

## *Sunday River Remembered*

Excerpts from

# Sunday River Sketches



**Martha Fifield  
Wilkins**

## Luke Reily-Riley

### LUKE REILY FAMILY

On the gravestone in the Sunday River graveyard, Newry, Maine, is the statement of the time Luke Reily came from Ireland, which was the year 1789. Riley Plantation was named for him, so I was told by my grandmother, Mrs. Alonzo Fifield, who could remember him.

It was told that Luke Reily, a native of Newry, Ireland, was being educated in that country for the priesthood, but fell in love with a sweet Irish colleen named Anne (\_\_\_\_). In order to marry her, they ran away from home, came to America and settled here where there were others from Newry, Ireland.

The Reilys lived first, as far as we can determine, in what is now Riley Plantation well up toward the headwaters of Bull Branch, in a locality called "Bumfaggin" where cellar holes can still be found. Later they moved down on Sunday River to what has since been called the Loren Trask place and in 1929 was occupied by Robert Bean.

Luke Reily's son Edward lived here, also a grand-daughter Sarah Riley Wilson (Mrs. Frank Wilson). Another grand-daughter, Martha Riley m. George Atherton and lived on a near-by farm.

Luke Reily spelled his name on deeds, *Reily*, and it so appears on his gravestone, but his son adopted the spelling *Riley*. The tradition lingers that Luke was much better educated than the other settlers of this region, and his manners were very polished and gentlemanly. One would infer from his gravestone which bears a Latin inscription, that he understood and perhaps was versed in Latin. He is also here given the title Esquire.

Anne Reily d. in 1836 only eight years before Luke's demise, but it is said he married a second time and had at least one child by his second wife. I have been unable to find any record of the marriage; however, there is reason to believe he did marry and have a

daughter. Some years ago several strangers called upon Mrs. Herbert Kendall asking for Riley information, stating that the daughter of Luke Reily by his second wife, married a man by the name of Hill and their descendants lived in Hudson, N. H. These persons were some of the descendants, but their names are not now remembered.

In Lapham's *History of Bethel Maine*, under the Russell genealogy, it is stated that Persis Russell, daughter of John [5] and Susanna (Twitchell) Russell, m. (1st), Jeremiah Virgin and (2nd) Luke Reily.

Old residents of Newry say they had a daughter Victoria who m. a Rev. Mr. Hill, an Advent preacher. They had two sons, one a minister whose children live in either Milford or Wilton, N. H. It is thought Luke and Persis had a second daughter, but this has not been verified in any way.

The gravestones of Luke and Anne Reily are two slate slabs, closely placed. The inscriptions are as follows: Luke Reily, Esq., died Dec. 1, 1844, aged 74 years. He removed from Ireland in 1789.—Hic Jacent honor virtus prudentia.—Translation: "Here lie buried honor, virtue, wisdom/" In memory of Anne, wife of Luke Reily, who died July 29, 1836.



**The Riley-Trask-Bean house, better known as the Loren Trask place, and now owned by Robert M. Bean. Probably built by Edward Riley. Photo 1946, by Mrs. Julia Fleet.**

LUKE REILY, d. Dec. 1, 1844, ae. 74, which would indicate his birth as being 1770, in Ireland. He removed from Ireland, according to his gravestone in the Sunday River

Cemetery, in 1787 when apparently he was an adventurous young man of seventeen years. In all his official papers and on his grave-stone, his name was spelled *Reily*. Anne, his wife, d. July 29, 1836. *Children:*

1. Edward, b. 1806 (per death record), d. July 26, 1880, ae. 74; m. probably about 1827, Martha Coburn, b. 1800 ? d. Feb. 17, 1877, ae. 77, dau. of Moses and Esther Coburn, and a sister of Dorcas (Coburn) Marshall (Mrs. James Marshall), grandmother to Avis (Foster) Smith of Methuen, Mass. Mrs Edward Riley's will was proven July 3, 1878 and James F. Wilson of Newry was made administrator. *Children:*

1. Martha, m. George Atherton; res. Newry, Maine.
2. Esther, m. Oct. 7, 1858, John Spaulding; res. Pelham, N.H.
3. Frances J., m. George B. Thomas. She d. Sept. 17, 1857, ae. 18 at Burlington, Iowa.
4. Sarah Helen, m. James Franklin Wilson of Hudson, N.H. and had son Adelbert Wilson.

