

Peter F. Littlefield
91 Front Street
Noank, CT 06340
(860) 572-1310

{ Rec'd 3/12/05 }

Curator
Koreshan Unity State Museum
8661 Corkscrew Road
P O Box 7
Estero, Florida 33928

March 6, 2005

Dear Sir/Madam,

I notice with interest that you have copies of some of the Ordway patents in your collection. Enclosed is a bit of family background on Albert Hale Ordway and his son Oscar taken from a family genealogy booklet that I prepared in 2002 for a family reunion. Albert Ordway's father was Moses Hemenway Littlefield, my great great grandfather. I am the proud owner of one of the Ordway platform rockers and also own Oscar Hale Ordway's tool chest.

Would it be possible to obtain copies of the patents that are in your collection? Do the ones in your collection relate to the patents listed on page 11 of the enclosed document?

Sincerely yours,

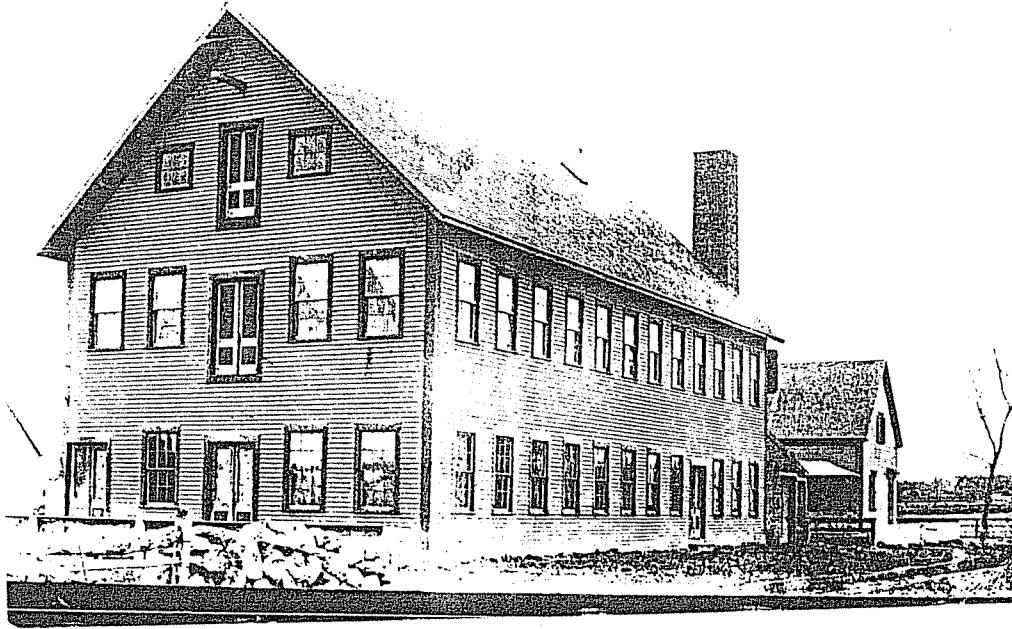


Peter F. Littlefield

ORDWAY MANUFACTURING COMPANY

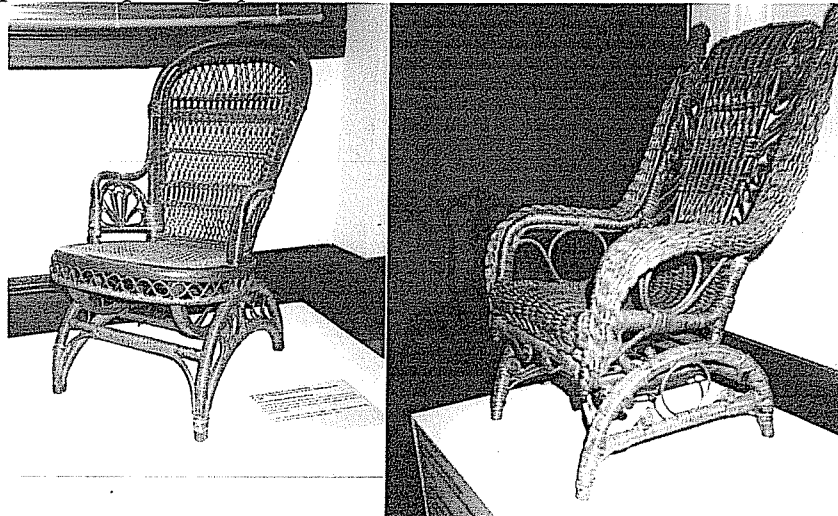
Initially, Joshua Albert Hale Ordway worked as a shoemaker in Haverhill as did his future father-in-law, Moses Hemenway Littlefield. Albert Hale Ordway, as he was called, later worked for the Heywood Furniture Company in Gardener and Fitchburg. In 1885, He was listed in the Melrose, Massachusetts's directory as a chair manufacturer.

