eat at noon. Aunt Mame & I had apple pie & cheese & cold coffee at 8. [**] Bed by 10.

[*] A cross-billed hen is more commonly known today as a cross-beaked hen; sometimes a scissor-beaked hen.

[**] When I was a child I had an autograph book, which I came upon just the other day. One of the "wise sayings" written inside by my uncle Jack was "Apple pie without the cheese is like the kiss without the squeeze."

Wednesday, August 8, 1923

Cloudy & some rain in AM. Clear & beautiful in PM. Up 7:30. Aunts were eating. Did some weeding, fed kittens & chickens & Mike & I fixed their food and drink. I gave him money for cracked food. Very little mending. Alice Buttrick down early. Nice lunch & off at 12. Alone in PM. An interesting day: children with turtle, etc. & a Miss. Birdley of Hampton Institute in & practically offered me a position there. Miss Nimms & I lunched [**] at the Waldorf & then she came to the branch with me & stayed until 9. Had a soda together. Home 9:30. Met some friends of Mrs. Scribner's. Wrote here, read a bit & bed at 11.

[*] The Hampton Institute is today named as Hampton University, a historically black college founded in 1868 in Hampton, Virginia. It was preparing to open its library school in 1925. The American Library Association had been seeking for several years a college to develop a professional course of study to train African Americans in library science.

[**] Here is another example of Nina describing having had lunch twice in the same day. Lunch could refer to the noon meal, or to lighter meals eaten at other times of the day, or at different social occasions. .

Friday, August 10, 1923

President Harding buried in Marion, Ohio. Everything in U.S. closed out of respect to him. Didn't wake until 8:20. Aunts had finished eating and Aunts Sarah & Elizabeth went to church at 10 -- services for Harding. Marion Buttrick down & Florence along to take us to ride. Up to Lexington for eggs & then to Lincoln & Cambridge Basin [*] & home at 11:15. Aunt Mame & I in the orchard; flowers: 6 ft. & 8 ft. cat o' nine tails, etc., & then she got dinner & I ironed dresses & fed the cat, kittens, hen & chicks. Aunt E. to Mrs. Austin's in PM. Aunt M. read & I sewed, read & napped. Had ice cream about 7 that Aunt E. brot & then I went up to the Buttricks. Very attractive house. [**] Aunt Sarah there & home together at 8. Bath & bed.

[*] The Cambridge Basin refers to what we know as the Cambridge Reservoir, which is a beautiful body of water, located mostly in Waltham and partially in Lincoln and Lexington. It is a beauty spot along Route 128. In 1923, more than a quarter-century before the Route 128 highway was built, Nina, Marion, & Florence would have approached it from Winter Street and others.

[**] The Buttrick family had recently moved to 115 Summer St.

Sunday, August 12, 1923 #

Up 6:15 & Florence came 6:45 & at the Gannetts' & Marietta Bell [*] & we went to Sandy Beach on Upper Mystic [Lake in Winchester **]. Had a breakfast picnic. Found built-in tables & seats & a lovely spot. Had bacon, eggs, coffee, johnny cake, corn & donuts. Home by 9. Made a cherry pie. Fed kits & chicks. Aunt Sarah had dinner with us. Bed in PM & read. Whipped cream for a pie -- just Aunt Mame & I. Aunt Sue, Ernest H. & Emma [***] at Aunt Sarah's & we went in for awhile in evening. Bed by 10.

[*] Marietta K. Bell was 24 years old and lived at 16 Glen Ave. in Arlington with her parents, Edwin and Fannie Bell. Because one of Nina's maternal aunts was born Altanah Bell Bacon, I wonder if there is a family connection to these Bells.

[**] Sandy Beach was renamed in 2008 as Sen. Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Memorial Beach, after the late state senator who represented Winchester, Somerville, and Medford between 1991 and 2005.

[***] This is Ernest Hesseltine, age 64, and his wife, Emma G. Hesseltine, age 48. They live at 38 Russell St. in Arlington.

Monday, August 13, 1923

Clear, fine, very windy. Felt so horrid that I stayed home and abed practically all day and slept & read & ripped up the blue twill [which was] so cut up there's only enough for Barbara's dress. Had breakfast in bathrobe, rang library, back to bed & slept. Lunched 12:30. Washed pink linen & back to bed & ripped dress. [*] Into a few things at 5 & made biscuit for supper & Aunt Mame & I ate by 6:30. Fed kits & chicks & read until 9:30. Both Aunt Sue & Aunt Sarah sick last night. George up in evening with a few blueberries; [he had come] up last night from Cape & [is] going back tomorrow.

[*] Nina's menstrual period started the day before, and as is often the case, she is having a very tough time of it. Her choppy writing also shows that she is not feeling well. When Nina writes that she "ripped dress," she doesn't mean that she caught her dress on a nail. Nina is removing the stitches from an old dress to have the fabric remade into something else -- in this case a dress for her niece, Barbara. This was common practice, as the era of cheap and "fast fashion" was decades into the future. In the early years of my career, when suits and ties were required business apparel for men, I would take a seam-ripper to pick out the stitches in the collars of my (expensive!) pinpoint Oxford button down dress shirts, when the collars began to show wear. The collar then would be turned around and sewn back onto the neckline of the shirt, extending its useful life. When the cuffs showed wear, the shirts would be made into short-sleeved ones -- not that it was OK for me to wear short sleeves in the US (depending on where one worked, a short-sleeved men's dress shirt was an oxymoron); however, when I traveled to tropical locations on business, they were perfect. And practical, as we had to change our shirts at least twice a day in places such as the Philippines and Haiti. I must sound like Methuselah here, but Nina's main activity today was evocative of my own experience in the late 20th century; one that the generation to follow mine would never imagine.

Tuesday, August 14, 1923 [*]

Up 6:20 & left by 7:20. Clear & wonderful -- quite cool. Library by 8:30 -- not very busy in AM. Miss Olsen in & wanted one of us to go to East Gloucester in PM & didn't I want to. That better no, after being out yesterday. Lunched in room & home [to Arlington] in evening & very weary. Such a nuisance to get so tired in every inch of me. Aunt Mame there; she is not going to Belmont until Friday. Nice eats & up to feed kits & chicks -- latter in bed. Read in evening & up to bed at 9:30. Thunder shower in middle of the night, not very near. Lightning bright & _some_ rain.

>From the Arlington Advocate of this week: FIRE ALARM WHISTLE MISSED FOR A FEW DAYS Those in our town who have depended upon the sounding of the fire alarm in the morning as their rising bell, have missed it for a few days. This has been necessary because of the changing of its location from the cupola in the Old Town Hall, where it has been ever since the system was installed, to its new location in the front of the building. This change has been necessary because of the removal of the cupola from the building . . . because of the shattered condition caused by its recent "knockout blow" by lighting. The cupola has been in a precarious condition for some time and now that the elements took a hand in helping to demolish it . . . much as it is to be regretted by many. The passing of the cupola reminds one of the changing scene about the center. According to Mr. Charles S. Parker's book, "Arlington: Past and Present," we find that the hall was built in 1853. The total cost was \$22,937.37, of which \$870.00 was for furniture and fixtures, \$260 for [architectural] plans, and \$330 for services of the committee. The cupola will be removed as soon as it is possible to have the work done, and will entail no little expense as well as trouble. [Note: It was predicted in 1923 that the Old Town Hall, which then housed the Arlington Police Department, soon would be torn down altogether to provide more modern quarters for the force. Instead, a new police station was built on Central Street in 1927. The Old Town Hall continued to stand until 1960, when it was removed to make way for the alignment of Mystic Street with Pleasant Street. The Uncle Sam Plaza occupies part of the Old Town Hall site.]

Thursday, August 16, 1923

Clear & glorious. Up soon after 7. Out for breakfast and back to make bed. Library 8:30-12 & kept busy In town, lunched with Helen Smith, paid for white voile & did other errands. To State House & saw Miss Jones (E.K.) [*] & got some review papers -- no positions open at present. Out to Arlington by 3. Called on Mrs. Damon & then on Mrs. Rice & Edith -- some errands & rushed home. Henry Whittemore had cleaned cellar beautifully & chopped wod, etc. but it cost me \$4 & my pay has nearly vanished again. Edith Rice up to supper & we had a nice evening together. Fed kits & chicks. Swordfish, tomatoes, etc. & sliced peaches. [**] Walked part way with her. Bed 10:30.

[*] Miss E.L. Jones (for E. Louise Jones) was on the staff of the Free Public Library Commission at the Massachusetts State House. Nina is erroneously identifying her as "E.K.," which may be due to the fact that the "other" Miss Jones in Nina's library circle is Miss Kathleen Jones.

[**] In Nina's original manuscript of this diary entry, it read as if she had fed the kittens and the chickens with swordfish, tomatoes, etc. & sliced peaches! This is why this editor inserts some badly needed punctuation.

Friday, August 17, 1923 [*]

Still another perfect day. Up 7:20. Aunt Mame ate early so I ate alone. Did dishes & a little reading. Morning fairly flew. Mrs. Rice rang up. Edith had gone to Winchester. Fed kits & chicks, mended a bit, bath & dressed by 11:30. Aunt Mame & I had dropped eggs [= poached eggs]. Library 1-9; first evening there since early July. Miss Olsen & her mother in in PM [with] flowers, etc. Pat on her

vacation -- 3-1/2 weeks. Mrs. Woods telephoned in PM that [her daughter] Marjorie [Moore] had a 2-lb.boy at 2 AM & both are fine. Aunt Mame to Belmont in PM for a few days. Read, bed at 11.

[*] On this date, Miss Caira Robbins landed in New York on the steamship Aquitania, accompanying the body of her sister, Eliza, who had died in an accident in Switzerland on July 27. Miss Ida Robbins had recovered from the shock of the automobile accident (all three Robbins Sisters were in the vehicle when it plunged into a river) and had been released from the hospital; however, "she was not in sufficient health to make the trip across the water."

Response to multiple queries on whether "2-lb." was a typo: Regarding Marjorie Woods Moore's newborn son being born at two (2) pounds (as reported by Nina Winn in her diary), I can only confirm that Nina indeed wrote the numeral "2," and I point out that in the same sentence she reports the birth as happening at 2 AM. Each of those numerals was written in the exact same way. Perhaps the baby was 2 pounds and some ounces (at 2-pounds-anything, every ounce matters), but Nina hasn't mentioned that, or she heard it, and just rounded it down in her diary note. As for the baby, he was named Henry Blandy Moore. When he registered for the military draft in 1942 (at almost age 19), he was 5 feet 8 inches tall, and weighed 130 pounds. He had just finished his freshman year at MIT. The Moore family was then living at 349 Gray St. in Arlington. My mother was born at the Richardson House at the Boston Lying-In Hospital in 1933, weighing 2 pounds 11 ounces. Her mother was a very petite lady; I don't know to what extent that factored-in to the birthweight. My grandmother and my mother stayed in the hospital for the usual several days for that era and then went home. I never heard that there was anything extraordinary about my mother's neonatal care. My uncle was born 17 months later, coming in at a whopping 3 pounds. I'm not usually conversant in the birthweights of assorted relatives, but during the pandemic confinement I finally got around to mining a mountain of images and correspondence from boxes that I brought to my home when my father passed away. Richard Duffy

Saturday, August 18, 1923 [*]

Another perfect day -- clear and OK for _another_ vacation. Up 7:15, eats & library 8:30-6. Lunched there. Put turtles in a big basin and they are having one glorious swim. Lost the dear little yellow pansy pin that Vida gave me long ago & yesterday lost the lavender enamel one she gave me (pansy found in library on Monday). Tired when I got home. Fed kits & chicks & then had some supper. Henry & Eva Daniels at Aunt Sarah's. Marion Buttrick there awhile. Read & bed about 10:30, after hot bath. Mame [Gannett] rang up to see if I wanted to go for a breakfast picnic.

[*] In the Arlington Advocate of this week: "Stray children continue to be brought to the police station. Another was added to the already long list on Tuesday, coming from Boston. The mother was communicated with by the Boston police and came to Arlington for the child."

Sunday, August 19, 1923 [*]

Clear -- wonderful clouds all day & another cerise sunset. Up at 6 & water boiled & in [Thermos] jug at 6:45 & basket packed & they didn't come until 7. Mame [Gannett], Charles, Aunt Carrie [**]

& Edith Winn. To Mystic Lakes again & had a fine time & then to ride: Woburn by Horn Pond & Lexington & down [Summer Street] boulevard & home at 9. Poor Esther had a headache. Busy all of AM, made crust and a blueberry pie, fed the animals, made bed, pressed dress & had 1/2 hour's rest. George to dinner at 2: broiled chicken, potatoes, lettuce, gingerbread, coffee, pie & blackberries. Aunt Sue & Clara Toutt at Aunt Sarah's & in to see them after dishes were done at 4. Up to bed, read paper & slept & up at 7. Had lobster salad with aunts, etc. & then they all came in with me and stayed until after 9. Rang Aunt Mame & up to bed at 10 -- read a bit.

[*] With the huge popularity of Sunday pleasure drives, and increasing numbers of automobiles passing through the streets of Arlington every day, the Arlington Police Department in 1923 constituted a special traffic squad of seven men and a sergeant, attired in distinctive khaki uniforms with leather puttees (protective wraps that were strapped around the calf above ankle boots).

[**] "Aunt Carrie" is Sarah Caroline Winn Peirce, the 71-year old paternal aunt of Edith Winn, thus the cousin of Nina's father. In this instance "Aunt" is used as an honorific for an older cousin.

Monday, August 20, 1923 [*]

Clear, perfect summer weather. Up by 6:10 & busy: eats, watered some, dishes, put up lunch, fed kits & chicks, made bed & off by 7:55. Just missed Waltham car & also Mr. Little in his car, so a bit late to work, but made it up at noon: ate in room. Hilda Olsen in in PM. Nutey back. Fairly busy, but not a crush. Miss Nimms & I ate at the Chinese and then went to the movies. Both silly plays but good fun. Home 9:40, wrote here, read a bit & bed. Fine moon. Mr. Landers found my pansy pin when he swept, to my great joy. Turtles fine & quite tame. Wrote to Barb & bed at 11.

[*] On this date was the funeral of Miss Eliza Robbins. Nina left for Waltham in the morning, so we should not be surprised that she did not make any note of something she did not witness, even though it was a major event in Arlington. Here is the account from the Arlington Advocate about the proceedings, which were held at the Whittemore-Robbins House, a place familiar to so many of us: **EXPRESSIVE FUNERAL SERVICE FOR THE LATE ELIZA PARKER ROBBINS** The funeral of the late Eliza Parker Robbins, who met death in an accident at Oberwil Simmenthal, Switzerland, July 27th, was held Monday, August 20th, at 3 o'clock from the Robbins mansion, 672 Mass. avenue, Arlington. Miss Cairra Robbins, the younger sister of Miss Robbins, sailed from France on the Aquitania, August 10th, with the body of her sister to lay it away in the family lot in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, and where while in life, Miss Eliza loved to go to place on the graves the garden flowers from the Robbins home she loved so dearly. The homecoming was doubly sad for Miss Cairra Robbins, as she was obliged to leave behind her sister, Miss Ida Robbins, who had not sufficiently recovered from the accident which caused her sister her life, (and in which were all three sisters), to make the trip across the water; but friends met Miss Cairra Robbins in New York and assisted her in making the final arrangements for completion of her sad errand. The Robbins residence, which has been closed for two years in the absence of the Misses Robbins abroad, was opened for the funeral, and long-time friends of the family filled the rooms. Town officials were also present, which was most fitting, for no other family has contributed so largely to beautifying the town as has this family and which has chiefly come through the interest and influence of the Misses Robbins. The businessmen of the town also were represented and during the hour of the

service, their places of business were closed. The services opened with scripture readings by Rev. Ernest Black of Walkerton, Ontario, Canada, the substitute rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, who read passages of scripture from the Episcopal service (of which faith Miss Robbins was a member). Dr. Frederic Gill, D.D., minister of the First Parish Unitarian Church, where Miss Ida Robbins and Miss Cairn have always been identified, also read passages from the Bible and offered a beautiful prayer, then reciting a poem that was especially requested. Shubert Male Quartet sang very effectively "Abide with Me," "Lead Kindly Light," "Nearer My God to Thee," and as the friends were leaving the house, the selection "Now the Day is Over." The casket was placed in the left hand corner of the drawing room and although there had been a request that there be no flowers, quantities were banked about the closed casket and on the same, coming from near and dear friends, besides those who took this means of expressing their sympathy. There was a beautiful wreath of pink lilies from the Arlington Red Cross, in which the Misses Robbins were so active during the World War, also a long plaque of Easter Lilies from the Town of Arlington.