5. Ellen H. (also called Helen), d. Jan. 10, 1863, ae. 19 yrs.; unm.

6. Infant, d. Sept. 8, 1831.

2. Thomas Jefferson, lived in Mobile, Alabama; m. Nancy (\_\_\_\_)?

3. Hugh, m. \_\_\_\_; *ch.*: James, Bert, and Fred, who were all in the roofing business in Boston.

4. Probably others whose names are now unknown; said to have been a large family.

Luke Reily m. (2nd) Persis (Russell) Virgin, b. May 13, 1799, dau. of John [5] and Susanna (Twitchell) Russell, and widow of Jeremiah Virgin. They had at least one dau. named Victoria who m. a Rev. Mr. Hill, an Advent preacher, and are said to have had two sons, one a minister whose children lived at one time in either Milford or Wilton, N.H.

#### LUKE REILY

"Luke Reily was said to be a younger son of an Irish nobleman who had been well educated and had traveled, but according to custom was left no money. I know nothing about his children except Edward who m. my grand-mother Marshall's sister, Martha Coburn. Her father was Moses Coburn. He is bur. in the Sunday River Cemetery.

"My mother, Lydia Ellen Marshall, went from Tyngsboro, Mass, to her aunt Martha Riley's to live while she taught school, and that is how she met my father, Stephen B. Fos-

ter, who was also teaching. I have heard him say that "Uncle Riley" as they called him, was the most perfect gentleman he ever knew."

—From a letter by Avis (Foster) [9] Smith of Methuen, Mass.

REILY LETTER

To "Luke Riley, P. M. South Newry, Oxford County, Maine/' postmarked Mobile, Ala. Nov. 17 (1844), written by Thomas Jefferson Riley, of \_\_\_ No. 90, North St., Mobile, Alabama, to his father Luke Reily.

The letter now (1935) is in the possession of Adelbert Wilson, Cambridge, Mass.:

Dear Father,

I have the pleasure of saying that the Doctrines of old Thomas Jefferson have binn re-deemed by the Democracy of my country. The first news we rec'd from New York the Whigs were very sanguine of carrying the State and we were just as sanguine as they were they offered to Bet freely and we taken up By oure people there was fifty thousand Dollars Bet on the State of New York all of which was one by oure people I won \$200 on the State I was the first man that Bet even on the election I have won every Bet I made Mobile has been a Whig ever since I have known anything about it untill this year we have whiped them this year and got thare money we had a large meting last evening to rejoice over the victory we have achieved. I have Binn expecting a leter from you for sometime I am well and hope these few lines will find you and all my friends enjoying the same Blessing of Almighty God. I rec'd a letter from the Geoules a few days since they were well, also one from Frank he is well.

From your son, Thomas Jeffr Riley Slorter (?) No. 90 North St. Mobile, Ala.

DEEDS

John B. Murray to Luke Reily, Esq.

John B. Murray of the City of New York, Merchant, for \$150. sold to Luke Reily, Esq. of Newry, County of Oxford and State of Maine, "all of a certain parcel of land, laying and being in the said town of Newry, and described in a plan theirof, made by John Stockbridge, Surveyor, as number five (No. 5) in the first Range of Lots between Bare and

Sunday Rivers, and containing (obliterated) hundred thirty acres, be the same more or less."

Signed by John B. Murray, Sept. 2, 1826.

Deed recorded Sept. 26, 1826, Oxford County Book 27, p. 384, # 2385.

Luke Reily to Edward Reily.

Luke Reily, yeoman, sold to Edward Reily, for \$1000. "one half of my farm in said Newry, equal in quantity and quality of the half I retain in my own hands and possessions."

Signed by Luke Reily, Dec. 9, 1829, in the presence of Ann Reily and Helen Reily. Recorded, Oxford County Book 35, p. 186, Jan. 15, 1831.