Mattapoisett, Massachusetts – A. H. Ordway Manufacturing Company



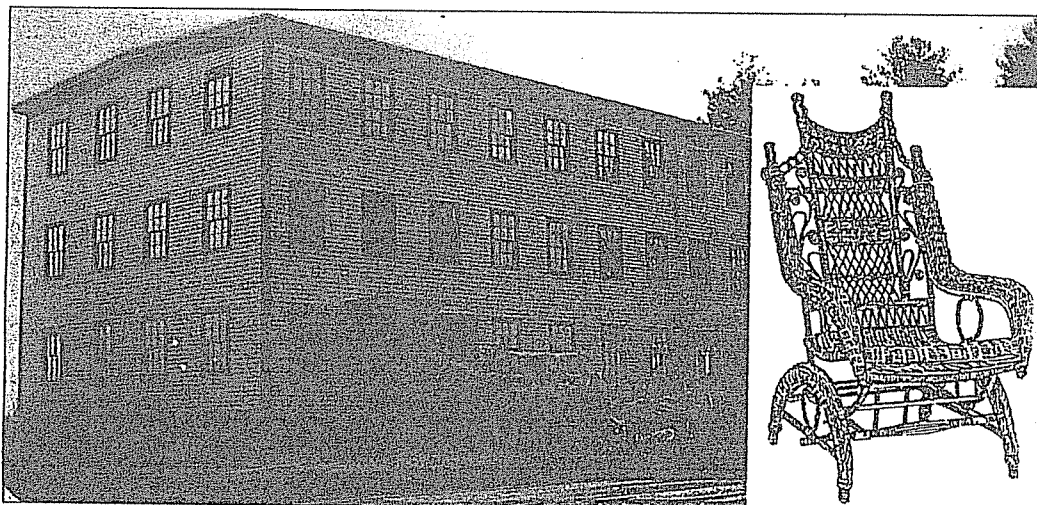
Mattapoisett Manufacturing Company
Courtesy of The Mattapoisett Historical Society

In 1887, Albert Hale Ordway leased the Mattapoisett Manufacturing Building in Mattapoisett for one year. The lease was renewed in 1888 for an additional year for \$250. While superintendent of the reed chair shop in Mattapoisett, Ordway originated what became known as a base-rocker, a chair with four conventional rigid legs supporting the rocking mechanism. There are three Ordway rattan chairs in the Mattapoisett Historical Society Museum: a base rocker, a salesman's sample and a photographer's chair.



Framingham, Massachusetts -

In February of 1888, Mr. A. H. Ordway, attracted by the fine railroad facilities, moved the Mattapoissett operation to South Framingham, MA. Temporary quarters were secured in the Dunn Building, a two-story building near the Framingham Coal Company on Howard Street. In the fall of the same year a convenient factory of three stories above the basement, 20x100 feet on the ground, was erected on land secured of Wellington H. Pratt. This factory was finished and occupied in November 1888. Evidently, Mr. Wellington H. Pratt and other citizens raised \$1000 for the construction of the Wellington Street factory. They manufactured one or two patterns of base-rocker arm-chair of reed-work. About forty hands were employed and the factory was equipped with all the necessary conveniences. Beside the chairs, an elegant line of bentwood and plush-upholstered footrests were made. The Wellington Avenue factory burned in 1902. (History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, J. W. Lewis, 1890, page 672). At one time, the company had contracts with The Metropolitan Manufacturing Company of New York to supply fifty chairs a day.



The A.H. Ordway Company manufactured wicker chairs. Ordway originated and patented a base rocker design. He also pioneered selling chairs "from a team" (horse and wagon) and buying "on time." His factory, pictured here in 1889, was located on Wellington Avenue near the Sherborn line. It burned in 1902. (FHS Collections.)

After the collapse of the Avoca, Tennessee venture described below, Ordway returned to South Framingham to make base platform rockers. As this project was not successful he abandoned the effort. He then resumed the manufacture of high-grade reed chairs. Finding it difficult to find a lucrative market, he turned his attention to the perfection and manufacture of sanitary spring cushions from a facility in Gardner, Mass. He eventually sold the business to the Heywood - Wakefield Rattan Company.

Joshua Albert Hale Ordway had obtained many patents for twisting wood and manufacturing bent wood reed chairs:

#426053	April 22, 1890	Spring Rocking Chair
#498140	May 23, 1893	Chair Frames
#538928	May 7, 1895	Shaping Wood
#556203	March 10, 1896	Wood or Rattan Twisting Machine
#595199	December 7, 1897	Machines for twisting Wood

#603965	May 10, 1898	Dowell Making Machine
#635179	October 17, 1899	Spring Rocking Chair
#637652	November 21, 1899	Wood or Rattan Twisting or Shaping Devices
#650269	May 22, 1900	Process for Twisting Wooden Rods into Rope Form
#655889	August 14, 1900	Shaping Wood
#656040	August 14, 1900	Method of Making Wood or Rattan Ropes

Related businesses in Framingham -

“Marston’s Rattan Factory - Attracted by Mr. Ordway's business and the inducements held out by the place, Mr. H. A. Marston, of Wakefield, moved his business here [Framingham, Mass.] in the fall of 1889, building himself a model four-story factory, 40x100 on the ground, beside a brick boiler and engine-house, bleach-house, etc. He located his factory directly opposite Mr. Ordway’s and between them there is a branch of the Old Colony Railroad. Mr. Marston's business is the importation of rattan from Singapore and other foreign points, and the splitting of it up into a fine class of cane, leaving the pith of reeds for chair-manufacture, like Mr. Ordway's. Mr. Marston's machines are of his own manufacture and patent, and he maintains a machine shop in his factory for building them. He lights the factories from his own electric plant, and heats them from his steam boilers. Beside the cane and reed manufacture, Mr. Marston is a large dealer in wooden chairs of Western manufacture. There are about fifty employees.” (History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, J. W. Lewis, 1890, page 672.)

