



**Arundel/Reid Collection  
(Collection #121)  
2015.005.001-004**

The Brick Store Museum  
Kennebunk, Maine

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Physical Description:

This collection of archival materials (bills, correspondence) collected by Wallace E Reid, resident manager/owner of The Arundel hotel in Kennebunkport with wife Virginia Reid. 1949-1950, 1953, 1956

This collection was donated by Gerard Morin of Old Orchard Beach. Believed to be found at book sellers.

The archival collection is housed in four (4) boxes.

History/ Background:

The Arundel land was originally owned by the Seashore Company, the river land was purchased by two maiden ladies from Boston in the late 1880s. The Misses Alice and Ida Paine engaged a noted Boston architect Harry Paston Clark to design a guest house. The architect also designed St. Ann's Episcopal Church. In 1908, a New York attorney, Charles Clinton Marshall, bought the building. Mr. Reid's great aunt Miss Elizabeth Shannon, purchased it from Marshall in 1913. Five years later she also bought the Riverside. In 1956, Reid, purchased the Sommerlyst to the complex, purchasing the old hotel from the Ellen Littlefield estate. Later, he also bought The Green Heron across the street.

“The Arundel has been in my family since 1913 and under my management since 1945. The success and pleasure of operating the inns has only been the reflection of the thousands of fine people who have passed through our doors and saying goodbye to you is often like parting with a close member of the family. We realize, too, that we are parting with a way of life not easily duplicated in these times...”

Wallace Reid- sold The Arundel in 1972.

From Portland Press Article 1972 (see attached)

He remembered the days when personal contact and individual attention to the guests was the manner of operation. Small services, such as chilling the wine or organization of activities, went along with a room. But not today, in his view.

Reid mentioned that he had been offered a change to change his operation. Officials of the Holiday Inn made him an attractive offer if they could add the Arundel to their domain.

*Arundel/ Reid Collection - Collection #120*

“I wouldn’t do it. The chain motels offer planned mediocrity, with the same furniture, wallpaper and television sets in every room. Their furnishings are status symbols- merely eyewash...”

Box and Folder Breakdown:

Box 1: A collection of invoices and paid bills dated to 1953. Organized by month- mostly summer months

Includes C.H. Cole and Sons Insurance – Real Estate-Bonds, Reny Bros. Printers in Saco, Burbank Douglas Co. China and Glass, Joseph Sabbag-linens out of Boston, Spiller’s Electric Company, E.R. Warren- heat, Eastern Fire Equipment Inc., New England Telephone & Telegraph Company, Hendrick Construction Co, various food companies selling fruit, fish and groceries and more...

Box 2: 1949 Correspondence to and from Wallace Reid mostly regarding accommodations and reservations.

Folders: Organized alphabetically

Box 3 : 1950 Correspondence to and from Wallace Reid mostly regarding accommodations and reservations.

Folders: Organized alphabetically

Box 4 : 1956 Correspondence to and from Wallace Reid mostly regarding accommodations and reservations.

Folders: Organized alphabetically

Original box that the letters were stored in. Collection was rehoused into archival boxes.

# # #

# Innkeeper Sells After Decades Of Fighting 'System'

KENNEBUNKPORT — Wallace Reid, a prominent innkeeper here for almost three decades, doesn't think much of today's hotel and motel industry. In fact, he's giving up his historic Arundel Inn because he refuses to be a part of it.

On April 7, Reid sold the hotel's buildings and grounds. The property at the mouth of the Kennebunk River had been in his family since 1913.

He'll still operate the Green Heron, an 11-room guest house across the street. But in essence he's getting out of the hotel business because, he said, "I'm tired of bucking the system."

Reid explains his move in philosophical and sociological terms. Indeed, his reasoning sounds like the hotelman's version of the book, "Future Shock."

"The hotel was making money, but running the operation was no longer the same," he said. The complexity of business these days, the very acceleration of life, has made the last few years far different from the decades of the 30s and 40s.