There were no bearers and the burial which followed the service was private. Traffic officers were detailed to do service at the residence and entrance to the same and the entire town passed to do reverence to those splendid women who have so laudably stamped their lives upon the history of the town and to then show their respect and sympathy to the two are left to mourn the passing of one has been an inspiration and guide to them and whose motherly traits of character had made her the center of the home circle. The following is the poem by Chadwick, above alluded to:

It singeth low in every heart,
We bear in each and all --
A song of those who answer not
However we may call.
They throng the silence of the breast;
We see them as of yore,
The kind, the true, the brave, the sweet
Who walk with us no more.
'Tis hard to take the burden up,
When these have laid it down;
They brighten all the joy of life,
They soften every frown.
But, o 'tis good to think of them
When we are troubled sore;
Thanks be to God that such hath been,
Though they are here no more!
More homelike seems the vast unknown
Since they have entered there;
To follow them were not so hard,
Whatever they may fare.
They cannot be where God is not,
On any sea or shore;
What e'er betides, Thy love abides,
Our God forever more.

Tuesday, August 21, 1923

Pleasant, warm, bit cloudy by PM. Sky has been a clear blue most of the last 2 weeks. Up 7:30. Ate at Grill. Library 8:30-6 and fairly busy. Home [to Arlington] in evening -- [trolley] cars fearfully slow and it was _7:30_ when I reached house. Fed kits & then myself. Good and weary. Mrs. Hobbs with Aunt Sarah; came [in] & talked a bit. Bed by 10. Poured most of time during night -- very much needed -- had to put both windows down. Thunder & sharply lightning.

[*] On this date, Eddie Shay, the chauffeur of infamous Boston Mayor James Michael Curley, was fined \$25 (more than a week's pay) and had two other moving violations "placed on file." This stemmed from an episode on July 18 in Arlington, where a car driven by Shay had passengers Mayor Curley and Mayor Quinn of Cambridge, speeding down Massachusetts Avenue en route to Fort Devens. Shay passed a streetcar on the left side, and refused to stop on signal from a police officer. Traffic Officer Flynn of Arlington then commandeered a civilian automobile, and gave chase to the Mayor's fast car. Officer Flynn was able to catch-up to the offending vehicle when it had to stop because the gates to a railroad crossing were down, whereupon the driver refused to show his license. Mayor Curley's chauffeur offered as his defense that he thought the police officer was just waving at him. The judge was not impressed by the stories.

Wednesday, August 22, 1923

Cleared off about 11:30 & sky blue as blue can be & not a cloud. Quite cool & coats needed. Up at 6 & fixed door for iceman [*] & at 7 George called to see if he could have breakfast with me and we ate by 8. An everlasting pile of dishes. Bad accident at corner [of Mystic and Summer streets] at 3 AM; car wrecked & man on danger list [at Symmes Hospital]. Mrs. Hobbs in some in AM. Fed kits, pressed dresses, morning flew. Left at 11:40 Aunt Sarah [had given] me \$100 towards expenses of bath, etc. Banked \$95.00, \$3.00 in Christmas Club & kept \$2.00. Library 1-6 & 7-9, all in Children's Room, making up time in evening. Miss Gilfillam & I supped at Grill. Mrs. Jones brot me some fine yellow tomatoes. Wrote Mabel & in here & bed at 11.

[*] In many homes there was a small door cut into an outside wall (or sometimes a wall within a vestibule), about four or five feet above the floor. This allowed the iceman to place directly into the upper compartment of the icebox the block of ice that he was delivering. In one of my previous homes in Arlington, which was built in 1902, there was still an "iceman's door," complete with a lock. I don't know if the lock was an extra security step to prevent the door from opening accidentally, or if it was intended as protection from someone who might try to steal the block of ice.

Thursday, August 23, 1923

Clear & fine -- cold: 50 degrees only & had a bad cold. Received the surprise of my life at the library: a letter from Edith Hayes, offering me the position of assistant librarian & cataloguer at \$1,300 [per annum] in Framingham. Left me gasping. Up 7:50, library 8:30-12 & then to Arlington. Saw Edith Rice at library, had a bit of lunch & home. Miss Olsen in AM for awhile, she had just

changed flowers & I began to sneeze. Thot it was hay fever but developed into a regular heavy head cold & kept me awake most of the night. Busy with washing in PM & fed cat, etc. George up to supper . Dora Daniels, Mrs. Hobbs, & Florence Harris in at Aunt Sarah's. Saw them for a bit. Read awhile in evening, hot bath & bed. Fine moon & saw it most of night.

Friday, August 24, 1923 [*]

Eleanor's [La's] birthday. Up just after 7. Down to 45 degrees & had the fireplace busy & felt good. George up to breakfast & I ironed & fed the livestock & as usual, morning flew. Borrowed hose & watered garden Felt lame & sore -- cold settled in kidneys; nose not quite so runny. Left by 11:45; [trolley] cars late so 15 minutes late at library. Not very busy. Worked 1-9. Lunched there or supped. House [at Mrs. Scribner's] at 8. Wrote here & if Hester didn't bring me up a cup of delicious hot chocolate & some buttered crackers. Mended stockings & _bed_.

[*] In an above-the-fold front page display advertisement in the Arlington Advocate of this date: Arlington Heights Furnished House 8 Rooms nicely located, near every- thing, for Winter or longer. \$110 per month, including Coal, Gas, Electrici- city and Telephone. Adult Protestants preferred. Address K, Arlington Hts., Mass. Note: When renting just a room (especially with board), specifying a certain religion for the tenant arguably *could* be understood as a way to promote compatibility with the way of life of the family (e.g., the manner of keeping the Sabbath and holy days, observing dietary restrictions or habits, etc.). In the case of this particular advertisement to rent a freestanding house, "Adult Protestants preferred," is just plain bigotry, and is coded language that is unlikely to be about religion. "Protestants" signaled that "Americans"-- meaning descendants of multiple generations of American-born citizens were sought. (Perhaps a nice Swedish family could pass.) And despite (or perhaps because of) advances in all fields of endeavor, Irish-Americans still faced discrimination, so "Protestant" equated to not "Roman Catholic," and thereby covered anti-Irish sentiment without calling it by that name. In some of Arlington's residential subdivisions of the era, local and Boston newspaper advertising for homebuyers touted the fact that one or another neighborhood was "American" (even if there were no underlying deed covenants in effect), to discourage members of more recently arrived immigrant groups (notably Italians, and Eastern European Jews) from seeking to settle there. By contrast, neighborhoods such as the streets off Appleton Street that are closest to today's Route 2, bore Italian place names (and one Polish one: Lublin), with the idea of "affinity marketing" to Italians or Poles, or Jews. So there was "something for everyone"--provided that everyone stuck to their neighborhoods. The situation in Arlington was not nearly as bad as in other Greater Boston communities, and it should be pointed out that in many cases the developers were not from Arlington and were applying their restrictions wherever they were building. Lastly, out-of-town banks,mortgage-makers, and real estate firms (remember that this is the pre-"redlining" era of Federally backed mortgages) sometimes insisted on exclusionary deed language as boilerplate; some landowners may have passively gone along with it, versus originating it.

Saturday, August 25, 1923

Vida drowned 2 years ago tomorrow. [*] Up 7:20. Slept fine & felt much better. Library 9-6; quite busy. Overcast & still cool. Some warmer at noon. Another coal strike predicted September 1. Home in evening. Heavy shower but in [trolley] cars & with Miss Gilfillam. Few errands & house 8:30 or so. Both aunts back: Aunt Elizabeth from Mashpee & Aunt Mame from Belmont. Talked of course. Florence rang up so said I'd go for picnic tomorrow. Edith Hayes rang up in PM to say she couldn't come Sunday, but would be out Tuesday night. Bed at 10 or so.

[*] The coroner's examination of Vida Damon's death at Kennebunkport revealed that Vida had suffered a heart attack while swimming as the proximate cause of her death, rather than accidental drowning.

Sunday, August 26, 1923

Cool early, but seemed fine & warmer later. Up 7:30. Aunts got breakfast & I put up some lunch. George up, so ate with us. Florence 1/2 hour late, so we left at 9:30 in "Lizzie." Miss Kimball there. Had a fine ride to Hollis, N.H. to the Hayes home -- 160 acres of land & an old house filled with the most delightful furnishings all in keeping, a portable summer house, big barn, flower garden & wonderful white pine grove where we had lunch. Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hardy & son Laurence also there [*] & the Will Rices called, the Leetches, etc. Nice ride down & home 6:30, bit of a wash, cooked steak, etc. Aunt E. in Belmont & Aunt M. had George to dinner. Read & talked in evening. Nice hot bath & not at all tired. Bed at 11.

[*] Charles Augustus Hardy was the son of Rodney J. Hardy, for whom the Hardy Elementary School on Lake Street is named. He was in the grain business and also was the town treasurer of Arlington. He lived with his wife, Laura at 34 Gray St. John and Mabelle Leetch were neighbors at 20 Gray St. William and Emma Rice resided in the same general neighborhood, at 25 Woodland St.

> Richard, \$100.00 in 1923 is the equivalent of \$1548.99 in 2021. That is > quite a generous gift! And it suggests that Aunt Sarah is a very wealthy > woman. Is she?

Hi Kathy, Yes, indeed, the amount is substantial, and certainly for an 80-year old lady in 1923. The above said, it's not even 20% of the total cost of the improvements, from which Aunt Sarah benefits. Several weeks ago, it was noted in Nina's diary that the cesspool on Aunt Sarah's side needed work, so I would argue that she is contributing to the sanitary improvements she herself needs at the duplex home she shares with her niece-by-marriage, Nina. We tend to think that a two-family condo is a new phenomenon, but Aunt Sarah holds separate title to her half, and the Winn Estate (of which Nina is a beneficiary) owns the other half. What image I draw in my mind about Aunt Sarah is that she must be marvelous company. She has visitors galore, and most significantly to me, visitors of all ages. She and Nina are close (much closer than Nina is to her Aunt Sue Winn, though perhaps not as close as Nina is to her maternal aunts Elizabeth and Mame). Nina and Aunt Sarah have a slight bit of friction from time to time, due to thin walls between the duplex units, but those issues never seem to amount to more than wee grumblings. Aunt Sarah was the mother of a child who died in infancy, and she was a fairly young widow, so I think that she exemplifies an

interesting blend of connection to the Winns (her married family), the Daniels (her birth family), and a wide array of friends. I wish that I could drop by for tea at Aunt Sarah's! Richard

Monday, August 27, 1923

Clear, quite cool early. Up 6:00. George up to breakfast & I left them eating & left at 7:43. Library 9-6 & ate in cellar there -- some contrast to yesterday. Fairly busy in PM, but not at all rushed. Supped at the Waldorf with Miss Nimms & then back to library for 1-1/2 hours. Wrote here, read in "Mutineers" [*] & bed by 10:30. Had rather planned on Mashpee over Labor Day, but George, Mr. & Mrs. Cousens & car are going, so guess I'll call it off. Aah house to part own I must say. Have had _one_ week there this year.

[*] <

https://www.google.com/search?q=mutineers&biw=1163&bih=525&source=ln&tbs=cd%3A1%2Ccd_min%3A1%2F1%2F1919%2Ccd_max%3A12%2F31%2F1923&tbm=bks

Tuesday, August 28, 1923

Poured early, but not enough. Cloudy all day; warmer towards night. Up 7:30 & library by 9. Busy until 6 & Hilda Olsen in awhile; had post cards, etc. Home in evening. Aunts had a fine supper: baked ham, etc. & cream pie. Uncle Arthur in as we sat down & Edith Hayes a bit later & we had such a nice time. Marion Buttrick in awhile & Alice [Buttrick] at Aunt Sarah's. Aunts sat up until 8:45 (We made them) and then Edith & I talked Framingham [*] & the position she has offered me -- assistant librarian & cataloguer. We went to bed at 11, but talked until _12_ & after.

[*] Edith Hayes was the assistant librarian at Somerville Public Library, where she got to know Nina. As some may have noticed, Nina's work at Somerville was much more clerical and technical (she spent a lot of time mending books), whereas at Waltham, Nina is performing the work of a professional librarian. I think that Edith Hayes saw the potential in Nina, and with Nina's success as a staff librarian at Waltham, Nina became an attractive candidate to recruit-away to Framingham, which was a fast-growing town of about 19,000 people in 1923. Waltham was a substantially larger city, but Nina's next career move would argue for Framingham. This was a time of transition in the library field, where the staff would be a blend of librarians who attended college or normal school to have an academic credential and preparation, whereas Nina is not even a high school graduate who has learned a great deal on the job.

Thursday, August 30, 1923 [*]

Clear & blue & not too warm. Up 7:30. Library 9-12 -- kept busy. Hilda Olsen in & met her & to ride at 12:30 & such an afternoon. Lunched at Georgian on Boylston [Boston] to South Station to meet her "Hoosier," only to find train went at 2: railroad time [**] so had an hour to wait but she saw her. Corking ride to Marblehead. On rocks awhile with "Vix" (dog). Light supper (not cheap) at Adams House & on to Danvers to see her friend Miss Porter -- fine call. Back on Newburyport Turnpike [today part of U.S. Route 1]. Some driving home. I tried to make her stay, but no. Bed

soon. Aunts in city to dinner & movies & house at _11:30_. Note from Mabel saying to come down [to Mashpee] for Labor Day.

[**] A reminder that in 1923, although Massachusetts changed its clocks ahead one hour for Daylight Saving Time, the railroads operated on the same standard time clock all year round. So this led to situations of people arriving too early to get their trains, or in this case, to see someone off at the station.

Friday, August 31, 1923

Clear & hot -- good here at night. but not in my Waltham room. Didn't wake until 7:30. Aunts had finished eating. I had some dresses to wash. George up to see about Mashpee, but I said I was afraid I couldn't go and at library found I'd have to stay, as Mrs. Jones's mother is ill, so 'phoned George back. Usual rush all of AM & at 11:30 Florence came with Edith Rice & drove us to see Miss Stone -- nice call & that house very attractive. They had time to come in and see my room. Library 1-9, _not_ a rush. Boys put turtles in Charles River. Miss Olsen in for a bit. Supper there (library). Down for a soda, talked a bit, wrote here & bed at 11.

Saturday, September 1, 1923 [*]

Clear & hot -- wished for Mashpee & a swim, but no luck, so worked from 9-6 in Children's Room. Not busy AM. Lunched at Grill. Finished all the mending in PM; had been hanging on since last winter. Fairly busy & a bit weary by night. Home [to Arlington] & a lot of errands & had lunch at Blake's & Aunt Mame had tea with Mary Saville & Aunt E. was at Dick's in Belmont. Read, talked with Florence about picnic, bath & bed by 10, but read awhile longer. Aunt Mame had ironed my 2 dresses, thinking I _might_ go to Mashpee.

Sunday, September 2, 1923

No one up until 8:30 & had eats about 9:30. Fed kits, etc. & bit wash & iron, dishes, etc. Expected Miss Stone for dinner & table looked very nice, but she didn't come. Upstairs about 4 & to bed & couldn't keep my eyes open or sleep sound -- just dozed heavily. Florence in awhile but wouldn't stop [stay]. Edith Rice telephoned in PM to tell me that the [Boston Evening] Transcript [newspaper] had a page about Mashpee & the old church, which has been restored & is to be used today with President [Abbott Lawrence] Lowell [of Harvard University] speaking, etc. [*] Read in evening & bed at 10. Foggy early, but cleared by noon & warmer.

