

THE HELFAND FARM

TWO CENTURIES OF HARD WORKING FAMILIES



THE POTTERS



The Potter family was descended from English ancestors who had originally settled in Rhode Island. Joshua and Deborah's six sons worked on the farm in their youth, but Alden, Lemuel, and James were drawn to the sea and went a-whaling.

The building that later became the Helfand farmhouse was probably completed in 1838, to accommodate the Potters' growing family. The house was probably built with lumber from the nearby Barkers' mill. It was fashionably appointed for its period, providing space for socializing while serving the family's essential needs. Additional houses for Potter relatives and descendants followed nearby on Chase Road and other places in Dartmouth.



Many Potters pursued a variety of other commercial and academic interests, and some relocated to other areas and to the Midwest. A later descendant, Holder White Potter, conveyed the farm to Sam, William, and Harry Helfand in 1912.

THE FARM ON CHASE ROAD

FOR OVER 200 YEARS, THE FARM AT 318 CHASE ROAD WAS HOME TO GENERATIONS OF FARMERS, MILLERS, BUILDERS, WHALERS, AND DAIRYMEN.

Originally the property of Jebez Barker, who settled here in the early 18th Century, the farm was developed by the Barker and Potter families during the 19th Century and purchased in 1912 by the Helfand family, who lived here through the 20th Century. In 1996 five Helfand siblings—Ida, Dorothy, Esther, Helen and Samuel—generously decided to place the farm in a trust for DNRT to insure that its fertile fields would remain forever in agriculture. DNRT received title to the farm in 2013 when the last of the five siblings passed away, and in 2015 decided to move its headquarters to this property, while keeping most of the acreage in agriculture.

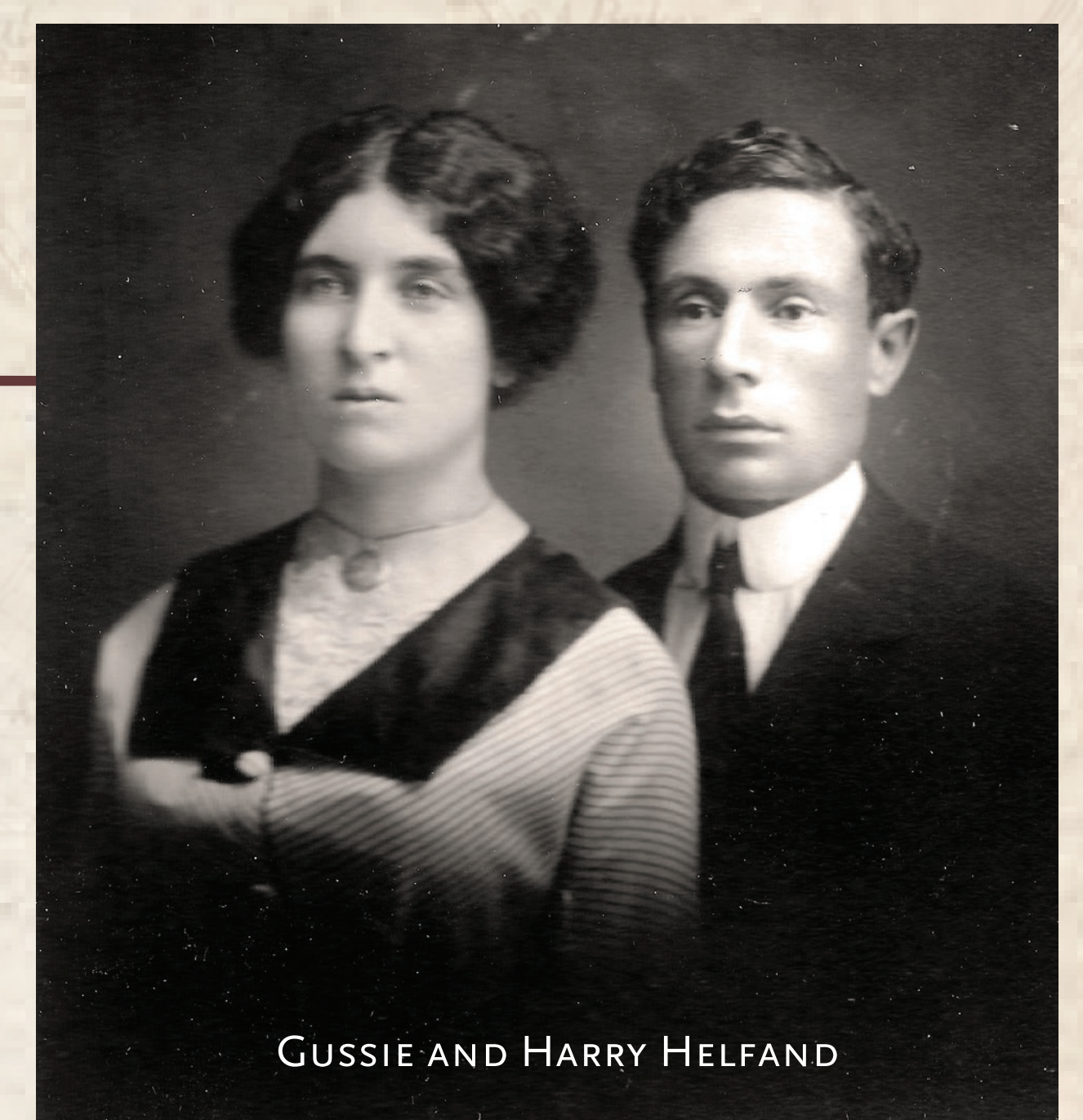
Through the Great Depression, the 1938 hurricane, and two wars, the Helfand family flourished, and its story of this family of faith, hard work, patriotism, and spirit lives on in this rehabilitated Helfand farmhouse.