Edward and Martha Reily to Luke Reily.

Edward and Martha Reily of Newry, conveyed to Luke Reily for \$300, "all our right, title and claim to the Farm we now live on and that this Voluntary Deed abolishes the Deed given by the said Luke Reily to his son Edward and also destroys all the written contracts given by the parties to each other before the date of Pr\_\_\_\_ses."(torn)

Signed by Thomas Reily and Martha Reily; Melvin Stow, Justice of the Peace.

Recorded in Oxford County, Jan. 4, 1836, Book 46, pp. 410, 411.

Thomas J. Reily to Edward Reily.

Thomas J. Reily of Newry, conveyed to Edward Reily of the Plantation of Reily, yeoman, for \$750. "the west half of the farm on which Luke Reily now lives and deeded to me by him, also one half of the piece adjoining said farm, deeded to Luke Reily by Luther Eames and by Luke Reily to me, containing about twenty acres, said farm and piece to be divided in quantity and quality. But no reprieve (?) shall be had in the division of said farm to any repairs that the said Edward may make in buildings on the said west half; also one un-divided half in quantity and quality of Lot. No. 5 in the first range of lots between Bare River and Sunday River with the exception of that part of said lot owned by Luther Eames, and I do covenant and agree that the said Edward and his heirs shall have the use and income of the whole farm undivided as above described, during my father's natural life, that is the life of Luke Reily with the exception of the house in which the said Luke Reily now lives and the privilege of the barn near the house."

Signed March 8, 1840.

Oxford Record Book 67, p. 50. March 10, 1843.

Luther Eames to Luke Reily.

Luther Eames of Newry, yeoman, conveyed to Luke Reily of Newry, yeo-man, for fifty doillars, "a certain tract of land situate in said Newry adjoining said Reily's farm westerly beginning at the south west corner of said Reily's farm and turning a westwardly course about thirty or fourty rods to a small yellow birch tree growing in a brook at the south-westerly corner of said tract aforementioned, thence a north westerly course along the standing trees to a stake and stones on or about the northerly line of the said Eames lot thence along said line in easterly course to said Reily's line thence a southerly course on said line to the place of beginning, containing about 20 acres be the same more or less."

Signed by Luther Eames, Dec. 16., 1826, in the presence of Edward Reily and Ann Reily.

Oxford Records, Book 29, pp. 200-201.

Thomas J. Reily to Edward Reily.

Thomas J. Reily of Mobile, County of Mobile and State of Alabama, con-veyed to Edward Reily of Newry, for \$500. "the following described parcel of land situated in said Newry being the same formerly owned and occupied by Luke Reily, and since by the said Edward Reily and known as the Reily farm."

Signed by Thomas J. Reily, March 27, 1873, in presence of Charles R. Locke and B. A. Frye.

Oxford Deeds, Book 168, p. 159.

Power of Attorney.

Thomas Jefferson Reily of Newry granted to Eben Eames of Bethel, power of attorney to collect certain notes of Reuben T. Sargent and James Sargent, given by them in favor of Edward Reily of Newry.

Signed by "Thomas Jeffr Reily," March 29, 1843, in presence of Nancy Reily and Luke Reily.

James Blood to Edward Reily.

James Blood of Newburyport, in the County of Essex, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Trader, for \$325. paid by Edward Riley of Newry, yeoman, "the lot of land num-

bered two in the fifth, and southwardly half of the Lot numbered two in the fourth range of Lots situated in an unincorporated place called Letter A, numbered one in said County of Oxford, alias Ketcham alias Riley."

Signed by James Blood, Sept. 13, 1833 in the presence of Wm. Frye, Justice of the Peace.

Oxford Deeds, Book 61, p. 164.