[*] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Indian_Meeting_House>

Monday, September 3, 1923

Labor Day # by night Fog early, clearing & quite hot by noon. Up at 7 & had lunch to put up: tomato & cheese salad, sandwiches, coffee, cookies & chocolate, while aunts got breakfast. Left at 9:45. Florence, Miss Kimball, Edith Rice & I & a load of good things. Seemed very _bumpy_, but we had such a good time. Went to the Ashby Road & river was so low we sat on rocks in that

roadbed & ate & watched the baby trout, frogs _&_ a snake. Followed latter across brook, slipped on a slimy stone & had a tremendous fall _&_ now have a "black & blue" on right leg -- big as my hand. On to Ashby & back to a pine grove for awhile & home at 7. Bot eggs & gladioli. Aunts in town. Susie Dupee & Carrie at Aunt Sarah's. Light eats, fed kits & had John get me some rubbing alcohol and to bed at 8. Used cold compress -- leg lame -- and slept on left side.

Wednesday, September 5, 1923 [*]

Not up until 8. Felt lame all over, especially back. Read some, fed kits & chicks, rather lazy. Aunts putting up pears for Althanah & selves. Left 11:45, to banks to deposit for Christmas Club. Up from [Harvard] Square with Miss Gilfillan. Library 1-6. Supped at Waldorf & at branch 7-9 & a rush at both places & glad to get back to room. Quite tired. Rubbed back with "Musterole" it ached so -- lame. Wrote here & read & bed at 11. Card from Barbara in PM & answered in evening.

Thursday, September 6, 1923

Up 7:30. Ate at Grill & library 8:30-12. Miss Olsen in to say she'd take me to ride in PM, so gave up Boston & she came at 12. Brot in a pile of flowers earlier. Up to the Drakes' for lunch -- only Mr. Drake there. Some music & then with "Vix" [the dog]. By Broderick to Gleasondale [*] to a dry brook bed filled with cardinal flowers & closed gentian & some turtleheads [**] -- red, white & blue spot. To Boone Lake to see Mrs. Onthank for an hour & so late they had me stay at Drakes' to dinner. Miss D. (Martha) there. Nice eats & jolly -- songs & dance & they brot me home at 9:30. In for a bit, and met Aunt Mame. Aunt E. just back from movies. Pretty tired but had a great old day. Drakes most cordial. [***]

[*] About Gleasondale, where Boone Lake is located: <
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gleasondale,_Massachusetts>

[**] About turtlehead flowers: <
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/turtlehead/turtlehead-flower-information.htm>>

[***] Hilda N. Olsen (Nina persistently misspells it as Olson) is 26 years old and is a landscape gardener. She boards at 212 Bacon St., the home of Bradford W. Drake, retired principal of the North Junior High School in Waltham. Also living in the home is Drake's 33-year old daughter, Martha, who is a school teacher. Miss Olsen is listed as part of this household (then numbered 146 Bacon St.) in the 1920 federal census as having been born in Norway, immigrating to the United States in 1896, and becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1915.

Sunday, September 9, 1923

All up late -- about 9 & just eating at 10 when Hilda rang to see if I'd go to Boone Lake, but had to much to do. Corking day, too. Washed & ironed, fed animals & generally busy. Read paper, etc. Dinner at 2 & [went to] bed later and _dozed_ like a log. Not dressed until nearly 7. Mabel up but at

Aunt Sarah's mostly, tea, etc. Aunt Elizabeth & I to walk in early evening, to Grove St. & back. Steady stream of noisy autos. Bed by 10.

Monday, September 10, 1923

Clear, cool, hotter during day. Up 6:30, nice eats & off at 7:40. Library 9-6. Entertained most of AM. Alice Williams, whom I knew in Somerville, came in to apply for a position & later Hilda Olsen with a lot of flowers -- more gentian, etc. Lunch in room. Pat & Miss Smith back in P.M. looking fine. Did a bit with school work, some reference, etc. Miss Nimms & I to the Chinese for supper -- good chop suey & chow mein & candy (Chinese) & later to movies: "Hollywood," "Heidi," and a funny one & all 3 good. [*] House about 10, some tired. Wrote here & bed at 11.

[*] See the links below for the two named movies that Nina and Miss Nimms saw:

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood_\(1923_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood_(1923_film))>

<<https://silenthollywood.com/Heidi1920.html>>

Thursday, September 13, 1923

Rained early but cleared beautifully. Up 7:15, ate with Miss Hawes at Grill. Library 8:30-12. Busy with school books -- have nearly 200 gone or ready. Edith Hayes telephoned at 9:30 that I had been unanimously appointed [by the library trustees] as assistant librarian & cataloguer at Framingham -- \$1,300 a year. Hardly know whether I'm glad or not. Hilda in & said picnic for PM: got a few cakes & I into pink linen & left at 12:30, with some car trouble, so back to Drakes' awhile & then on a wonderful ride to Canton. Stopped at Ponkapoag Pond for engine trouble going & coming. And such a day. Lunch in a pine grove back of Hilda's brother's, picked cranberries with May Lantell [sp.?] on Nixon Waterman's bog. [*] & at their house in evening, & he with us as we ate corn by firelight. To the Linden's for [unreadable], dahlias and gadioli. Home at 11:45, wrote here & [to] bed. Bit weary as to legs.

[*] Nixon Waterman (1859-1944) was a well known poet of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who resided at "Oak Lodge" in Arlington Heights, his home at 89 Oakland Ave. And speaking of Arlington Heights, it was during this week in 1923 that work was started by the Metropolitan Water Works to build the limestone exterior and viewing gallery of the "Greek Temple" water tower at Park Circle.

Friday, September 14, 1923

Clear & nice. Up 7:30 & not a bit tired -- felt fine. Breakfast at Grill & nice lunch at Tea Room. Library 9-6 & quite busy with school work. Called on Mrs. Maenche & at St. Peter's in PM -- no luck at latter with books; no deposits for awhile. Hilda in in PM & brot me a bag of lettuce, tomatoes, & a cauliflower & later rang up & insisted on my going to dinner with them -- came down for me & I had the best time. Miss Drake made a fine fish chowder & after dishes they drove me home [to Arlington] & came in for awhile. Aunt E. abed (as usual). Dick's kitten there & full of fun -- gray & fluffy. Bed 10:30.

Saturday, September 15, 1923 [*]

Pleasant. Everything very dry. Bit wash & watered garden some. Aunts got eats & did dishes & I went to town [Boston]. Bot wool eponge [**] for skirt, some shoes at Tuttle's, cakes at Schrafft's & had lunch & at library by one & worked until 6. Not busy. Table full of flowers that Hilda O. & Jack Billings brot in & he came in with more early & she came in later with Miss Drake & Miss Warren for a bit. Home by 7, few errands, met Mabel who came up & to the house and had supper with us. The best fish hash, beets, etc. & we just stuffed. Aunt Elizabeth over town with Mabel & Aunt Mame & I did dishes & read. Hot bath & bed by 11. [Received] Formal notice from Framingham [of job appointment].

[**] Wool eponge was one of several different weaves of wool fabric for ladies' skirts that were popular in the early 20th century. It was a wool crepe that had more of a soft, flowing movement than a wool serge, and certainly much more than a wool boucle' or tweed. Wool eponge, like wool prunella cloth, lent itself nicely to print patterns.

Thursday, September 20, 1923

Tried to rain early, but didn't succeed & tried again in evening. Up soon after 7, eats, bed & library 8:30-12 -- not at all busy, just books to pick out, etc. Hilda to house just after 12 & [we went] up to the Drakes' to dinner -- usual nice corn. Took Vix [the dog] with us & to Groton. [Hilda] insisted on my driving from Concord on -- so [I] made a poor start for 20 miles, but loved it. To the Lowthorpe School: oh-so-delightful, flowers & gardens galore, dear gray kitten, Bobby the sheepdog, & Miss Hatzmer (?) who went with us to a stone quarry, then an old mill -- beautiful spots. Water & cardinal flowers. Long call on the Mays on way, frogs hopping on street & Hilda's wonderful driving. At Drakes' an hour & then Hilda brot me home. Wrote here, bed 11:30.

Note The Lowthorpe School was the first in the nation to prepare women to be landscape architects. Read more about it in the below link:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lowthorpe_School_of_Landscape_Architecture>

Friday, September 21, 1923

Some rain but not enough to do any good. Up soon after 7, eats & back to house: had to mend a hole in my old stockings. Hilda O. here at 9 & we went to Mrs. Knowles's studio where I met Pauline Yetten [sp. ?] & then we went on to town [Boston]. Left me at Dr. Bailey's & I paid part of bill, to Chandler's, Filene's, had a manicure & nice chat with Mrs. Richardson, S.S. Pierces & met Hilda on Charles St. & had lunch at the New England Kitchen & then back to Waltham. Library 1-6, not busy most of the time. Hilda in for a bit. Miss Nimms & I supped at the Chinaman's & then went to Branch where I worked 7-9 & then went to Branch, & waiting for car when what should I see but Hilda over for gas mantles & waiting for me, so drove me to Mrs St. Onge's [dressmaker's] & then down here. Wrote here, formal acceptance [of offer of new position] to Framingham & bed by 11.

[*] The name of the Chinese restaurant was not "the Chinaman's." This is a term which long ago passed from being considered descriptive, like Frenchman or Irishman, to being recognized as pejorative today. In 1923 it was not uncommon to hear or see in writing the term "Chinaman" in reference to a Chinese male (or, more likely, an American of Chinese descent), as well as sometimes being applied to persons of other Asian origins. The name of the restaurant was Canton Low Co. at 168-170 Moody St. The manager in 1921 was Mr. Louie K. Fong, and in 1923, Mr. Lee J. Marn.

Saturday, September 22, 1923

Clear & nice -- coolish. Up 7:30, eats, etc. & library at 9. Books to pick out & charge & quite a lot of children in, both AM & PM. Florence rang to see if I'd go to Hollis tomorrow & she & Miss Kimball came in for a few moments in PM. Hilda in for a moment with some grapes; going to Lynn with her Dicky Drake [a nickname for Miss Martha Drake]. Someone rung to say they'd come for me at 6 & it was Mabel, Barb & Jr. -- didn't know her voice. Nice to ride home. Mabel, Barbara, and I had supper at Blake's & later Mabel came to house. Aunt Mame there, Aunt E. still in Belmont. Talked & read, hot bath & shampoo [*] & bed at 12.

[*] The convenience of a hot water heater and a bathtub makes it easier for Nina to give herself a shampoo whenever she pleases.

Sunday, September 23, 1923 [*]

Some rain at last, but not near enough -- tho too much for a N.H. trip. Up by 7:30, washed a bit while Aunt Mame got the breakfast. Hilda O. telephoned that she'd take me anywhere I wanted to go in PM & suggested Framingham, so telephoned Dr. Curtis for directions. Charles Peabody [Aunt Mame's son] & Mr. Ripley came from Winthrop for a couple of hours. Read paper. Barbara in & stayed to dinner with us at 1:30 & at 2:30 Hilda & Miss Drake came. Left Miss Drake at Waltham & back on to Framingham. _Wet_. It had poured all day but we didn't care. To Mrs. O'Neill's but she was out & then hunted-up Edith Hayes. Found her & Sue & Mrs. Jennings, but they went soon & I had a visit with Edith while Hilda went back to Mrs. O'Neill's. At the centre & then later she came in & we stayed awhile & then had a nice ride back to the Drakes. Cheese sandwiches & cocoa & music. Hilda and Martha drove me home at 9:30. Aunt Mame & I talked until nearly 11 or _I_ did. Aunt E. still in Belmont but coming tomorrow. Aunt Sue with Aunt Sarah for night.

[*] Dogs had been required to be licensed for many decades; however, there was no leash law in effect. Dogs running wild in the streets had become an alarming concern in 1923. Following is an item from the Arlington Advocate regarding the situation, which pertained to public safety in general, and to the prevention of destruction or frightening of farm animals, in particular: **YOUR DOG MUST BE MUZZLED** There are many in this town who evidently think that the order issued by the Selectmen regarding the muzzling of dogs was a joke, judging from the large number of dogs seen daily running at large without a muzzle. The police have been busy rounding up the stray dogs, and of those not properly muzzled this week, several were killed by Dr. F. Holden Smith, the town veterinary. The fact that a dog has a collar bearing the name of the owner will not save him if he is caught without a muzzle. The police have been instructed to rigidly enforce the

regulation and have orders from the Selectmen to see that the order is carried out to the letter. If you own a dog, see to it he is muzzled, or restrained.

Tuesday, September 25, 1923

Up 7:30, eats, bed & library by 8:40. Busy with deposits most of the day. Hilda, Mr. & Mrs. May all [came] in in AM -- had been photographic fringed gentian [*]. Fairly busy PM. Lunched at Grill with Miss Hawes (also saw her at breakfast). Into gingham ready for night & Hilda came at 6 & we went to Stony Brook -- couldn't find gentian. Saw a muskrat swimming along. Vix with us. Back to the reservoir -- just too nice there: water, pines, brook, basin, cliff, etc. Nice lunch & sat awhile & started to walk when we heard a kitten crying & found 2 of the dearest, wee, stubby-tailed kittens -- hungry & so lonesome. Inquired at Italians'. Found [learned that] 2 other kits had been killed & mother cat run over, so carried the kittens to owner named Sibley who was nasty & I suppose drowned them. Back [to Drakes' home] & talked. Two sons there: Philip & [blank space] & Margery Warren. Music, etc. & home [to Mrs. Scribner's] before 11. Wrote here & bed.

[*] The day before, September 24, 1923, Hilda and Nina went during Nina's noon lunch hour to an area near the Waltham Hospital: "a glorious spot filled with hundreds of fringed gentian -- such a feast of beauty."

Wednesday, September 26, 1923

Pleasant, cool early, but warmer during day. Library 9-6. Lunched at Grill & sat with the domestic science teacher -- picked each other up. Home [to Arlington] in evening, but late. Rather weary in PM & wasn't I glad to see Hilda at 6; she had hustled back from Canton just to take me home. Up to Drakes' a moment & they _insisted_ on our staying to dinner with them, so piled in. "Dicky" for a shampoo in evening & Hilda & I did dishes, then Philip came home & we talked till 8:30 & then to center for Dicky & they drove me home. In for awhile. Aunt Mame just back from city & Aunt Elizabeth from Belmont. Talked later & bed about 11.

Thursday, September 27, 1923

Quite pleasant, overcast, no rain. Up 630 & on [trolley] cars for first time for ages & 15 minutes late in Waltham. Worked 9:15-12. Rushed to house & into sneakers. Hilda down with Vic, of course, & we were off. Bot a melon & some cheese in Arlington. I drove some & did much better than last week. To Groton & persuaded Miss Hetzer & "Bobby" to go with us to Jaffrey [New Hampshire]. Wonderful foliage, such beautiful vistas -- made one fairly heartsick. Found a field of mushrooms & picked an immense basket full. Just missed the Hatfields at Jaffrey, the car passing her as we went up the hill to their camp for an hour & then started home. Brot bacon & crackers & had a fire in a fine fireplace off the Ashby Road by a waterfall. Brot a pan & had Hilda's jackknife & we cut bacon & mushrooms & had delicious sandwiches. Wanted to stay all night but couldn't. Wonderful drive home -- good moon & Hilda _can_ drive. Left Miss Hetzer at 9 & to the Mays' for an hour. Camped by the woods for awhile & rested & home at 12. She's a darling.

Sunday, September 30, 1923

Clear & glorious. Woke about 7 and put the clock back one hour and slept for two. [*] Washed and ironed some, fed kits, etc. & in to see Aunt Sue awhile. Tried to mend stockings between times. Hilda & Jack Billings over for an hour with a load of flowers and vegetables. Mabel up while they were here. Elizabeth Hardy & Edgar out to dinner for the day. Ruth Peirce & Mrytle called in PM and then Flora & Edna, and we had a nice visit. Talked and read & I grew tired of staying in, so down to Mabel's -- just having a rarebit -- good one, too. Stayed until 9. Barb back from a camping trip at the Girl Scouts in Waltham. [**]

[*] September 30 was the end of Daylight Saving Time in 1923. By contrast, Daylight Saving Time in 2021 will end on November 7.

