

MacDougall

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honors in 1913 (he still holds yearly reunions with his classmates) winning the Grennell prize offered by the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture

A Farm Boy

He decided that agriculture was to be his vocation (he was born on his grandfather's farm in Forge Village), just at the beginning of a new concept of education in farm life through what is now known as the Agricultural Extension Service. As a traveling instructor for the college, he helped lay the ground work for the establishment of County Agricultural Agent work in the state.

When he retired to his home at 42 Boston Road in 1955, his background included five years as Hampshire County Agent, 32 as Middlesex County Agent and presidency of the National Association of County Agents.

This is when he turned really seriously to his hobby as an amateur historian and collector of Colonial and early American artifacts, principally agricultural tools and equipment.

As director for five years, he revitalized the Hadley Farm Museum in the western part of the state. It is housed in a barn moved from the first farm outside the Indian stockade in that town. Allister MacDougall is also past president of the Garrison House in Chelmsford.

The nonagenarian spends little time around the house; watching television is not for him as he has too many outside interests. Always on the search for old documents, ancient records and articles for his private museum, nevertheless he has turned over to the town many important records of the past.

Colonial Unit

A loyal Westford Minuteman, he participated in every important event of theirs until a couple of years ago. At the age of 84, he trooped with the outfit to the North Bridge at Concord on April 19, 1975. He shouldered a musket weighing 14 lbs., one that Benjamin Osgood, a farm boy of 21, carried over the same route 250 years previously.

Mac's ancestry is mixed. His mother was Harriet Lee Hosmer, descendant of the English family which settled in Concord in pre-Revolutionary days. His father, Alexander, came from Cairndow in the Western Highlands of Scotland, much, much later. Caught in a small sailing vessel on the high seas during the Blizzard of 1888 for three months, he was given up for lost. When he turned up one day at the John W. Abbot estate where his sister, Jennie Feeney was a cook (and the best in town), all thought they had seen a ghost.

Married to his first prom date, the former Edna Comins of North Hadley, who will also be 90 on August 17, the couple have three living children. They are Louise Norris of Maine, Gordon of Virginia, and Stephen, who lives opposite the MacDougalls on Blake's Hill. Allister Jr. (Sandy) was a paratrooper surgeon in World War II and died from war complications.

When asked by his family how he would like to observe his 90th birthday, the noted senior citizen said, in all modest sincerity,

With my family.

This Sunday, the clan will gather at Stephen's summer home at Robert's Island, Essex, carrying with them the well-wishes of fellow townspeople for many more healthy, happy and busy days to come.