"IN THOSE DAYS you ran a business for the sake of the business, the clients, yourself. There was a special feeling, a pride. Now, with today's emphasis on size, conformity and impersonality, most of the fun is gone."

Reid, 51, charges that pressures on the small innkeeper are becoming greater. He mentioned growing headaches of making out unemployment insurance, social security and state income tax forms, altering one's systems to comply with the computers; dealing with firms that ignore the small inns for the chain motel accounts.

"Many innovations save time and money for (big) business but add work for us. A large chain like Howard Johnson's can do it, but a single proprietorship finds it difficult.

"Oh, the changes are small, they come gradually. But they take their toll. It's a burden on the individual. You have to line up with the program—the program won't line up with you."

He mentioned a soft drink salesman who told him he couldn't bring his sodas if he went on ordering less than six cases. When this was worked out, the salesman's firm stopped using returnable bottles, though the Arundel's machine is designed only for returnables.

"A small matter, but they add up," smiled Reid. "THE ARUNDEL is a small operation, about 39 rooms, with a staff of between 24 and 26. An Inn of this size has trouble making it anymore. We saw this years ago and

viewed expansion and bigness as our alternative.

"But we rejected that route. Further growth, with its accompanying impersonality and conformity, would make us slaves to the system. The only thing we could get out of it was money. And there's got to be more than money as a reward."

He remembered the days when personal contact and individual attention to the guests was the manner of operation. Small services, such as chilling the wine or organization of activities, went along with a room. But not today, in his view. Reid mentioned that he had been offered a chance to change his operation. Officials of the Holiday Inn made him an attractive offer if they could add the Arundel to their domain.

"I wouldn't do it. The chain motels offer planned mediocrity, with the same furniture, wallpaper and television sets in every room. Their furnishings are status symbols — merely eyewash.

"The whole industry is becoming like this and the pressure on the little man to conform has been mounting. You have to keep bucking to resist it."

REID SOLD the four buildings to John McDonall of Me. Va., who has plans to continue running the inn. Land near THE inn. Land near the ocean was brought by local developer Robert Marier, who reportedly is planning to build condominiums there.

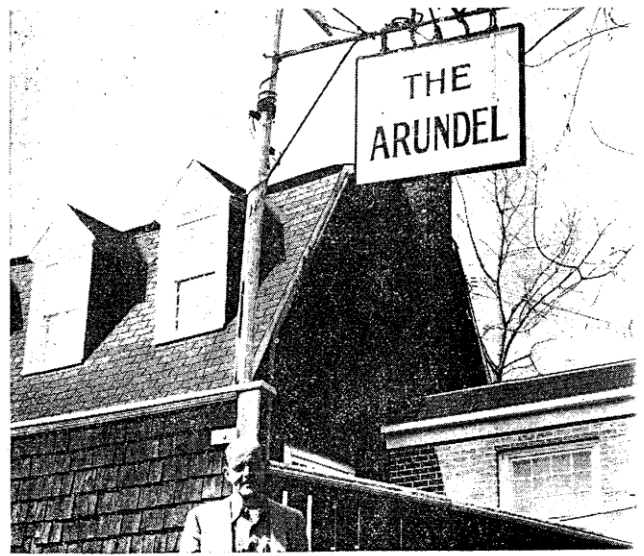
"It's too bad there can't be some way to preserve the area," he lamented. "It's very historic. There are still remains of gunmounds from the War of 1812.

"The point, which Kenneth Roberts depicted in his book, 'Arundel,' was the center of activity for eighteenth and nineteenth century townsmen. Every time we've had to dig we've found coins and relics."

Reid is a colonel in the Air Force reserve, an engineer and one of the town's busiest planners. These activities, along with his chores at the Green Heron, should keep him busy. Not surprisingly, though, he says he'll miss the Arundel.

"I've been managing the hotel since 1945; I worked at it before that. The guests, the staff, the buildings have been a part of me for decades. I'll miss them. But it was a decision I had to make," he said.

"I've been bucking the system for the last few years. It gets harder, particularly as I get older. By selling the Arundel, however, I don't have to buck it anymore."



Wallace Reid and his sun