[**] The Girl Scouts developed a modern facility both for the use of Girl Scouts, and also for training scout leaders. It was located at Camp Cedar Hill in Waltham, which is still in use as a Girl Scout camp. In 1923 Cedar Hill included a newly built open air swimming pool and a reconstructed assembly hall. There was a new "council fire ring" cut out of the rocky hillside, with the land terraced to allow the scouts to meet around the fire in a natural theater. Cedar Hill includes the historical Ephraim Hammond House, which was restored by Helen (Mrs. James) Storrow, a renowned philanthropist, social activist, and early global leader in the Girl Scouts movement. Storrow Drive was named in memory of her husband, James J. Storrow, II. The Storrows had donated one million dollars for recreational improvements to the Charles River Basin, but James Storrow was never a supporter of such a design aspect, and Helen Storrow was a vocal opponent of the notion.

Monday, October 1, 1923

Up 6:30 & ate at 7. Mabel telephoned they'd take me over [to Waltham], so had until 8:20. Aunt Elizabeth with us. Very windy. Library 9-6. Busy with school books. Dear Hilda in in P.M. & counting flower records: 298 -- but we must have had at least 50 more & I should say 100. [Hilda] asked me to dinner, so into white at six & walked up. Marjory Warren there, "Dicky," & Philip. Music in evening. Hilda had to go to talk [Christmas] cards with Mr. Knowles -- [she is] going to sell [them] at the Brockton Fair & the poor kid is so tired & had a fierce cold. Jack back with her & Mr. Drake in later. Hilda drove me home at 11. Wrote here & bed before 12.

Sunday, October 7, 1923 [*]

Clear & cool. So tired -- not up until 9. Ate alone, bit rush, out for lettuce, made bed & generally lazy. Annie Prentiss rang up and we had a nice chat & then Hilda came for half an hour. Miss Cone drove her. [Hilda was] hoarse from talking so much at Brockton Fair. We just sat on steps. Hoped to see her in PM, but she didn't come. Dick [Hittinger], Doris [Hittinger] & Uncle Arthur [Bacon] came to dinner & then he took them & Aunt Elizabeth to ride. Aunt Mame wouldn't go. I did dishes and hoped for Hilda again. Read & talked. Fed kits & the stripey one gave me a fierce bite, he was so hungry. On couch from 6-10, reading, eating & resting. Aunt E. back about 7.

[*] On this date were played the last of the semifinals matches of the singles and doubles championship tournament at the Arlington Heights Tennis Club. The finals were scheduled for Columbus Day, October 12. The tennis courts were located on Park Avenue on the northerly corner of Prospect Street (just northwest of Park Circle). After the club sold its lands and disbanded, homes were built upon the site in 1931.

Monday, October 8, 1923 [*]

Still clear & glorious & cool. Up 6:30, nice eats & off by 7:45. Just missed car at Watertown but reached library by 9 & there until 6. Only busy latter part of PM. Some books, etc., in AM. Lunched at Tea Room & walked out without seeing Hilda, who came in while I was paying, but saw her at library later with Jack for a few moments & again for quite awhile without him & _so_ _dear_. Over river with Nimmsie & to the Branch where Bunny & Sharpie had the nicest supper, all in the theatre room. Dainty china & a beautiful rose in a clear green vase that they gave to _me_. Fruit cut, chop suey & chow mein, rolls, olives, chocolate fudge cake, pie, nuts, & candy -- such a feast & such a good time. Hilda came for me just after 7 & we went to the Mayall's with butterflies from Mrs. Waterman for Laurence, then to the Drakes' until 9:30. Jack was cross -- he does want Hilda so, & she is nearly wild & a bunch of nerves. Philip full of naughty stories. Martha so happy. Mr. Drake abed with a cold. Hilda drove me home at 9:30 & we had a heart-to-heart talk. I had a chat with Mrs. Scribner, packed some & bed at 11:30. [**]

[*] On this date, the Arlington Historical Society voted to purchase the Jason Russell House, then described as being "off Jason Street" because it was surrounded by buildings from the 1890s that fronted on Massachusetts Ave. and Jason Street. It therefore left only a narrow front walkway for passage from Jason Street to the house. In 1960 buildings were razed to restore the battlefield and give us the view of the Jason Russell House that we enjoy today. The price paid was \$3,500 and the Society had to take out a mortgage to acquire the property. It was announced that the Jason Russell House would be "a home" (headquarters) for the Society and a "repository for Arlington relics." Since its founding in 1897, the Society's "relic room" had been located at Robbins Library.

[**] Nina has been so delightfully busy on road trips with Hilda lately that she hasn't seemed to have time to focus on her departure from Waltham Public Library. We didn't hear anything about her turning in her resignation, how it was received, or anything else. The supper held at the branch library almost certainly was held as a going-away event for Nina (and a combination of menu items strange to our modern eyes: fruit cup, chow mein, olives, chocolate fudge cake, etc.). Her chat with Mrs. Scribner and her packing is a rather matter-of-fact as she takes leave of her lodgings there. Nina is not expressing much sentiment about that, but I would not be surprised that she keep in touch in some or another way, just as she has done with Stoney. Nina is first and foremost a people person.

Dear readers of Nina Winn's diary, I have received a few off-list inquiries as to my thoughts on the nature of Nina's relationship with Hilda Olsen, who went in what seems like a split-second from being "Miss Olsen" to "Hilda -- she's a darling." It's undeniable that an intense bond has developed between Nina and Hilda (I don't have a diary from Hilda to try to understand how she might be feeling), and that Nina is utterly captivated by Hilda. We can gather that what once was termed a

"girl crush" has developed here on Nina's side. Whether this is a matter of affection or sexual attraction, or some of each, we must wait to learn by what Nina shares in her diary. A few historical notes on the era are in order so that we have a framework to assess what sentiments Nina is expressing. First, there's context. Same-sex friendships were the norm in the 1920s. Mingling with members of the opposite sex generally was restricted to interacting with family members, unless there was a prospect of advancement on the romantic or marital front. What's the difference between "romantic" and "marital"? The fact is that marriages were not necessarily great love matches, but rather sometimes unions of a more affectionate but practical character. It once was posited by Stu Galley that Mrs. Deshon's son, Richard, had a crush on Nina, given that he used to walk her home so often or drop by. For everything I ever could gather (Richard Deshon died a bachelor), he was simply accompanying Nina to her front door as a gentlemanly act. Never was there even a hint that Nina had an attraction to Richard or that Richard acted in a way as to make Nina think that there was any romantic interest. By contrast, "several years ago" (in Nina diary years), Nina was pretty plain-spoken about her unrequited designs on the pastor of the Belmont Unitarian Church. More recently she has had half-an-eye on W. Royce Taylor, who never had anything but overdue books for Nina. In the past two years Nina has lost her two dearest friends unexpectedly, with the deaths of Vida Damon and her third-degree cousin and best friend, Eleanor "La" Prentiss. Coincident with the death of Vida was the disbanding of the "Christmas Club" of unmarried forty-something women, that included other close friends such as the Frost sisters and Nina's Winn cousins, Edith and Amy, to whom seems to be close only by default. Nina has yet to fill the huge gaps left by these losses with another close friendship, until now. Now, on to Hilda, specifically: She and Nina share a deep mutual passion for nature, and flowers in particular. We know that this has been a lifelong interest of Nina's and now she has found herself with someone, 20 years her junior, who not only has the same interest, but who is a professional in the field of horticulture. And an energetic, encouraging, and free-spirited companion in the bargain. Giving Nina driving lessons and cutting bacon with a jackknife to make sandwiches with freshly culled field mushrooms . . . I kind of have a crush on Hilda myself, or at least I am quite intrigued by her. In gender-segregated socialization (outside of family or romance), we have seen and can expect to see women sharing a bed and physical affection. If and when this might evolve from chaste to carnal we may learn, but it is important to take Nina's words at face value (she is writing to herself only, after all) -- be it words of longing, passion, or something more. And we need to keep in mind the mores of the 1920s before reaching a conclusion that these were bent or broken by Nina, with Hilda, or with anyone else. Where are the boundaries in this situation? Only time will reveal. It is my objective to treat the contents of Nina's diaries with authenticity and grounded-theory in preparing my commentary, not passing judgment as much as asking that readers try to reach their own conclusions on the meaning of Nina's words in the context of a 46-year old single working woman of 1923. Thanks for reading, and for your constant engagement with Nina and the window she provides (or that I must open wider) into the Arlington of a century ago. Richard A. Duffy

Thursday, October 11, 1923

Clear & Indian summer weather. Up 6:30, good breakfast & off at 7:30. Left the aunts checks for coal bills at office. Aunt Elizabeth telephoned that [her daughter-in-law] Doris had a miscarriage & is at N.E. Hospital [*]. Library 9-12 & in town, had shampoo, facial & manicure. Bot a hat -- brown

of course & did a lot of other errands & home at 5. Aunt Mame & I to supper & Hilda & Martha over later in evening & I went home with them for the night. Hilda just tired out & to bed by 10, but we talked some so it was nearly 11 when I kissed her good-night. Didn't sleep much, but rested and looked out the window, just wide awake.

[*] The New England Hospital for Women and Children was a pioneer in the education of and promotion of women as physicians, and it graduated from its nursing school the first formally trained nurse, and also the first African American trained nurse. It evolved into the present-day Dimock Community Health Center. See below for additional information on this remarkable medical institution:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England_Hospital_for_Women_and_Children>

Wednesday, October 12, 1923 [Columbus Day]

Up about 7, just after Martha. Hilda slept until 8 or so. Made sandwiches, as the Drakes went to Mason, N.H. [*]. Hilda & I left at 9:30. Wonderful foliage everywhere, then to Dedham, Canton, Blue Hills & finally Cohasset & North Scituate & a walk in the glades & found bird-banders just going, so out with William Forbush & a crazy Mr. Wheeler & trailed them in Hilda's car to Mr. Harding's for bird observing, etc. White Throat Wintermen warbler, song sparrows, etc. Who should bother but Mr. Farley of Mashpee, one of the great bird men. On to Whites' and Fletchers'. 40 or 50 in all. Nice houses & interesting people. Left then & to Hanover & called on friends of Hilda's, the Tuckers, then Canton & at the Lantell's for a couple of hours. Ate in snatches when we could. Left soon after 8 & home 10:20 & to the Drakes' for the night again. Dickie [Martha] abed & so sleepy. Slept myself after Hilda kissed me goodnight.

[*] Mason, N.H. was a town where several residents migrated from Menotomy (Arlington), because farmland tended to be passed to the eldest son, and other sons would either become apprenticed to a trade, or take a financial share of their fathers' estates and re-settle in a less populous area to pursue agriculture. The family of "Uncle Sam" -- Samuel Wilson -- moved from Menotomy to Mason, N.H. when he was a boy. Descendants of Jason Russell also sought to make livings for themselves in Mason. So in many respects, Mason is a historical "sister city" of Arlington.

SDL – did not actually pass to eldest son – not always convenient and fathers often died after eldest sons were already well established. They did migrate for more farmland and general farming opportunity. It was generally not a good idea to divide up farms for inheritance purposes as it limited the output of the farm and how much land the family needed to survive. In the Jason Russell example, his older children went to Mason while Noah Russell inherited the farm.

Saturday, October 13, 1923

Woke soon after 6 & up 6:50 & nearly dressed when Hilda woke. Eats & dishes. Mr. Drake down. Martha, Hilda & I had some music & then she took me to library. Quite a day -- girls very nice & quite a lot of people in to say goodbye. Busy at noon, packing & lunch. Mildred made me a beauty collar & cuff set, Nuety gave me correspondence cards, Miss Rooney violet perfume, & Alice Johnson a neck dangler. _Busy_ in PM. Hilda not down until 5:30. Mr Mayall in to see me. To house [Mrs. Sturgis's] for things & to Drakes' to supper. Hilda just all in -- she had washed, cooked

& did all sorts of stunts. Dishes & all 3 of us to Arlington by 8:15. Few errands. Blake's & home. Barb here & Aunt Mame. Aunt Elizabeth in Belmont. They [Martha and Hilda] stayed until 9 or so,. Bit wash & hot bath, wrote here & bed about 11:30.

Sunday, October 14, 1923

Mabel & George's 20th anniversary. Mashpee with Hilda & Martha. Up by 7. I had washing out [on the clothesline] by 8 & again some. Packed. Down with present for George & Mabel: \$3.00 Met Hilda as I came back & to house for things. Charles & Ella [Aunt Mame's son and daughter-in-law] there. To Waltham for more packing & Martha, and Hilda, Vix [the dog] & I left at 12 for Mashpee. Out through Blue Hills for the foliage and Scituate & a tire gave out & had to be patched. Two nice men [fixed it] & wouldn't take a penny. On to Duxbury Centre & had a blowout & Hilda & Martha changed the tire with help from some passers-by. Hilda bot a new tire at Plymouth where we had some lunch & we reached Mashpee at 7. Started a fire & got a bit of supper. Put up beds on piazza. Ate there & unpacked & bed early. All a bit wakeful & Hilda _very_ tired.

Tuesday, October 16,

1923 Clear & glorious. Up about 7, nice eats & all off at 10:30 or so. Hilda flew airplanes with Merwin [Bessie Boardley's son] awhile & then we went in the boat, up to Hick's Cove. Ashore & picked cranberries and beach plums & watched the birds. Then on to Pickerel Cove & fished. Caught a lot of small perch. Ashore at Rothery's, walked to Pimlico & Peters. Found a hill covered with checkerberries. Birds everywhere. Home at dusk. Coloring wonderful. Steamed clams & chowder [made from the "huge basket of small clams" that Nina, Hilda, and Martha had dug at Popponesset the day before]. Wrote cards & to aunts & to Ethel Nute in evening & wrote in here. Rest wrote letters also. Bed soon after 10. Rowed a good lot. Had a wonderful day.

Wednesday, October 17, 1923 #

Clear & glorious. Up 7:30. Found old auntie [*] had come, so Hilda & Martha made me stay abed with a hot water bottle. Hilda in with tme awhile. They even pushed table up so I didn't dress until about 10 & they did all the [house]work. Left about 12 to Cotuit for meat, etc. & then on to "Pop," where they dug a lot more clams. Walked up back to Dean's Pond. Vix with us Just a nice day. Home before 6 & they made me rest. Hilda read to me & Martha got the supper. Luscious steak, fried onions, candied sweets, tomato salad & wonderful chocolate cake. Talked, dishes, and bed about 10. Hilda in with me & rubbed & rubbed my back, dear heart. Wind blew a gale & none of us slept at all well. Also had eaten too much.

[*] Nina has always suffered greatly from painful menstrual periods, a medical condition generally known as dysmenorrhea. They have sometimes been disabling and have led her to call out sick to work. The huge difference in today's entry versus previous times is that when "auntie" arrived (Nina's euphemism for getting her period, along with the # symbol) is that we hear of her receiving care and concern for the first time. I get the idea that Nina was either suffering alone (when she was

living alone), or it was expected by her various aunts, Stoney, Mabel, or whomever, that she just carry on as best she could. Perhaps if Nina's mother had lived into Nina's adult years Nina might have had a sympathetic female to lean on. Or perhaps not. Nina's elders quite possibly viewed menstruation as a taboo topic--something unpleasant to be borne with neither acknowledgment nor care, in keeping with widespread Victorian social conventions. In Hilda and Martha, we have younger women who came of age in the 20th century and who are more predisposed to empathize and be supportive. In recent weeks, Nina has had the thrill of learning to drive. Now it's care and comfort for painful periods. No wonder Nina is in a state of enchantment by her new-found, clearly modern, female friends.

Thursday, October 18, 1923

Rain. Woke at 6:30 to find it pouring & puddles on the floor. Crept upstairs to see about windows and Hilda came up soon and we got into bed & later Martha joined us & we stayed until nearly 9. Just up when Arthur Oakley brot us our chicken. Nice eats. Blankets in house to dry. Hilda downtown for a tramp. Dickie [Martha] & I washed, talked, did lamps, etc. talked & just going out when Hilda came. She had been to Cotuit for an oil burner. Left her, & Martha & I to the Sandwich line. Fried chicken (from Arthur), baked potatoes (Grandma Sturgis's), sweet potatoes & salad. Canfield in evening. [*] Poured, so we all slept upstairs. Hilda alone, & Martha & I in front room. Poured & blew all night. Up at 3 to mop the floor.