THE BARKERS

An earlier farmhouse, south of the present structure, was probably built for the family of Lemuel Milk Barker and occupied by the Barker families in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. In 1836, Lemuel's widow, Maria Barker, her son Lemuel Jr., and his wife Ruth, conveyed the property to Joshua Potter (Maria's nephew) and his wife Deborah, reserving accommodations for widow Maria Barker for the rest of her life.

THE HELFANDS

The Helfand Family had lived in Minsk, Russia, in today's Belarus. The concentration of Jews there made them easy targets for pogroms, and devastating attacks in 1881-83 and 1903-06. These attacks targeted hundreds of communities, killed thousands of Jews, and caused considerable property damage. It was under these conditions that led Samuel Helfand and his sons William and Harry decided to immigrate to the United States. Harry, a hat maker, at 17, escaped conscription into the Russian Army and was the first to arrive. William, his older brother, followed, and both brothers settled in Fall River with relatives, and found work in the scrap metal business.



GUSSIE AND HARRY HELFAND

After their father Sam arrived, the three Helfands bought a farm on High Hill Road in Dartmouth in 1910. William and Harry married sisters Anna and Gussie Rosovsky, and children followed rapidly. Together with Sam, they decided to move their burgeoning families to the farm on Chase Road in 1912. They purchased the farm from Holder White Potter, bought a herd of dairy cows, and began to farm the rich land. William, a builder, added a second house in the 1920's, just southeast.



ESTHER AND HELEN HELFAND, DAUGHTERS OF WILLIAM AND ANNIE

The families prospered and grew, cultivating the farm and caring for their herd. Twenty children were born to the two brothers and their wives. The children milked Holstein cows, mowed hay and cornfields, and harvested vegetables and fruit. They also gathered stones in wagons and sold them for 25 cents a ton, to be crushed for paving Dartmouth's roads. All the Helfand children and grandchildren took advantage of Dartmouth's good school system and were honored as successful scholars. They were also very patriotic, with eight of the Helfand children serving in WWII, one receiving a Purple Heart, and another, giving his life on a battlefield in France.