### REILY - SPAULDING

ESTHER COBURN RILEY, dau. of Edward of Newry, Me. and Martha (Coburn) Riley, m. Oct. 7, 1858, John Lot [6] Spaulding (John [5], Lot [4], John [3], Andrew [2], Edward [1] Spaulding) b. Dec. 16, 1833, d. \_\_; res. Pelham, N.H. *Children:*

1. John Edward Spaulding, b. May 11, 1860.

2. Charles Henry Spaulding, b. Feb. 24, 1865.

I. Edward Spaulding, d. 1670; m. Rachel (\_\_\_\_).

II. Andrew Spaulding, b. Nov. 19, 1652, d. 1713. 8th child of Edward and Rachel; m. Hannah Jefts of Billerica, Mass, who d. Jan. 21, 1730.

III. John Spaulding, b. 1682, d. 1760; m. (1st) Mary Barrett, 1705, (2nd) Lydia(\_\_\_\_), d. 1760.

IV. Lot Spaulding, b. Chelmsford, Mass., 1737, d. Pelham, N.H., 1822; m. Esther Butterfield of Chelmsford; res. Pelham, b. 1764, d. 1842.

V. John Spaulding, b. Aug. 3, 1788, d. Mar. 24, 1851; res. Pelham, N.H.; m. Sarah Perham of Tyngsboro, Mass., Nov. 20, 1836.

—From *Spaulding Memorial*, p. 226, #4062.

### RILEY - WILSON LINE

I. Luke Reily, b. 1770, Ireland, m. (1st) Anne (\_\_\_\_), d. July 29, 1836; (2nd) Persis (Russell) Virgin, dau. of John [5] and Susanna (Twitch-ell) Russell, and widow of Jeremiah Virgin, b. May 13, 1799.

*Children:*



1. Edward, b. 1806 (per death record), d. July 26, 1880, ae. 74; m. probably about 1827, Martha Coburn (1800-1877) dau. of Moses & Esther Coburn. Six children.

2. Thomas Jefferson, lived in Mobile, Alabama; m. Nancy (\_\_\_\_)?

3. Hugh, m.\_\_\_\_; *ch.*: James, Bert and Fred who were in the roofing business.

4. Probably others.

Luke Reily, according to his gravestone, left Ireland in 1787 and as far as is known, came directly to Riley Plantation, or Ketchum, Maine. *Children*, by his 2nd wife, Persis:

5. Victoria, who m. a Rev. Mr. (\_\_\_\_) Hill, an Advent preacher. Two sons.

6. Another dau.?

II. Edward Reily, b. 1806, m. Martha Coburn (she d. 1878?): lived on the

Trask-Bean place, Sunday River, Newry. *Children*:

1. Martha, m. George Atherton, Newry, Me.

2. Esther, m. Oct. 7, 1858, John Spaulding; res. Pelham, N.H.

3. Frances J., m. George B. Thompson. She d. at Burlington, Iowa, Sept. 17, 1857, ae. 18.

4. Sarah Helen, m. James Franklin Wilson of Hudson, N.H. and had son Adelbert.

5. Ellen H. (also called Helen), d. Jan. 10, 1863, ae. 19 yrs.

6. Infant, d. Sept. 8, 1831.

III. Sarah Reily, b. Aug. 1, 1840, d. (living in 1905); m. about 1860, to James Frank Wilson, and lived on the Riley-Trask-Bean place in Newry, Maine. *Children*:

1. Frank Adelbert, b. Hudson, N.H., Dec. 3, 1871, d. Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 1946; m. Hudson, N.H., June 21, 1903, Nettie O. Colby, dau. of Luke B. Colby of Nashua, N.H. *Children*:

1. Adelbert Colby, b. Nashua, N.H., July 11, 1905; m. Nov. 1933, Polly Finley of Wakefield, Mass.

2. Arthur Frank, b. Nashua, July 4, 1906; m. Ruth Paddock of Melrose, Mass.

3. Kenneth Oliver, b. Hudson, N.H., June 25, 1913. 2. Arthur, b.\_\_\_\_; m. Lizzie (\_\_\_\_) and lived at one time in Nashua, but in 1935 was a resident of Worcester, Mass. *Children*:

1. Helen, b. 1909, teacher in Groton, Mass. High School.

2. Elizabeth.



3. Byron.

There is a tintype picture of Sarah (Riley) Wilson. James F. Wilson of Newry, Maine was made administrator of the will of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Edward Riley (Martha Coburn), July 3, 1878. They lived on the Trask place.