[*] About the card game Canfield: < [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canfield_\(solitaire\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canfield_(solitaire))>

Sunday, October 21, 1923

Woke at 6 & in with Hilda for an hour or two, then all up & busy packing, cleaning, etc. Martha got a fine breakfast. All over to see Grandma & carry stuff & ready to leave by 11:30. Down to see Anna & Clara Collins & had a nice call, then to Falmoth on the back road & home the Brockton way. Martha drove some. To Canton & Hilda's. Called at Lautrells, where Hilda helped Russell with car & to Watermans' & Crosbys' & left for home at 6. Martha & I balancing rock back of Lautrells'. Beautiful views & fine sunset. To Drakes & kept a nice supper. Phil & Martha & Mr. Drake drove us all to Arlington in his new Reo 6. Fine & racy. [*] All hands in for a while. Both aunts there. Talked later, hot bath & bed soon after 11. Such a _nice_ week at Mashpee.

[*] In recent weeks Nina has been cramming so much content on the diary pages (the available writing surface of the paper measuring just 3" x 4-1/2") that her difficult handwriting has presented more than the usual challenges. For example, I have gone for the Reo 6 automobile being "fine & racy," but Nina's scrawl could also be "fine & easy." At all events, the Reo was a brand of automobile established by Ransom E. Olds (who gave his initials to create the name of the marque), after he left Oldsmobile. The Reo Speedwagon (alternatively spelled REO Speed Wagon), is considered an ancestor of the modern pickup truck, and was a name adopted by the rock band REO Speedwagon.

Monday, October 22, 1923

[Nina's first day of work at Framingham Public Library as assistant librarian and cataloguer.]

Up at 7. A busy morning. Packed, washed, etc. Nice eats with aunts. Hilda here at 10 & we left at 10:30. Few errands & to Framingham with my luggage. [I] drove part way & loved her all the way & more. To library for Edith Hayes & then to room & Hilda did most of the unpacking for me. We all lunched at the Chinese -- poor stuff. Back to library & Hilda left us. Hated to see her go, my very dear. Talked & looked over some LC cards [*], met some of staff in PM & a trustee. Chairman Kendall in to meet me in the evening. Edith Hayes & I supped very well at the Tea Room. OK home: \$2.50 for nicely [**]. Wrote here & to Hilda, as she left a spray of pink chrysanthemums for room. Bed _11:45_. Fine sunset. [**]

[*] LC cards likely would be Library of Congress catalogue cards, which libraries would purchase to use. A card contained essential information about a book. The cards were valuable for their content, no matter what classification system (commonly referred to by patrons as "the numbering system") that a library had in use (e.g., Dewey Decimal, Library of Congress, Cutter, etc.). In Nina's new role as a cataloguer, these will be important tools. Not all cards in a library's catalogue would be purchased. Many would originate in the library, and called for skills to assess the work being catalogued and to be consistent with the prevailing cataloguing approach to create a coherent "search tool" that most of us on this list remember from years of handling these physical records kept in banks of card drawers.

[**] There is a missing word after "nicely," which I would assume to be some positive attribute of the room Nina rents at \$2.50 per week, such as "nicely furnished," "nicely located," etc. It is interesting to compare the lack of details about Nina's new lodging arrangements in Framingham, versus the rather complete descriptions of her room when she arrived at Mrs. Scribner's in Waltham. Spending weekdays away from her Arlington home is no longer the new experience it was when Nina started at Waltham, but more importantly, Nina is having what is arguably the most invigorating and joyful time of her life in the embrace of Hilda and Martha and, indeed, the wider Drake family. Nina has been a very engaged daughter, niece, sister, aunt, cousin, and friend. This is a full cut above those dynamics. It is as if Nina is having in her mid-40s the kind of life she might have wished for (had she known that such a life was even out there) in her mid-20s.

Tuesday, October 23, 1923 .

Poured all day & quite cold.

Up at 7:30 & Edith & I off by 8:15. At the Wellworth (fair) [*] and library by 9. She went in town later. I worked until 6. Lunch at the Tea Room. Accessioned books, revised some filing, entertained an agent [book sales representative], etc. Quite a contrast to Waltham. [**] Just hoped Hilda might show up but too far & wet, of course, but I do miss her. Supper at Wellworth -- only fair. Mended & read a bit. Edith home early so we played [double] Canfield for nearly 2 hours. Bed soon after 11. Hilda at 2 funerals in PM & then to Groton for the week. Drove Mrs. May from Brookline.

[*] The Wellworth Service Stores were headquartered in Framingham and were in the restaurant and confectionery business. Not to be confused with Woolworth.

[**] A few words to introduce Framingham. In 1923, Framingham was a town of about 21,000--about two-thirds the population of Waltham, a city of approximately 33,000. Framingham had an industrial core (Dennison was an anchor manufacturing business), but Framingham also had many rural areas, as its population was spread across 25 square miles of territory. In 2018, Framingham converted from a town form of government with a representative town meeting, to a city charter with a city council and mayor. Mayor Yvonne Spicer is the first African-American mayor in Massachusetts to be elected by direct popular vote (versus cities whose city council elects the mayor). Framingham's population today is about 72,000.

Wednesday, October 24, 1923

Poured most of the day -- much warmer. Work about 7 & up at 9. Rang Drakes & got Mr. Drake, who said Hilda went to Groton yesterday for the week. Wrote to Grandma Sturgis and Bunny Putnam, embroidered & read some. Edith up about 10:30 & we had breakfast & dinner combined at the hotel -- best food we found yet. Library 1-9. Found a card from Hilda dear, sent from Waltham just before she left for Groton; brot joy to my heart. Busy with books, accession & cataloguing all of PM. Edith & I had egg shakes for supper. Trustees meeting -- nice lot of jolly men; met all but one. Did some reference work & kept fairly busy. Down on the 9 p.m. car. Bath, wrote here, read & bed by 11. Wrote to Hilda at library.

Saturday, October 27, 1923

Up at 8 & a rush. Happy because I'd see Hilda. Nice, busy morning with books & she came for me at one. We had lunch at the little Tea Room & then we went to the Arnold Arboretum. I did a _punk_ job driving. Had a good walk, gathering leaves, etc. for Hilda's classes & then had a long talk in the car & a happy ride to Waltham. Marjory Warren at Drakes' had the best beans & "browns" [brown bread] & a hot chocolate cake. In Hilda's room reading Papa May's letter & _some_ others; very artistic. [*] Music & I handed Canfield & then the whole family brot me home [to Arlington] in Drakes' car. Everybody abed & I went soon. A happy day.

[*] This reference to "Papa May" presents the opportunity to share more of Hilda Olsen's life now. Hilda, according to the 1920 Federal census, had immigrated from Norway to the United States as a child. Perhaps that misinformation was supplied by the Drakes to the census enumerator because that's what Hilda had told them was her genuine background. At all events, the fact is that Hilda was born to Odina Olsen, an unmarried 22- or 23-year old cook in a private home. Odina was born in Norway when that country was united with the Swedish crown. Odina would not have been in a position to care for her daughter, so Hilda was placed in the home of Henry and Mary May, who operated a farm on York Street in Canton. Mr. and Mrs. May were in their 50s, with two older sons living at home, when they welcomed Hilda. So there was no pretending (as was often the custom) that the Mays were her parents--more like foster grandparents. Hilda's status was as a "boarder," which suggests that someone was financially supporting her, rather than Hilda ever having been adopted. Thus, Mr. May is referred to be "Papa May," rather than just "Papa" to

Hilda. She seems to have had a happy upbringing in the May home. Mrs. May died in 1918 and Mr. May in 1922. The identity of Hilda's father is not known, and census records at different points show his birthplace variously as Denmark or Sweden. Possibly neither is true. The stigma of being an "illegitimate child" was intense in the early 20th century, so coming up with stories for public consumption would have been a way to avoid disclosing that. As always, when the time is right in the advancing narrative of Nina's diaries, I'll provide more background so that the readers can enjoy the storylines in "real time" (i.e., without plot "spoilers").

Sunday, October 28, 1923

Clear & beautiful. Up by 8 & down to talk to aunts & both said how _happy_ I looked & I surely am. Fine eats, bit of a wash, fed kits, got weighed: down to 155 pounds. Hilda over soon after 12 & stayed a bit & then we went to Dickie's for dinner -- fine as usual. [*] Ride with Mr. Drake in PM & Ruth Sanderson with us. To Nobscot (a village within Framingham) by a winding country road, then Marlboro, Hudson, & Lake Boone & stopped at the Onthanks. Hilda & I for a bit of a walk & talk together. Saw a 3-toed am. woodpecker.[**] Back to Drakes' to supper: rarebit, cinnamon toast & hot chocolate & all so good. Music in evening & later Hilda brot me over in the town car. Talked with aunts awhile, looked at snapshots & Hilda nearly went to sleep in my room & arms. I did so want her to stay all night, but she wouldn't. Hot bath & bed by _12_.

[*] About "Dickie." She is Martha L. Drake, a 1909 graduate of Wellesley College, who is an unmarried school teacher living in the family home in Waltham. I do not know the origin of the nickname "Dickie" and note that it is used inconsistently: sometimes she is described as Martha, other times as Dickie, and once-in-a-while as Dicky. Certainly, "Dickie Drake" is nicely alliterative.

[**] <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Three-toed_Woodpecker/id>

From: "Eugene Benson"

Subject: Re: [arlington] [history] Nina Winn's 1923 diary - October 28

I am wondering about Nina's identification of a three-toed woodpecker because one would not expect to see a three-toed woodpecker in Massachusetts in October based on the bird's current range (north of Massachusetts) and habitat (conifer forests). According to *Birds of Massachusetts*, by Viet and Petersen, (1993) the three-toed woodpecker is a very rare and irregular winter visitor to Massachusetts and south only during winter irruptions. The book lists only a few records of the woodpecker in MA (winter and early spring; none in October) but notes that the bird was "possibly more numerous in New England in past years than they are today (i.e., 1993)." Any real birders able to help with this? Thanks. Gene (not a bird expert)

Wednesday, October 31, 1923 [*]

Didn't wake until nearly 8 -- clock wrong again. [Weather] Cleared-off beautifully. Edith said not to feel I must go to Needham [to a librarians' meeting?], so I rang Hilda who said she'd come over. Downtown for breakfast & read until Hilda came at 10:40 or so. She had hard work to put on car

radiator. Talked in room until 12 & I rocked her & held her -- she is so very dear. Went out towards Nobscot & had a bit of lunch. Lamppost [name of restaurant?]; nice & woodsy & back to library just after one, had some Danton butterfly books to show her. Rest [of staff] not back until 2. Loved her until 1:30. She told me about herself a bit -- dear girl & loved her more than ever. Rang her in evening for a goodnight chat about 9, so down on 9:30 [trolley] car. Nice supper at Tea Room. Sue Jennings in in PM to call & Edith there for supper. Read in evening. Hallowe'en. Read & bed by 11. Wrote Hilda in evening a bit. [At the end of each month in the 1923 diary book is a page headed "Memoranda" on which Nina summarized her feelings about October 1923.] A happy, full month with many changes -- leaving Waltham & starting at Framingham -- a wonderful, happy week at Mashpee with Hilda and Martha Drake -- and many, many happy days with dear Hilda and my great love and friendship for her.

[*] In Arlington this month, the Arlington Junior High School girls' band was formed, with 48 pieces. It was said that there was just one other such band in the United States at the time, in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1923, Arlington had two junior high schools: Junior High Centre at the corner of Academy and Maple streets, and Junior High West, which is today's Ottoson Middle School. The school system operated a "6-3-3" system, with the freshman year of high school (grade 9) housed in three-year junior high schools.

Thursday, November 1, 1923

Clear & glorious -- heavy white frost, bluest of blue skies. Up 7:30. Edith & I ate at Wellworth. Library at 9 & I rang Hilda to say goodbye. Short chat as Mr. Drake was waiting. Last time for the month, as she is to be with the Holbrooks at "Naulakha." [*] Library 9-6. An interesting day with books & accessions, etc. Edith & I had a salad at library and then walked for 1/2 an hour. Heavy dinner at the hotel -- good, but we both ate too much. Box of checkerberries from Arthur in evening. Two trustees in in PM: Rev. [John] Wilson [of the First Parish Church, Unitarian] & Mr. [Charles N.] Hargraves [a sanitary inspector of the Metropolitan Water Works]. Wrote here and some cards & to bed about 10.

[*] "Naulakha" was the former home of author Rudyard Kipling in Dummerston, Vermont; about 6 miles north of Brattleboro. It was purchased by the Holbrook family in 1903. They added the adjacent Scott Farm to their holdings in 1911 (it was the site of filming the 1998 movie "The Cider House Rules"). See links below on this property. Hilda's reputation and talent as a landscape designer must have been great for her to have such a prestigious professional engagement: <https://landmarktrustusa.org/rudyard-kiplings-naulakha> <<https://landmarktrustusa.org/rudyard-kiplings-naulakha>>

Saturday, November 3, 1923

Up 7:30. Library 9-1. Rose met me with a letter from dear Hilda as I got of car; answered it in evening. In to Park Square [Boston] on crowded [trolley] car. Across Common, lunched, errands at Chandler's, hair & nails at Mrs. Richardson's. Arlington by 4-ish, [to] library a few moments & home at 6. Beans & scallops -- good, too. Over again [to Arlington Centrer] in evening with aunts to do errands. Met Myra Wood. Up to see [attorney] Arthur Wellington about settling estate; I had

promised Hilda to do it. [*] Read later & hot bath & bed at 12. Aunt Sue & Aunt Sarah at Maria Hill's.

[*] The Winn family holdings (land and buildings) are still mostly titled to the "Heirs of Albert Winn" (Albert Nina's paternal grandfather, who died in 1888) or as the "Heirs of George P. Winn" (Nina's father, who died in 1907), including such recent assets as the filling station. It is getting more and more complicated from a financial and tax perspective to be operating as an estate, rather than each beneficiary receiving his/her share and being responsible for it. This is a matter of such apparent consternation to Nina that she has been discussing it with Hilda, but we're just learning of it now in her diary. We got a glimmer of how Nina felt earlier in 1923 when Nina made reference to the fact that she was a part-owner of the Mashpee cottage, yet wasn't enjoying what she perceived to be her fair share of its occupancy.

Sunday, November 4, 1923 #

Up about 8:30 & ate partly with aunts. Started a [central heat] furnace fire & then rang Hughes & asked about it. Went well -- house hot. Wonderful out -- washed, fed kits, etc. Barbara & I to Mr. Sztobbe's -- bot pinks & to cemetery to Arthur's grave. [*] Wanted to go to woods but # stopped me. Aunts had a fine chicken dinner. Read & talked all of PM & evening. Aunt Sue at Aunt Sarah's. Talked with George some in AM about settling estate. Bed at 11. Saw Mabel a few moments at noon; she gave me some gray ooze shoes. [**]

[*] Arthur Harold Winn was Nina's second-eldest brother. She has taken flowers to his grave in commemoration of his birthday, which was November 6, 1875.

[**] Ooze is a treated leather similar in its soft-brushed texture to suede. It is often made of calfskin.

Friday, November 2, 1923

Clear & cool: white frost. Up 7:30. Edith & I ate at the Wellworth & up on 8:45 car. Library 9-6. Found a card from dear Hilda, mailed at Fitzwilliam [New Hampshire]. Wrote to her rest of the letter I started last night. Wrote for L.C. [Library of Congress] cards: 68 new titles. Salad at library, Edith I & just to the Collins store, where I bot a nice yellow apron. Supped at Tea Room: _75_ cents for chicken pattie & french fries. The Randalls home and talked with them most of the evening -- outdoor things. Edith in town in PM; back by 9. Lot of nine new books in -- plenty to read. Bed about 11. Miss my dear one.

Note. The Randalls are the owners if the home where Nina and Edith Hayes are lodgers.

Monday, November 5, 1923

Up 7:30. Eats & a rush. Mr. Hughes here & explained furnace a bit. Left at 9:15. Asked George if he would drive me to Waltham. To [Arlington] Centre with Mabel & then to Mrs. St. Onge's [dressmaker] for a fitting & on to town [Boston]. There 11:30, lunch & on 12 o'clock Worcester [trolley] car to Framingham -- read, and the ride seemed short. Library 1-5 & 6-9 -- quite busy in

evening & some tired. Nice, long letter from Hilda dear & wrote her after I reached home. Started it at library but too busy. Bed soon after 11. Wish I had that child in my arms for about 5 minutes.