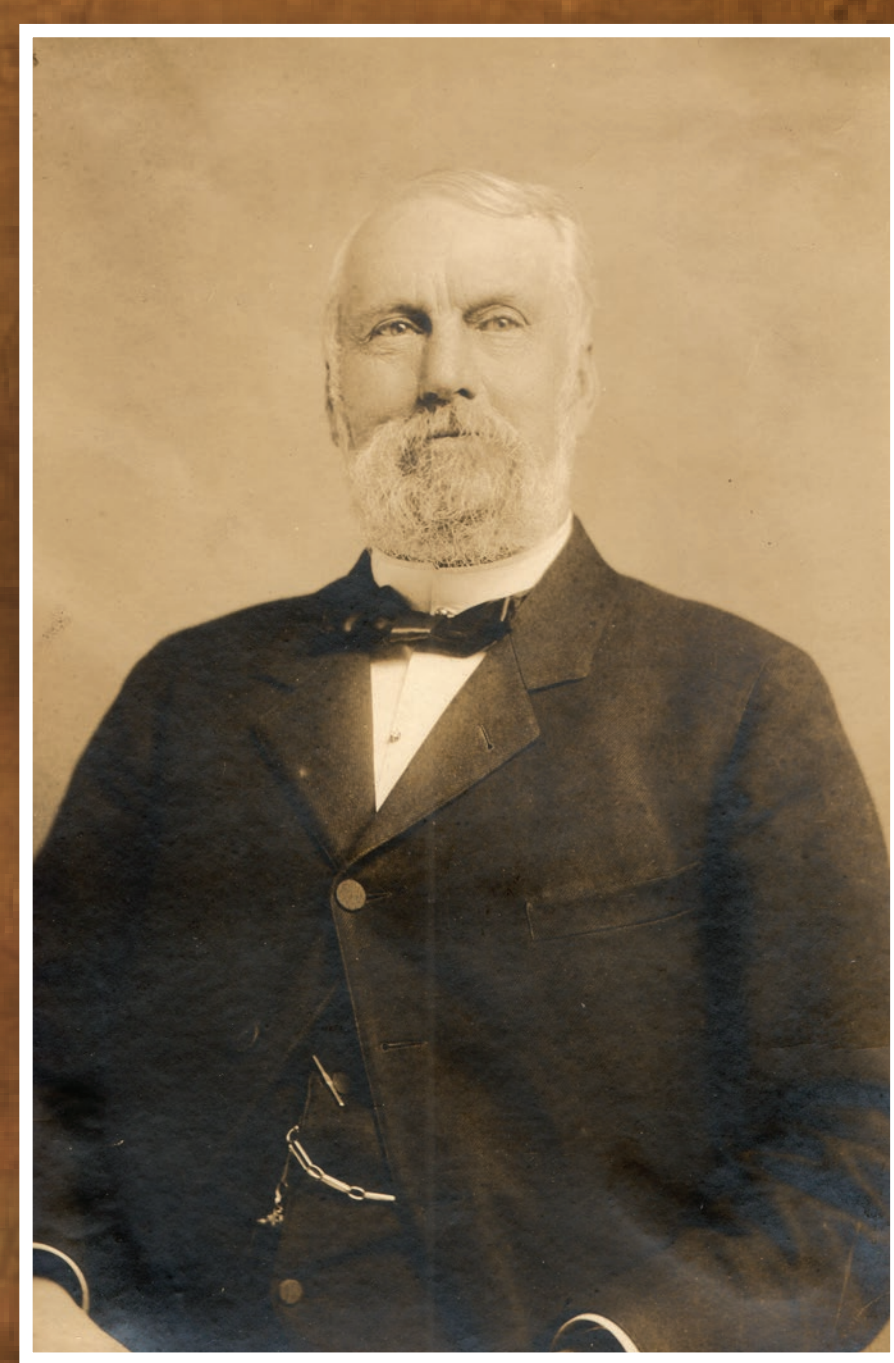


IDA HELFAND

During the later 20th Century, many Helfands relocated to other towns and became successful in manufacturing, medicine, education, law, building, public service, and other pursuits. Eventually the farm passed to William and Anna's children—Ida, Dorothy, Esther, Helen and Samuel—who wished to live out their lives on the farm with the knowledge that it would never be developed. They placed the farm in a trust that ensured that it would come to DNRT upon their deaths.

ALDEN TILLINGHAST POTTER

Alden Tillinghast Potter, born in 1832, was master of the whaling bark *Brunswick*, which was struck by ice in the Bering Sea in 1865. After the *Brunswick* was evacuated. It, it was spitefully scuttled and burned, along with eight other ships, by the *Shenandoah*, by Confederate sailors on a steam-powered cruiser, months after the Civil War had ended. Alden, his crew, and those of other ships were delivered safely to San Francisco. Alden Potter continued whaling in the Pacific until at least 1875 and later returned to Dartmouth a wealthy and civic-minded man.



THE HELFAND DAIRY

Tom Helfand, Harry's oldest son, ran the Helfand Dairy, and established a pasteurizing facility on Russells' Mills Road in the 1940's. With milk from the Helfand cows and other farms, the dairy delivered milk and other dairy products to families all over the South Coast and Cape Cod. When milk was sold later in larger containers at food stores, home delivery became less practical, and many dairies consolidated or were discontinued. Many silos remain, reminding us of the productive dairy business of the region.



SAM HELFAND



14 HELFAND CHILDREN



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