

Reminiscence

# On the Road in 1949

By Walter Walker  
For the Beacon

August 31 (continued from last month): Entered Oceanside, California at 12:15 PM, where I wrote some letters, etc. Around 3:30 PM we met John Graves. We then ate our evening meal and played miniature golf for a long time. We took John Graves back to his base and hit the sack around 1 AM, just a few feet from the ocean.

Thursday, September 1, found us up around 9 AM, covered with ants again. We took a dip in the ocean and killed time until about 1 PM when we had lunch. We then went into Oceanside looking for work, but had no luck.

We then picked up Corporal Graves. Ate and played golf until we got sick of that, then went to an amusement park and later to a show. After the movie we sat around talking until around 3 AM, went to bed around 4 AM, in the ants again!

September 2 found us up and on the road by 9:30 AM, driving until we got to Riverside, where we went to the employment office. We got a job hoeing cabbages, and after hunting for a long time we finally found the place and learned we would be working under a Japanese woman. Remember, this is 1949 and not too distant from December 7th and Pearl Harbor, so "Grand Canyon, here we come," says my diary.

We stopped at 10:30 PM for gas, and it was an even 100 degrees! The Olds was boiling most of the time, but we managed to cross into Arizona at 11 PM, where it was a bit cooler.

On Saturday, September 3, we drove until daylight, which was around 4 AM. We pulled off the road about 50 miles from Grand Canyon and slept until about 10 AM. We

then drove to the canyon, where we had lunch and admired that beautiful natural "trench."

Our car quit on us as we were about to leave, but we got it go-



"This is the view we had [of the Grand Canyon] while we ate lunch one hot day in September 1949." Photo: Walter Walker

ing again and headed for Winslow, where we found rain. I wrote some letters; we ate and hit the road again. Crossed into New Mexico at 10 AM.

Sunday, September 4, found us driving until about 3:15 AM. We found a place to sleep a little way outside Albuquerque and slept until about 10:30 AM. We next stopped at Tucumcari for gas, got cleaned up, and bought something to eat.

We crossed into Texas at 3:30 PM. "Hadn't any more than crossed the line when we came up behind a car with an old couple in it. The way they were acting, you would think they were teenagers! That's Texas for you," says my diary.

I'm not sure if it was those two old-timers or us, but for some reason we had a tire blowout about 6 PM. We fixed it and drove until a little before 10 PM, when we stopped, and after listening to the radio for a little while, we went to sleep at 10:55 PM.

In the next installment, you will meet some of the nicest folks we came across during our trip.

## Sanborn Hall: An Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Hospital In Franklin

By Betsy Woodman  
For the Beacon

My grandfather, James B. Woodman, Sr., practiced medicine and surgery in Franklin for 55 years. He died in 1958, but there are still plenty of people in the area who remember him.

A number of years back, I went through some of his papers, and found a brochure advertising Sanborn Hall, the private hospital that he ran in Franklin from 1905 to 1913 with his partner, Dr. John Staples. Curious to learn more about this window into my family's history and into early 20th century medical care, I did some research in the *Franklin Journal-Transcript*, many decades of which are on microfilm in the Franklin Public Library. It was like stepping into a time machine.

The newspaper gave a very detailed, gossipy picture of life in the town, and especially of the kind of things that kept a doctor busy. The reporters took some relish in describing gruesome mill and farm accidents, and there were frequent references to smallpox, malaria, and typhoid.

At first, young Dr. Woodman slept in quarters right off the office, and the newspaper gleefully announced that he would be "within call at all hours of the night."

I wrote up this research as *Sanborn Hall: An Early Twentieth-Century Proprietary Hospital in Franklin*, which appeared

in *Historical New Hampshire*, Summer 2010. The article focuses on how Franklin came to have its first hospital, one of the few in New Hampshire at the time.

At its peak, the facility had nine beds. It charged \$15 to \$25 for a week's stay, including "the best of everything in the way of food." The delivery of a baby, however, cost an additional \$10. The doctors were proud to have an operating room with a "three-burner electric light" and "facilities for attaching an electric sterilizer," and the brochure boasted of the "abundant pure water from a spring," the central heating, and the fine views of the hills and river valley.

For those interested in further details, I will be presenting an illustrated talk about Sanborn Hall at the 2011 annual meeting of the Franklin Historical Society, on Thursday, May 5, at 7 PM in the "Webster Mansion" at Webster Place, just off South Main Street (Route 3) in Franklin. From the intersection of Routes 11 and 3 in Franklin, go south about 2.6 miles and turn left, directly opposite Webster Farm. Mapquest can find the building at 21 Holy Cross Road, for which there is no sign, but your GPS probably will not. Park in designated spaces or on the right side of the road.

Visit [FranklinNHHistoricalSociety.org](http://FranklinNHHistoricalSociety.org) or call Leigh Webb at 934-8222 for more information.

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