Note: It was not just Nina who was modernizing the systems in her home in 1923. Arlington surpassed 4,200 electric meters installed; but Nina still was illuminating with kerosene. The original Arlington Gas Light Company plant off Mystic Street, where the newest section of Mount Pleasant Cemetery is today, was dismantled in 1923 and all gas manufacturing consolidated at its 1914 plant on Grove Street. The gasometer was left in operation at the old plant site, such was the increased demand for gas and the need for all available storage tanks to distribute it.

Saturday, November 10, 1923

Clear & nice. Up 7:30. Ate alone, as Edith went early. Library 9-1 and fairly busy with list and things. In town, on a local [trolley car making all stops on request] and slow. To Tuttle's to have shoes stretched & out home. Lunched at Blake's. Library to see book exhibit -- children's -- & had a nice chat with Miss Hibbert [sic] -- very charming. [*] Met Aunt Mame & Mabel on way home. Bit wash, set table & started supper & to feed kits. Baked beans, etc. & good. Aunt Mame a bit faint in evening but better later. Read some, wrote to Hilda, bath & bed. Heater going & house too warm, tho Aunt Sarah here to fuss a bit. Read until 12:40 in "Old Forever" by [Alfred] Ollivant -- India story.

[*] Frances Hubbert was the new associate librarian at Robbins Library, having just taken up her appointment on October 1. Hubbert was a graduate of the Pratt Institute School of Library Science in Brooklyn. November 11-17, 1923 was national Children's Book Week, and the exhibit at Robbins featured the historical development of children's books to the present day, attracting nearly 800 people to view it.

Sunday, November 11, 1923 [*]

Clear, east wind but nice. Woke early but slept & read a bit & up 8:30 or so & Aunt Mame & I ate at 9. Fed kits, went to church to hear Mr. Rosebach -- good sermon; saw so many I knew. Home with Mrs. Prescott and Lucy & in [at their home at 15 Russell St.] for awhile & then in at 146 for a bit. George not at [attorney] Arthur Wellington's _yet_. Dinner nearly ready when I got there & a good one, too. Barbara & I in the woods from 4-6, to Simm's Swamp [**] not clear [skies] but good to be there. Only two woodpeckers. Had dreamcakes & hot chocolate. Mabel & Arthur in a bit. Talked with Dicky [Drake, who] expects Hilda by Wednesday. Read a bit, wrote Hilda & bed by 11. Aunt Mame not out. Aunt E. at [her son] Dick's. Aunts Sarah & Sue to see Laurel Tout at Wakefield.

[*] The Boston Sunday Globe on this date carried the thrilling headline "Legislators Go Up at Boston Airport: Sixty Take Trips on Inspection Tour," noting that each to do so was to "risk life." The lawmakers had to sign waivers of responsibility in case of injury or death, as they traveled on small airplanes of the 101st Observation Squadron of the Massachusetts National Guard. Among those to have an aerial view of what would become today's Logan International Airport was Arlington State Rep. Bert S. Currier, of 82 Claremont Ave., Arlington Heights.

[**] Simm's Swamp is a vanished wetland that was located in the woods above Old Mystic Street.

[***] A 1923 recipe for Dream Cakes (two words) was to take slices of very thin white bread between which were placed slices of American cheese, then fried in butter generously seasoned with red pepper (cayenne) and salt. The idea was to have the bread slices be so thin that the cheese would melt through them

Monday, November 12, 1923

Mostly clear but sharp. Woke at 6 & again near 8. Breakfast with Aunt Mame. Washed a few things, up to feed kits & get celery & in to see Aunt Sue for awhile. Left by 11: brot dishes [given by Aunt Sue to equip Nina's room at Framingham], Sterno [*], etc. Library at one & found a letter from beloved Hilda: nice one, but she is not a bit well or very happy in it; had a still nicer letter in the evening. [**] Put up bulletins and new book covers and carried (with Rose's help) new books downstairs. Put them some new ones [shelves?] & in evening had quite a lot of reference & an interesting time. Supper at Tea Room -- think they [the owners] will give it up -- doesn't pay. Home 9:45. Talked awhile, wrote here and to Hilda again. Expect her home by Thursday. Bed 11:30.

[*] Sterno sold folding metal stoves that fit into an 8-inch by 8-inch paper envelope. These were intended for cooking use with Sterno (which came in different-sized cans) in a variety of settings: outdoor camping, inside the kitchen in summer (to avoid firing up the kitchen range and adding heat to the kitchen), in offices, and in lodging rooms. Compared to small kerosene stoves, the "canned heat" of Sterno was a comparatively safe fuel, but most of us would shudder to imagine someone renting a room in a private home today who was heating up food using an open flame.

[**] On November 9, Nina wrote in her diary: "Such a dear letter from Hilda, poor youngster. Mrs. Holbrook is _horrid_ to her. [Daughter] Grace [Holbrook] had been to N.Y. without her but was back again." Grace Holbrook was, like Hilda, an alumna of the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Groton and we assume this is the connection that brought Hilda to Naulakha, outside of Brattleboro, Vermont..

Thursday, November 15, 1923

Up 7:30. Edith & I breakfasted at hotel & were at library by 8:45. Busy day with accessioning -- did about 35 books & put some way through: desk piled up with them. Letter from Hilda in AM: said she was coming home today in the limousine and enclosed two tuberose blossoms and one was very fresh and nice & so fragrant. I wore it in PM & have it by me scenting the whole room [at home now]. Took only a half-hour at noon & lunched at Tea Room. Went to Saxonville in PM to branch -- nice little room. Down [on trolley car] with Mrs. McCarty. Met Edith at the hotel for supper; nice one for 50 cents. Hilda rang at 9 for a chat; she got home at 7 from Naulakha. Read in evening, wrote here & bed early. Mrs. Randall feeling better. Saturday, November 17, 1923 Just mean & depressed all day & couldn't enjoy a thing. Some better by night but still weepy. Up 7:30, eats & library 9-12 & good & busy Hilda [came] for me at 12 & looks so good to me; she darling and so good to me. We lunched at the Tea Room & then went by way of Nobscot. No one visible

at the O's [Onthanks?]. Called on a Mr. Brooks & heard a lot about Ford's buying land, etc.
[*] Waltham by 2:30 & Martha, Marjory, Hilda & I had a fine tramp over Prospect Hill & called at Berry's. Back at 6 to mighty good beans. Hilda & I to the Mayalls to call in the evening -- very pleasant. Back at 9:30. All weary but drove me to Arlington: 4 of us. So late they didn't come in. Aunt Elizabeth upstairs but came down & talked until 11:30. Bath & bed about 12:30.

[*] This may refer to the Ford Motor Company considering (or even concluding) the purchase of land with future development plans. Massachusetts produced more automobiles in the 20th century than did Detroit. Ford had a plant in Cambridge and later at Somerville until 1958 (thus the "assembly" in Assembly Square and Assembly Row). General Motors had a plant in Framingham that was active until the early 1980s.

From: "Lauren A. Lineback"

Dear Richard, I'm afraid I may have missed an entry. Is there any more info. on the source of Nina's unhappy mood? Also, as far as the reference to Henry Ford buying up land, is it possible Nina is referring to his purchase of the Wayside Inn in 1923 and his expansion of that property to more than 3,000 acres??

<https://www.wayside.org/discover/our-story>

Thank you for these delightful and engaging posts of Nina's diary (and for so often putting things into context). Lauren

From: Richard Duffy

Hi Lauren I like your explanation much better than mine for what the buying up of land by Ford is likely to be. The general geography fits nicely as does the timeline. We do not know who Mr. Brooks is except that he is someone who Hilda knows. So it was a dangling detail. Thank you for offering a much stronger possibility. On another Ford-related note I was asked off list about Massachusetts having manufactured more automobiles in the 20th century than did Detroit. This is one of those things that may be more brag than fact, in that the comparison to Detroit might be narrowly construed to its city limits and omit what was happening in the Detroit region. Someone with an interest in historical automotive production data could chase down some numbers to refine the assertion. It sometimes happens that local bragging can hit the data target, but miss the point. A good local example is that the Tobin Bridge over the Mystic River is longer than the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. That is true in a technical sense when including the length of the elevated approaches to the bridges over land. But what most people admire of the engineering feat and consider important is the span of the bridges, and the GG is the undisputed winner on that aspect. Having a significant achievement isn't satisfying to some people in absolute terms. They want importance to be measured in comparative terms.

Lastly, Nina doesn't share with us the source of her feeling mean and blue. Even though I advance the narrative by one or more days, if there is a pertinent piece of information that Nina gives on a skipped day, I add it as a footnote, as I did with Mrs. Holbrook reportedly being horrid to Hilda. Cause it is all about Hilda these days. Richard

Tuesday, November 20, 1923

Clear & glorious. "Shenandoah," the big air-ship, sailed over at one. [*] Up 7:30. Edith & I ate at hotel. She went in town with the Jennings & I to library 9-6. Miss Mueller out sick. Put through over 50 books & have piles more to do. Bit of a walk at noon after lunch at library. Down on 6:30 [trolley car] & ate at hotel. Did want to go to Waltham in evening for night & when I rang Hilda at 7:30 she said she thot of same thing, but too late then & they (she & Dickie) were on their way to bed. Good to hear her voice anyway. Mended, wrote here, got some eats ready for early AM, read a bit & bed by 10. Had to destroy her dear letters, as I gave my promise. [**]

[*] The Shenandoah was a big deal. And the article about it linked below makes me more grateful than usual that Wikipedia came to be. Not mentioned in Wikipedia is that this date's flight took about 13 hours round-trip between Lakehurst, N.J. and Boston. For Arlington, it was a particularly special event. The Shenandoah flew low over the town, with "an Arlington boy," 30-year old Fred Tobin, steering at its helm and flying directly above his family's home at 6 Russell Terrace.

<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Shenandoah_\(ZR-1\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Shenandoah_(ZR-1))>

[**] At the risk of stating the obvious, the passion between Nina and Hilda is apparently fierce enough to warrant Hilda worrying about her written words being discovered by others. Where exactly are the lines in this relationship, we can only know when Nina draws them for us. I would not hold out much hope for a detailed declaration from a decidedly Victorian-era woman in 1923 who still euphemistically describes her menstrual period to herself in her diary with the symbol "#." I am getting a "love that dare not speak its name" vibe from Nina's references, and as Nina's modern-day "spokesperson" I am eager to understand more about this transformative relationship, which has surged onto center stage. This date feels like some sort of milestone, but it's a marker on the road to where?

Wednesday, November 21, 1923

Pleasant, warm. Up by 6:45 & had coffee & grapefruit in room & left for Boston on 7:45 car, meeting Hilda at Park Square at 9. Walked to DeWolfe's & bot books & had a good time looking at them; then to Butterfield's & bot more up in the Winchester store [*] & across Common & car there to Horticultural Hall & in library awhile. Lunch at a nice French place on Boylston St. & then Hilda drove me to Chestnut Hill. Oh, my, such a nice morning together. Library by one & busy P.M. Down at 4:45 car & had supper at hotel. ome with books & dress that Hilda brot from Mrs. St. Onge & off on car & at Saxonville by 6 for library. Mostly children in & very good. Down at 9. Wrote here, to Mrs. St. O., & read & bed at 11. [*] Boston was a publishing center in the United States in the 1920s and the city had a wide variety of booksellers. Today Nina went to DeWolfe Fisk & Co. at 20 Franklin St. and the store of William A. Butterfield at 59 Bromfield St. The reference to the "Winchester store" does not refer to the town of Winchester, but to a probable annex of Butterfield's, in one of the Winchester Buildings, which were located at 70 Franklin St. and 49 Summer St.

Saturday, November 24, 1923

Up 7:30: rained & kept it up all day & night -- just _poured_. Ate at hotel. Library 9-12. Hilda over for me & we had lunch at hotel & then dashed back to Centre for Mayall pictures, back to Wellesley to a store & then to [Waltham] to Mr. Sturtevant's with gliders. [*] Watched Waltham-Newton ball game awhile from upstairs [**] then Miss Varnum invited Mr. Drake to listen-in on radio of Harvard-Yale game & we all went & got returns from 2/3 of game. Mighty good; felt as if we were there. [***] Martha & Marjory back from shopping about six & dead tired. Usual nice beans. All upstairs awhile in evening, talking & doing clothes & then played "Spillikins" (Jackstraws) until 10:30. So wet [outside] I stayed all night. Slept in Hilda's bed & she came in for a half-hour or so.

[*] Gliders in this instance refers to toy glider planes. In between World War I and World War II, sport gliding was a daredevil pursuit; 1923 was among the bigger years for setting altitude and distance records, reporting about which was featured in general-interest newspapers and magazines. This naturally inspired the merchandising of toy gliders, advances in their features, and competition play.

[**] The football rivalry between Waltham and Newton high schools was one of the better known in the Boston area. On this date the teams played in the mud and rain before an estimated 5,000 spectators. The score was a 7-7 tie.

[***] Last, but not least, I have been waiting impatiently for Nina to say something about radio broadcasts. When she finally discussed it, the event being broadcast was significant: the Harvard-Yale game held at Harvard, where the host team Crimson lost to the Bulldogs 13-0. The 1923 season was an undefeated one for Yale.

Sunday, November 25, 1923

Rained early -- clearing by noon. Woke at 7:30 when Hilda came in & we talked for an hour before dressing. Martha didn't feel well & stayed abed & Hilda carried her breakfast & later we went up & talked. Mr. Drake to church. Hilda drove me home about 11 & stayed for an hour with us. Aunt Elizabeth had sat-up until _12_ last night -- I thot they'd be abed so didn't telephone. Barbara in. Had a nice dinner & just done when Mrs. Damon came up with some poppy seeds. [Son] Fred driving & daughter Agnes [Wellington] with them & took me to ride -- great car. Down to Mr. Sztobbe's later for moss & bot 3 "mums." Light supper. Both aunts home & Aunt Sue with Aunt Sarah. Read in evening & up to bed by 10, had a bath & shampoo & bed _soon_ after 11. Wonderful sunset & such a moon.

Monday, November 26, 1923

Clear & glorious. Hilda & I wanted to run away to Mashpee, it was so fine & clear & warm. Up 7:30 & nice eats with aunts. Ironed a bit & fed kits, etc. Hilda came at 9:30, furious because they wouldn't let her demonstrate planes in Arlington. [*] Drove Aunt Elizabeth over town & then we carried pictures to Foster's & Mr. Foster showed us over the plant -- very interesting. [**] A couple

of errands in Waltham. At Drakes' a bit, Knowles for cards, to Mrs. St. Onge's with brown [dress] which is a _mess_ & on to Framingham by 12, to room & fixed our heads, as Hilda also had shampoo yesterday. Hotel for dinner -- poorest I've had there. Hilda saw "Nibby" a moment & later at library. Drove me up there by one, or soon after, & she stayed & demonstrated gliders on the Common. Worked on L.C. cards all of P.M.: had 700 come in. Took only a half-hour for supper as I'd not worked very hard earlier in PM; I watched Hilda on Common. Fairly busy evening and on 9 [o'clock] car, wrote here, read a bit & bed at 11 as usual. Aunt Mame to Portsmouth in PM for a week or two.

[*] The issue regarding Hilda's gliders isn't clear. The term "demonstrating" could refer to a "sales demonstration" or simply "demonstrating," as in putting on a show of her equipment and skills because she simply wanted to fly them. We also don't know if she applied in Arlington for some kind of permit and was turned down, or if she popped-up in a town park or garden and was stopped by the authorities in the act of flying and/or selling gliders. Apparently her activity was tolerated in Framingham. At the moment, I am leaning towards Hilda being in the business of selling gliders. Just as she sells her own Christmas cards at the Brockton Fair, Hilda seems to be pursuing different types of work in the non-growing season, to supplement her horticulture work with the Waltham public schools.

