

FROM THE SCRAPBOOK

You Can Lead a Horse to Water..., Moulton Libbey, Brockway, 1904

by Dr. William Randall

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You've heard the expression, "you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink." Moulton Libbey knows that. In fact he knew that in 1904 when he regained consciousness after being kicked in the head by a horse he was taking to water. Of course he wasn't exactly leading the horse to water in the normal fashion. As he told the story to me on July 27, 1993 he described his unusual way of taking the horse from the barn to the river - he took the horse by the tail. Seems to me it would be a similar action to sculling a boat. Unfortunately, that day, a dog dashed out and jumped at the horse. The horse kicked violently and got young Moulton squarely in the forehead. Theodore Vail got on his bicycle and rode thirty kilometers to Harvey to get Dr. Keith. Dr. Keith came to Brockway, examined the child, and advised immediate surgery in Fredericton. Moulton's Mother, Annie Laurie, hitched up the horse and buggy and drove her little boy to Fredericton. Six weeks later Moulton was discharged from the Fredericton Hospital, but it was clear that the young man would be unable to begin school that fall and would need special care.

Some months later the scar area appeared inflamed and began to suppurate. After a time that would heal but regularly the condition would recur. The following year Joseph E. (Teddy) Jenckes of Providence, Rhode Island, returned to his Brockway summer cottage called Tamerac Lodge. Mr. Jenckes was a wealthy man and included in his summer entourage was his own family physician. (He also brought the first automobile ever seen in Brockway). Upon seeing the young Libbey boy's pitiful condition, he urged the family to bring him to his own physician. Without the modern day anesthesia, the doctor reopened the wound and with a delicate probe discovered a moveable irritant. He prescribed a poultice for the mother to prepare and place over the wound. Soon a sliver of bone emerged about the size of an adult's fingernail, after which the wound healed permanently but left, 88 years later, a visible concave scar.

Having pursued with outstanding achievements a career in the military it seems as though the near fatal horse kick had little effect upon the brain of Major Moulton Libbey. Moulton Libbey was the son of Annie Laurie Vail and Aaron, son of Aaron Libbey. Annie Laurie Vail was born in 1862, the daughter of Solomon Vail and his second wife Aseneth Nutter of Fredericton. Solomon Vail had been born in Kingsclear, York Co., 1810, the son of Thomas Vail and Hannah Russell. Thomas Vail was born in 1786 at Kingsclear, the son of Jonathan Vail and Lydia ? Jonathan was classified as a Loyalist, the son of Joseph Vail, 1717 and Grace Manning. Joseph was the son of John Vail born 1685 and Martha Fitz Randolph, born 1693. John Vail was a Quaker preacher, the son of Samuel Vail and Elizabeth Hunt. Samuel was the son of Thomas and Sarah Vail who came to Salem, Mass. in 1640.

So, when the Vail's had a family reunion in Brockway on August 15, it is not much wonder that over 200 names were on the guest book.