

Tom Marshall's Weekly News, February 14, 2005

The Stanleys and the Rickers of Maine: Two Maine families of the 19th century made it big with their enterprises: the Rickers of Poland Spring with their Poland Water and the Stanleys of Kingfield and Lewiston with their photographic dry plates. It has been said that the Rickers could (and did) buy Mountain Wagons at cost to service their three resort hotels, and the Stanleys could stay at these hotels on a complimentary basis. A photo in the new Stanley book (*The Stanley Steamer: America's Legendary Steam Car*, by Kit Foster) shows F. E. and Augusta leaving the mansion house at Poland Spring in a 1913 Model 78, identical to ours. What is the Marshall connection? Israel Marshall, who built Auburn Heights, had kidney trouble as a result of a fall from a scaffold at the Homestead Mill at Marshall's Bridge when he was 18 (in 1869), and this plagued him for the rest of his life. He thought going to Poland Spring and drinking the water might make him more comfortable, and this he did the last summer of his life in 1910. Mountain Wagons met the trains at Danville Junction and took guests to the hotels, 6 miles away. Israel's son Clarence (my father) arrived in this way for a long weekend with his father. Stanleys were not strange to Clarence as he bought his second one, a Model K, in July of 1910 and also became a Stanley dealer that year. Israel had thought about the qualities of spring water for some time and in 1905 had "our spring" at the state line tested for its water quality. It was as soft as Poland Water; I have the results of this test.