[**] Foster Brothers was a well-known picture frame and mirror retailer at 4 Park Square in Boston. In 1918 John R. Foster built a frame-manufacturing plant at 78 Summer St. (on the northeast corner of Mill Street). The location was ideal because the rear of the property was adjacent to the railroad, for deliveries and shipments. Abutting to the east were four acres fronting on the mill pond (what today is covered by Buzzell Field) that belonged to the Winn family. John Foster's handsome residence was at 362 Mystic St.; in recent years its address was changed to 4 Old Mystic St. The Foster Brothers plant was a wholesale customer of what is today the Old Schwamb Mill, for circular frames and for linear frame moulding. In 1945, the plant and buildings were sold to the Malcolm G. Stevens Co., manufacturers and distributors of foundry supplies. The link below is to a photograph of the once-familiar manufacturing plant in the 1970s. Stevens was one of the last rail-freight customers in Arlington before service was discontinued in 1981. The Stevens Co. moved to Tyngsborough in 2000 and the plant was razed for construction of The Village at Cutter's Mill condominium development.

<<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:6q182n713>>

From: todd_cooper

Nina does not mention Thanksgiving?? I know it was not made official until FDR, but did she do anything?

From: Richard

Thanksgiving was celebrated on Thursday, November 29. That date is not possible any longer--the latest date now is November 28. Although Thanksgiving was not designated as a nationwide U.S. federal holiday until 1885, it was a holiday in Massachusetts for Nina's entire life. Nina was born in 1877 and in that year there was a wide variety of activities for the holiday, with almost equal emphasis on religious and charitable observances (reflecting the origins of the holiday as a day as one to be set aside for "prayer and thanksgiving") and mostly indoor recreational events. (The first

Thanksgiving Day high school football game wasn't held until 1887: Boston Latin vs. English High). Turkey and plum pudding at family feasts were well-established traditions by the time of Nina's first Thanksgiving in 1877, and to that point, in that year consumers were warned to closely examine the insides of the turkeys they were buying, as some unscrupulous casual sellers had taken to adding quantities of boiled peas to the cavities to increase the weights of their freshly killed birds.

Wednesday, November 28, 1923

Clear & nice & warm. Up 7:30. Library 9:00-5:30 with 1/2 hour at noon. Nice busy day. Edith up late in AM & down for [pay] checks at noon & had a trustees meeting at night. [I] left on 5:30 car & met Hilda at Chestnut Hill & she was tired: had had a full day at Brockton, Wollaston, & Quincy with gliders. To [Hilda's] home in Canton & to Hyde Park [and then to Waltham]. Went to the Drakes' to supper. Hilda down to Knowles [*] later & Martha made pies & I did dishes & had a chance to talk with Martha. We left soon after 9 for Arlington. Everybody away & had the house to _our_selves. Fixed fires & bed very soon: talked, _etc._ Held her in my arms a lot & didn't either of us sleep very much. Happy, oh ----. Hilda gave me a clay facial before bed. [**]

[*] Thomas Harrison Knowles, Inc., printers, at 673 Main St., Waltham. I presume that this is the commercial printer working with Hilda on her Christmas card business.

[**] In the early 1920s, clay facials were promoted for both men and women. Perhaps the most famous preparation was the "Boncilla" brand, whose "Clasmic" clay facial pack was used by barbers to cool and refresh a man's face in the summer. For women it was sold for home use as the "Boncilla Beautifier." One of the conditions it was supposed to address was "a fagged face." Clay facial products were often compounded with balsams, to differentiate them from "unscientific" mud packs. But there was pushback from the scientific community, which published studies comparing these branded products to ordinary clay powder that could be bought in any pharmacy and mixed with water. But the plain-old-clay from the druggist lacked glamour advertising. I wonder what kind of stuff 20-something Hilda was slathering on Nina's 40-something face.

Thursday, November 29, 1923

Thanksgiving Day. Warm & clear & like September. Woke early but didn't get up until 10 or after. I love her more & more every day. Had a broiler, toast, etc., about 11:30 & left soon after one for Canton. To Waltham first & got the music box & Vix. Family party at the Drakes. At Lintells' where we stopped a few moments; had a walk in their woods part way with Miss Crosby & a cousin, Mr. Crosby, & then a _wonderful_ walk to Hilda's grove & back to house for quite awhile & then called on the Watermans -- charming as usual. Home about 9:30 & had bacon, toast, hot chocolate, & lettuce. Fixed a fire, had fire in fireplace & off to bed. Hilda so sleepy I helped her undress, but she woke some later & gave me a rubbing & I rubbed her. Slept some better. A happy & perfect day from first to _last_.

Friday, November 30, 1923

Cloudy & poured later. I woke by 6 & Hilda about 7:30. Intended leaving for Boston by 9 but bed was _so_ __good__ we didn't get up until 9:30. Dishes done & just going when Aunt Elizaeth arrived. Went to Waltham & left car & Vix. Aunt Emma [*] there. Mr. Drake drove me to Chestnut Hill & Hilda went back to Boston to shop & I went to Framingham. There by one. So sleepy in PM & evening I nearly went off. Plenty of books to write-up. Supper at Tea Room & _some_ hungry. How I hated to leave dear H.N.O. [**] at Chestnut Hill. Poured when I came home at 9. Miss Mueller worked extra, so down together. Rose also there. Edith to Mem. Plc. [***] & abed now. Sort of lonesome here tonight. [On the month-end "Memoranda" page for November, Nina wrote: "A happy, wonderful month -- mostly a dear Hilda one."]

[*] Emma M. Whitford is 73 years old and a maternal aunt of Martha "Dickie" Drake, whose mother was Bertha Whitford Drake (1861-1919).

[**] H.N.O. stands for Hilda Nicalene Olsen. The spelling of the unusual given name "Nicalene" would appear to be an English-language adaptation of Scandanavian-language versions of the (still-uncommon) given name, spelled variously as Nikoline or Nikolene.

[***] This is not legible and I have transcribed what I believe the letters to be. Although Framingham's seat of municipal government is in a building called Memorial Hall, that structure did not exist in 1923.

Saturday, December 1, 1923

Clear, glorious and warm. Up 7:30 & library 9-12. E.B.H. [Edith Hayes] in town in AM. Fear I didn't accomplish much -- too soon after our holiday. Chestnut Hill [*] by 12:30 & Hilda & Mr. Drake came soon after & there we waited for Mr. Forbush & went to Brookline Village & back but gave up at 2 & fear he went to _Forest_ Hills. Back to Waltham. Hilda & I had a little time together & then went to Girl Scout headquarters & heard a good lecture by Ernest Harold Baynes. [**] Looked for Barbara & didn't find her. Came in late, she said. Joyous walk back to Drake's & a little time together in evening & later Mr. Drake drove me over, with Marjory & Hilda. Dickie tired & didn't come. Aunt Emma Whitford there too. Elizabeth White [granddaughter of Aunt Elizabeth Hittinger] at house. Talked a bit, baths & bed by 11.

[*] Chestnut Hill was a major stop on the Boston and Worcester Street Railway, whose trolley cars served Framingham via the Worcester Turnpike (today's Route 9).

[**] Baynes was a renowned naturalist, referred to as a "real-life Dr. Doolittle." His prominence included controversy because many felt that his opinions on certain matters pertaining to animal welfare were too divergent from his others. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Harold_Baynes>

Saturday, December 8, 1923

Clear & warm -- an outdoor day. Up 7:30 & library 9-12:30 & met Hilda at Park Square at 1:45 & we met Martha & Marjory at [R.H.] Stearns at 2, lunch & shopped in relays. Marjory & I divided on

presents: 1/2 each on gloves for Hilda & nighty for Martha. Fierce crowds & dog weary. Intended on going home [to Arlington] but all went to Waltham in _the_ car. I held Marjory. [*] Martha _very_ tired & Hilda & I were coming to Arlington but she said her Dad would be disappointed. Hilda dear offered to come with me & go for berries tomorrow. Nice supper as usual, did dishes & left about 8:30. some errands at [Arlington] Centre. Hilda sold gliders at 5&10 to Mr. Sanborn (manager), whom she knew. Met Aunt Elizabeth, Helen Hard & a friend, so carried bundles & they were at house when we arrived & Hilda drove them to [trolley] car at 10 & then we all went to bed. Bath & talked and slept _some_. A wonderful night. Mrs. Hobbs at Aunt Sarah's.

[*] This suggests to me that Nina would have been in the front passenger seat with Marjory on her lap in the enclosed section of a coupe or roadster, with Martha occupying a one-person rumble seat. One of the other names for a rumble seat is the dickie seat (in British usage), which makes me wonder if Martha "Dickie" Drake got her nickname through such a connection.

Sunday, December 9, 1923

Warm & rainy. Woke early & dear Hilda who [woke] later. [It was] raining, so didn't hurry up; just talked & napped. She is so dear & lovable. Aunts had eaten, so we had cereal, grapes & steak about 11:30. Fooled around [*], made bed, read paper together on couch. She rang Dicky who was still tired & didn't expect her until 7. Aunts had a fine dinner about 3: pot roast. Did dishes & we were sleepy & it was so dark, so we went up for naps about 4:30 & stayed a couple of hours, having good talks. Howard White [Aunt Elizabeth's grandson] & a friend, Ford, over, so Hilda took them along to Belmont. Had a wonderful weekend. Directed most of my cards in evening & got presents ready to do up & rang Mabel about gifts to family so it was after 10 when I went to bed.

[*] There are a few meanings of the expression to "fool around," and in current usage these include to engage in casual sexual activity or to be cheating on a partner in a committed relationship. In 1923 "fooled around" meant to have been benignly idle; to relax casually, often aimlessly, and sometimes humorously. In diary passages describing spending time with other people, Nina has used the expression "fooled" and "fooled away" as equivalents to "fool around." (The British might say "to fool about.") Nina using "fooled around" in today's diary entry leads me to comment on the elephant in the room: Nina's sexuality. I say "elephant in the room" because we have been reading in recent weeks of Nina's profound admiration and love of Hilda (expressed sometimes in acts such as Nina having "rocked and loved her", the sharing of beds, the destroying of Hilda's letters to Nina at Hilda's request, and other activities that entail levels of more than casual physical and emotional intimacy). I have received several off-list messages, all asking more-or-less whether I think that Nina is a lesbian. It would be trendy and trite for me to simply reply "love is love," and thus sidestep the issue. But I have formed an opinion on the matter, and it is that I do not think that Nina and Hilda are in a sexual relationship. Nina is a mature woman (almost 20 years Hilda's senior), and after finding themselves drawn together by an abiding passion for nature and the outdoors, Hilda also has found a confidante and a sort of mother-figure in Nina (bearing in mind that Hilda was not raised by her unwed birth mother, and Hilda's foster mother was deceased). For her part, Nina expresses (not in these exact words) being attracted (sometimes to the point of distraction) to Hilda's unique blend of exuberant youthfulness, intelligence, and talent. In some respects it seems as if Hilda is the child that Nina never had. The physical tenderness described

by Nina seems to be more on the order of comfort and affection than of a sexual character. The dynamic between Nina and Hilda has not been seen previously in Nina's relationships with her closest female friends. I and others (to say nothing of Nina) have been taken by surprise by the sometimes all-consuming nature of this new relationship. It will be important to frequently take a step back from what Nina writes and consider her words in wider context to better grasp the significance of Hilda in her life.

Monday, December 10, 1923

Some cloudy, rain by 10 PM: warm. Up at 7:15 after a sound sleep & did up 1/2 dozen presents, nice breakfast with aunts & then rang Hilda. She had a horrid time last night when she got home -- her first fight with Martha [who] is jealous of me, poor dear. Such a pity for all of us & Hilda frightfully upset & had a horrid crying spell. Fed kits, got weighed: down to 154 = 1 lb. less. In town [*] & did a lot of shopping but lost the 12 o'clock car: made [lost work time] up at supper hour. Books as usual in P.M. & desk, etc. in eve. Down at 8, mended & wrote here & bed about 11:30.

[*] When we read about Nina shopping in Arlington, it seems to be almost entirely simple "errands," rather than gifts, clothing, and similar items. She was not alone in preferring to shop in Boston, where the selection of goods naturally was greater, and the prices were perceived as being lower than in Arlington. In December 1923 merchants in Arlington were trying to encourage readers of the Arlington Advocate to keep their holiday gift trade local, extolling their variety of sought-after goods and services, as conveyed in the text of the following three display advertisements:

PICTURE FRAMING

Developing and Printing
Keep Your Work in Arlington
H. KREEM "Hymies"
198 Mass. Ave. Arlington
Cor. Lake Street

LaBREQUE'S MEN'S SHOP

600 Mass. Avenue
Arlington Center
First Class Line of
Men's Furnishings
Styles suitable for all.
Come in and look over our stock.
New Goods at Right Prices

Ladies' and Children's

Coats, Skirts
Silk Dresses, Waists
Wool Dresses

HOUSE DRESSES

(Barmon Brand)

Corsets, Silk Underthings

Sweaters, Gloves, etc.

REAL "Honest to Goodness" Apparel

Save time and expense of going to Boston

THE FASHION SHOP

1338 Mass. Ave.

Arlington Heights Opposite the Post Office|

Wednesday, December 12, 1923

Clear and fair.

Up 7:30. Tried for Hilda at 8 -- line busy, but got her from hotel & [she] said [that her head] cold was much better. Met Miss Dale & left on 8:48 [trolley] car. To Newton Lower Falls early, so had a nice walk. Group [library] meeting. Not much of a discussion, but Miss Fletcher very interesting on Near East relief. [*] Took up a collection; got \$28.50. Saw Mr. Little, Nutey, Raymah & Orpha Matheson [from the Waltham or Somerville libraries]. Basket lunch but we didn't take one -- [instead] walked to Wellesley Hills [and took a Boston & Worcester trolley car] & [arrived in] Framingham at 1:45. Dinner at hotel & library at 2:30. Nice supper at Tea Room with Edith & Mrs. Norman & back until 9. Trustees meeting. Quiet downstairs. [At the lodging house] Mr. Randall in & Mrs. R. a bit later. Bed soon after 10.

[*] The excellent website in the link below provides a compelling view of the Near East Relief organization confronting the humanitarian crisis following World War I, principally large groups of Syrian and Armenians who were forced to migrate. Near East Relief was focused on immediate assistance and ultimate settlement of non-Muslim refugees (chiefly women and orphans) who were arriving in camps in terrible conditions. (Note that Muslem rather than Muslim was the typical spelling of the era.) December of 1923 saw a variety of campaigns to raise funds. At Radcliffe College, the students agreed that they would have stew for their Sunday meal, in place of the usual chicken dinner. The \$69 saved by that economy was sent to Near East Relief. Individual households were encouraged to take similar actions to both make monetary donations and to demonstrate solidarity with the plight of those exiting the Middle East.

<<https://neareastmuseum.com/archives/>>

Thursday, December 13, 1923

Warm & windy.

Up at 7. Edith & I ate at hotel & had a good dinner there at night, with egg shakes at noon. Library 9-6. Put through a lot of books, changed bulletins, etc. -- a good day. Walked about a bit in evening looking in [shop] windows & to house at 7:30. Rang Hilda in evening -- poor child has another fierce cold. Might hard world to hear [her] as rehearsal was going in in parlor. [*] Read & embroidered a bit & bed by ten & slept well. [**]

[*] Nina writes often of music at the Drakes' home in Waltham, so I imagine that the rehearsal was on the other end of the telephone line from her.

[**] Meanwhile, back in Arlington, it was notable in 1923 that a section of Massachusetts Avenue was re-numbered to include for the first time a series of addresses in the 500-598 range (even-numbered side of the street only). This section corresponds to what is now the building housing Kickstand Cafe (594) and Anton's Cleaner's (which, oddly, now uses the same 600 Massachusetts Ave. address of the separately owned VFW building immediately to its west). This adjustment to street numbering was done to create a "500 block" between Swan Place and a now-vanished street that was called Bucknam Court. In the 1920s, the 500 block took on its present configuration of a large outdoor area (now the parking lot) fronting on Massachusetts Avenue, with the building set far back on the property. This arrangement was due to the burgeoning expansion of automobile ownership. Gas pump islands were installed in the center of what is now the parking lot, and the present Kickstand/Anton's building originally was Frank W. Wunderlich's one-story service station. Wunderlich featured an extensive tire department, which explains why the building is much larger than a typical filling station with just one or two service bays. More about Bucknam Court in the link below:

<<https://www.wickedlocal.com/article/20091031/NEWS/310319930>>

Saturday, December 15, 1923 Pleasant & clear.