**Adelbert Wilson, Anson Kendall and Joseph Spinney at the Herbert Kendall house, Newry, Maine. Mr. Wilson is a descendant of Luke Riley for whom Riley Plantation was named. Photo, by M. F. W.**

The Thomas Jefferson Sargent farm in "Riley" was conveyed to Elhanon B. and Edmund Foster, who conveyed it to Flora C. Foster, who in 1877 conveyed it to J. Frank Wilson. (This is thought to be the Sargent—Emery—Demeritt place in Ketchum).

**"MAN, 73, KILLED BY STREET CAR—CAMBRIDGE VICTIM HAS SKULL FRACTURED"**

"While crossing Mt. Auburn St., near Coolidge Ave., Cambridge, last night, Frank A. Wilson, 73, of 7 Cragie St., Cambridge, former caretaker of the Walter Fernald School in Belmont, was struck and killed by a street car. He was pronounced dead at Cambridge City Hospital of a fractured skull.

"The street car that struck him, police said, was operated by Alexander Campbell of 25 Partridge Ave., Somerville. He leaves two sons, Adelbert of Cambridge and Arthur Wilson of Melrose."

—From a clipping, Jan. 1946.

This chapter about the Reily-Riley families was copied from Sunday River Sketches, A new England Chronicle by Martha Fifield Wilkins. It was edited and introduced by Randy L. Bennett. Androscoggin Publications 1977

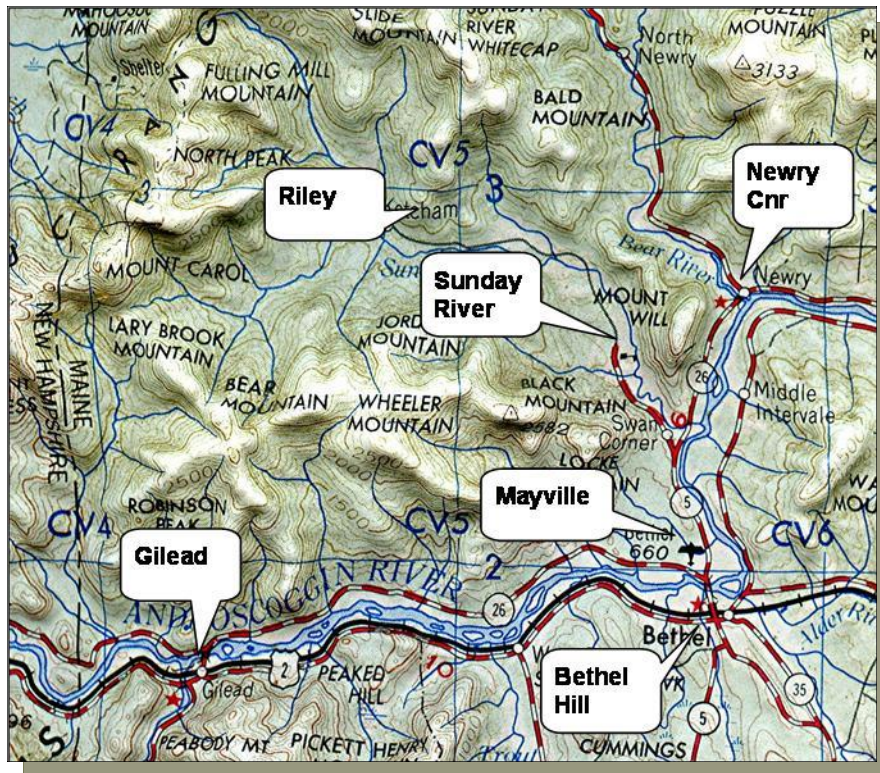


**LUKE REILY, Esq.**  
Died Dec. 1, 1844  
Aged 74 years He  
removed from Ire-  
land in 1789

**Right:**  
**EDWARD RILEY**  
Died July 26, 1880  
AE 74 Years 9 Mos.  
**MARTHA** His Wife  
Died Feb. 17, 1877  
AE 77 yrs. 6 m. s.



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