Up 7:30, eats & bit wash. Hilda rang up that she was punk & no Boston. I went in & had great luck & finished up my [Christmas] shopping. Saw Mr. Fraser at DeWolfe's for a chat. Home by 12:15 & did up some more presents & we were just having lunch when Martha & Hilda came & we went to Groton. Martha drove us; poor Hilda felt punk. To see Miss Hetzer [*] about Rose Helmer [sp.?] & then to the Mays' & they insisted we stay to supper. Old _Mr._ tried to kiss both Martha & Hilda on the _sly_ -- horrible creature. I beat him [in] six games of go-bang [**]. He beat me 6. Home 9:30. Such a nice day. Very tired but sat up & did up Christmas things until 11:30, then had hot bath & bed at 12.

[*] Miss Lilie Louise Hetzer (sometimes identified as Louise L. Hetzer) began her professional career in horticulture as a student at the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Groton, then went on to become a Lowthorpe instructor and she retired as its dean.

[**] "Go Bang" is based on the Japanese board game Gomuko. It has been known by various names, such as Five in a Row. The "Go Bang" name was a British import.

Sunday, December 16, 1923

Clear & nice -- quite sharp.

Up soon after 8 & felt so tired all the morning. Washed a bit, fed kits & Aunt Mame ironed for me. Did up presents until Hilda came at 12. [I was] so tired I should have stayed home but couldn't resist and was cross and mean all day. Nice steak dinner at the Drakes & then Hilda, Martha, Vix & I went to Canton. [Ran] out of gas .2 miles from Dedham but someone Hilda knew came along & drove her back. Found Oscar & Bertha [*] home & rest disappeared & I went out in the woods &

they came later. Got piles of greens, some berries & had a great bonfire. Russell Lentell [**] there to keep it up. Rest had hot dogs. In house for awhile & left at 8 & home in about over an hour. Aunts abed. Girls in for a while by open fire. Finished doing up presents. Bed 11:30. Not much sleep: wept noisily & heavily most of night.

[*] Oscar May (b. 1876) is just a few months older than Nina. Bertha M. Watters May is his wife. We could reasonably describe Oscar as a "foster brother" of Hilda's. He was 20 years old when Hilda was born, and she was an infant or very small child when she went to live with the May family as a "boarder." Although "boarder" was the legal relationship, it is obvious that Hilda's independent adult relationship with the Mays is as a family member. Oscar Mays carries on the farm of his late father, Henry May.

[**] Russell Lentell (Nina has misspelled his last name as "Lintell" and other ways) was born Benjamin Russell Lentell in 1893. He is a neighboring farmer to the Mays on York Street in Canton. In the early years of the automobile York Street was designated as "Motor Route A." It is a major street in Canton, running roughly parallel to Route 24 and Route 138.

From: Richard Duffy

In addition to being extremely weepy at night, Nina wrote that she was extremely fatigued all day and "felt cross and mean."

It's almost time for Nina's next menstrual period, and we know how profoundly and frequently she suffers with side effects that would be classified as dysmenorrhea. Modern medicine might diagnose this day's intense fatigue, discomfort, and weepiness as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), or as premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD). In 1923, in the highly unlikely event that Nina would have sought medical help for her symptoms, it is equally unlikely that she would have been met with competent scientific knowledge and treatment. So Nina is left to simply describe and endure her symptoms, month after month, year after year.

December 17, 1923 #

by night.

Clear & windy.

Up 7:30. Looked & felt like the dickens but not so blue as yesterday. Light eats. Hilda rang & said she'd be over at 11. Went over town & mailed packages & did a few errands & saw Mabel a moment. Aunt Mame has a fierce cold. Aunt E. in town. Hilda over by 11:15 & drove me to Chestnut Hill, the dear, but had to rush back to Waltham by 12. Reached Framingham 12:30 & had lunch & to library. Busy with bulletin. Edith asked me if I'd like to take Monday [off?] & work Saturday PM. Oh my. Rang Hilda twice in evening about Christmas tree legends. Home 9:15 & little aunty was here, so feel ----- . Used Hilda's [heating?] pad but turned off electricity. Bed by 10:30 or so.

From Richard Duffy, response to a question about "Christmas Tree Legends"

Nina is a librarian, so she is likely putting together content for a display or bulletin item on the lore of Christmas trees, perhaps to accompany a suggested reading list, or simply due to seasonal

topicality and current events. December 1923 saw the first "National Christmas Tree" erected in Washington, DC, so there was a special level of interest among the American public. A giant blue spruce was presented as the gift of the president of Middlebury College in Vermont, the state where President Calvin Coolidge was born. The tree was discussed in the Boston newspapers in mid-December, and was illuminated with 3,000 red, white, and green electric bulbs, between Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

In modern times, Christmas trees typically are up and illuminated for much of the season of Advent, and sometimes they are erected right after Thanksgiving (often depending on when in November that holiday falls in a given year, and if the tree is real or artificial). In my father's youth, Santa Claus brought both the presents and the tree on Christmas Eve, timing which fits with the lighting of the first National Christmas Tree occurring on December 24.

Tuesday, December 18, 1923

Up 7:30 & just out of bed when a tap came & Mrs. Randall had coffee, toast, & a donut for me & it was so good. Edith in town early. Library 9-5:30 & a good day. Sue Jenings up in PM awhile. Left at 5:30 & Hilda dear met me at Chestnut Hill and we had a nice ride to Arlington [*] & a fine supper with the aunts. Talked in evening awhile & Hilda insisted on my going to bed & gave me a fine rubdown with alcohol before she went at ten. Read awhile & talked with aunts a bit. Felt in much better spirits than the last two days; slept well.

[*] Arlington was recently in the news for having appeared in a December 16 Boston Globe article titled "11 Bostons in United States: Postoffice Deplores Similarity in Place Names." The U.S. Post Office (styled as "Postoffice" in the article) released a list of 43 post office name designations occurring more than 20 times each. Arlington was the fourth-highest on this list with 29 localities (following Franklin, Clinton, and Chester; and just one place ahead of Washington). It was claimed that these multiple identical namings "often slows up the mail and causes confusion." Not mentioned in the article, but of pertinence to Arlington, Massachusetts, is the name-change of the town from West Cambridge to Arlington in 1867, which was expected to improve mail delivery by avoiding confusion with Cambridge. What hadn't been contemplated is that poor handwriting or careless reading would sometimes misdirect mail to Abington, Massachusetts.

Thursday, December 20, 1923

Pleasant; rained by night.

Up 7:30. Fine sun dog [*] at left of sun when we went out at 8 AM. Edith & I ate at Wellworth & I went on to the library. Fairly busy day. Lunched at Tea Room. Edith up in PM as she worked in evening. Supper at the Daylight -- very good. Mended, wrote here & read in evening. Didn't ring Hilda as she said she'd be out to supper. So sleepy. Tried to read in bed but had to put the light out by ten.

[*] Sun dog or sun-dog were typical spellings in 1923. In recent years, sundog (as a single word) has become an increasingly used variant of sun dog.

Monday, December 24, 1923
[Christmas Eve]

Woke to find it sleeting & snowing but not very cold.

Up 7:30. Aunt Mame's cold bad. Breakfast & some washing as usual. Expected Hilda by 9:30 but she rang & said it would be 10:15 & it was 10:45 when she & Dickie came. Back to Waltham with them. Had some music & a chicken dinner & then (finally) left about 2 for Canton -- some trips & got there at 3:40. Went in woods with white horse & cart & had a wonderful time chopping firewood, a fire, etc., & filled cart & back of car. Bertha asked us to supper & we had such a good time. Wonderful moon & colder. Stopped at the Hatfields' on the way home & reached Boston at 9; no hats, etc., but all to Beacon Hill, Louisburg Square. Lights wonderful & carol singing fine. Parked car. On to Waltham & had hot chocolate & crackers at 11:30 by open fire & then they drove me home & reached there at 12:40. Put presents in stockings & bed about 1:30.

Tuesday, December 25, 1923
Christmas

Clear early & cloudy & raw later on, but a nice day nevertheless.

Up by 7:10 & Aunt Mame & I ate & just done when Barbara came up for me, so back & tree -- so many nice things for everybody. Mabel & Barb back with me while we 3 [Nina, Aunt Mame, and Aunt Elizabeth] opened (stocking) presents. Good fun -- [gift tags] marked from cats, ash man, etc. Hilda rang & we had a nice chat. She goes to Mays at Canton & Dickie to the Drapers at Canton; I just envy them. Ella & Charles to see Aunt Mame, & Arthur Bacon in a for a moment. So busy & so sleepy & tired by dusk. To 146 again at one; fine turkey dinner, plum pudding, usual jokes, etc. Mabel & I to the cemetery later with her wreaths. Stopped at Mr. Sztobbe's a moment. He had a beautiful poinsettia for me & she a box of candy. Home for a 1/2-hour rest. Aunt Mame quite cross and I was glad to leave. B [rest of name undreadable] drove me to Frosts' (Edna) [in Belmont]. Crowd there: Annie, George, Herbert & Althea [the late Eleanor "La" Prentiss's parents, brother, and his fiancée]; & Winns, Guernsey [Frost], etc. Some were playing "mahjong," [*] good supper, in evening Mr. Frost gave a little talk on wheat, had the Christmas tree jokes, etc. Left early; walked over with Josie, Mary, Edith, and Amy [Winn]. Home 10:30 & glad to find Aunt Elizabeth there. She had had a fine day. Looked at her stocking, etc. Nice bath & bed about 11:30.

[*] Mahjong was a recent fad in the United States, the first mahjong set having been imported in 1920.

Wednesday, December 26, 1923

Writing by the lamp my Hilda gave me.

Up 7:30, eats & a bit of a wash & iron to do, fed kits, showed presents to Aunt E. & carried them to room. Aunt Mame quite grouchy & snappy. Hilda came about 10:20; she had been talking with Mr. Foster at George's [filling station] for 40 minutes. Showed presents, etc. & we left by 10:45 to Waltham & saw her gifts & talked a bit & then on to Framingham. Had dinner at hotel & to room where Hilda fixed light for me we saw Mrs. Randall's presents. [*] To library at 1:30 but she

wouldn't come in. Morning all too short. Not a very busy PM: put through a few books, Edith & I had supper at the Tea Room. Dull evening at desk. Trustees & legion met in evening, so Edith was busy. Home 9:15, wrote here & to bed about 11.

[*] We can see that it was apparently a custom of the era (at least among ladies) to view the Christmas gifts that each had received. This was an informal variation on a practice of the early 20th century to have a formal display of wedding gifts (but not accompanied by the names of the givers) at the home of a bride, to be seen by all visitors; otherwise as one of a string of wedding-related events, such as a tea party for the bride's close friends especially to view the presents. It was a way of sharing part of the wedding experience with an appropriate audience, but the practice fell out of general favor after World War II. In some places there also was a tradition for children to arrange the opened birthday gifts they received on top of their beds so that party guests or other visitors (back when there was a lot of in-person visiting at homes) could admire them. Following are just some of the more interesting or amusing (to our modern eyes) Christmas gifts that Nina gave and received in 1923. Nina received:

>From Hilda, a clamp electric lamp (which Nina would use at the room she rents at Mrs. Randall's, because there is no electricity at 37 Summer St.), and a blue denim table set.

>From Aunt Elizabeth, various items, plus Lavioris mouthwash

>From Aunt Sue, picture of Dallin's Indian in storm "The Hunter" (I suspect this refers to the Menotomy Indian Hunter statue), which in 1923 was just ten years old but which already enjoyed iconic status.

>From Stoney, a "duck bag," meaning one made of a cloth classified as a canvas, but lighter in weight, tighter in weave, and more waterproof than common notions of canvas material.

>From Aunt Altahah, coffee and canned grapefruit sections.

Nina gave:

To various female friends or relatives, almanacs with the illustrations of Kate Greenaway, a Victorian artist whose works were as popular as ever in her lifetime, perhaps even more so in the 1920s

To a few friends or relatives, dried and pressed fringed gentian flowers (collected by Nina herself) that were framed (perhaps at Foster Bros.)

To Aunt Sarah, canned goods (jointly with Aunt Mame -- total cost \$1.23)

To George and to the Prentisses, apple cutters. I would expect this to be a cast iron, tin-coated combination device common to us today in other materials, that is designed in a single action to core and slice into eight or twelve pieces an apple

To "my Hilda" went an Aladdin's Cave of merchandise: a Kate Greenaway almanac, soap, a facecloth, fine gloves (joint gift with Marjory), and a blue Liberty tie (meaning a tie with a miniature floral, paisley, or abstract print, which Liberty London began producing in the 1920s -- thus a luxurious and modern fashion accessory). Nina's total spend on Hilda was \$7.50, which was 25% higher than the \$6.00 Nina budgeted for each of her very closest relatives. The extravagance

would seem to represent both affection and gratitude, as we can see that Hilda seems to always be driving Nina places, and more importantly, taking Nina on day trips that fulfill Nina's passion for nature and the outdoors.

Saturday, December 29, 1923

Up 7:30. Library by 9 & later Hilda rang & wanted me to leave early, so went at 11:30 & met her at Chestnut Hill & hustled for Lynn Beach -- some driving. Tore best brown coat trying to get out when Hilda took off chain. [*] Met Mr. Forbush at Lynn Beach & had a great time looking at ducks in the bay & from Little Nahant: American barrow -- a golden-eyed, a red-breasted Merganser, etc. [**] Left him at Harvard Sq. & on to Waltham & had a few moments together before Dicky & Marjory came. Latter didn't stay & us three had a very cosy supper by the open fire. Dear Hilda had an attack of indigestion & Martha made her take a hot bath & go to bed & she drove me home & we got steak & cheese at Hutchinson's . Home by 9:15, hot bath & bed. Aunt Elizabeth & Harriet Kimball in Belmont but home by 10:30.

[*] I am guessing that this refers to a tire chain, which had sharp edges that could easily snag the bottom of a long cloth coat. It was recommended to remove tire chains promptly when they were no longer needed to grip on slippery road surfaces, even in the middle of a motor trip. Certain brands of chains were advertised to emphasize their ease of attachment and removal.

[**] Barrow's goldeneye: < <https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/bird-watching/waterfowl-identification/barrows-goldeneye.php>> Red-breasted Merganser: < <https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/bird-watching/waterfowl-identification/red-breasted-merganser.php>>

Monday, December 31, 1923 [*]

[New Year's Eve]

Stormy.

Up 7:30 & just eating breakfast when Hilda came to drive me to Chestnut Hill. Sleety rain & bad going. She had the Reo. Good drive & got 9:30 [trolley] car & took an hour. Fairly busy day but _so_ sleepy in PM. No [pay] checks. Left on the 5:30 & Hilda met me in coupe at Chestnut Hill -- my she looked good to me. To Waltham where Dicky had a wonderful supper & we ate by open fire on small table. Chicken, french fries, peas, onions, & salad. Talked by fire, looked at pictures & they asked me to stay all night. Up to bed at 10. Had a facial & bed at 11. Dicky stuck close, so no chance for goodnight chat. Slept fine. Storm rather bad & cold.

[*] And so another year comes to a close in the Nina Winn diaries. Let's look at some of the numbers in Arlington of 1923:

Tax rate: \$26.50 per thousand valuation

Dwelling houses: 3,708

Electric meters: 4,943

Population (est.): 22,000 (up from ~13,000 in 1915)

Births: 475. Deaths: 232

Number of horses: 187 (down from 438 in 1915)

Number of cows: 122 (up from 87 in 1915)

Daughters of the American Revolution: 13 (Menotomy Chapter founded in 1923)

Chain drug stores: 1 (Liggett's opened in February 1923 at 645 Massachusetts Ave.)

New hardware store: 1 (Wanamaker's, opened by Chester A. Wanamaker in July 1923)

State Poultry Championship: 1 (Richard Davis)

High School League Sports Championships: 1 (Girls' Field Hockey)

Number of houses on fire at one time: 6 (area of Medford, Hamlet, Franklin, and Parallel streets)