“New England Rattan Company - Mr. A. H. Ordway was chiefly instrumental in securing the location here [Framingham, Mass.] of Mr. Marston's business, and Mr. Marston in turn, aided by other citizens, induced the New England Rattan Company to move their business from Wakefield [Mass.] to this place, and the latter company was not slow to see the superior opportunities for transacting business here. So it followed that in March 1889, a fine four-story factory with high basement was finished for their occupancy, just opposite those of Messrs. Ordway and Martson. The company manufactures an elegant line of rattan and reed chairs of many patterns and styles of finish, besides tables, easels and other parlor furniture in bamboo work. The officers of the company are: President, W. E. Ryan; Secretary and Treasurer, Mathias Hollander; Directors, H. Ryan, L. S. Mansfield, R. M. French, H. Leuchtman, and Richard Cuff. About forty-five hands are employed.” (History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, J. W. Lewis, 1890, page 672.)

Tennessee Ventures -

1891 "A Branch Factory, The Ordway Chair Works in the South" As there have been various rumors about town [Framingham, Mass.] in regard to Mr. Ordway's recent trip through the South, the Tribune representative has interviewed him to learn the facts. Having sent samples of his work to the trade there, he finds there is a great demand for his class of goods in the South and Southwest, which proves beyond question that a thriving business can be done in that section. Mr. Ordway informs us that the freights are so high that it is impossible for him to supply the demand from his present factory. Therefore, he has decided to build a factory in Newport, Tennessee, to be in running order January 1, 1892. This branch will be under the management of his son, Oscar H. Ordway. This will in no way affect the business that Mr. Ordway has already established in South Framingham. The factory here is so pressed with orders that the men will not be able to take a vacation in June, as was anticipated. Over fifty men are now employed, which is about all that can work to advantage in the present factory. Mr.

Ordway's large weekly payroll has been a benefit to our town, and we wish him his usual success in the business he understands so well." Framingham Tribune, May 15, 1891. Unfortunately, all land and vital records of Newport, Tennessee were destroyed in a fire. The Newport venture was probably not finalized.

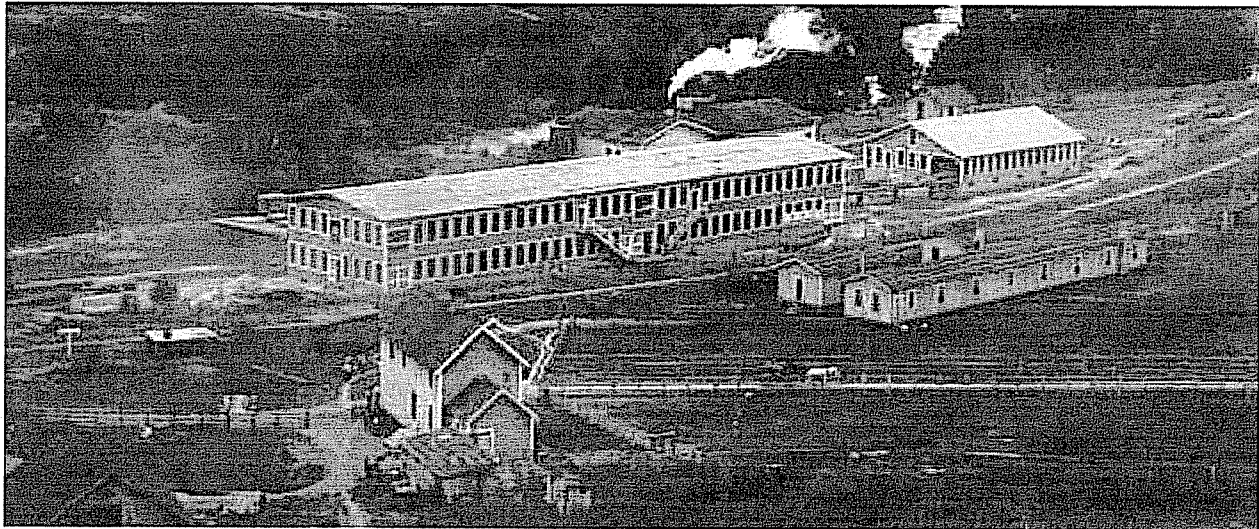
The business moved later to the Avoca section of Bristol, Tennessee to be nearer to the source of rattan and other materials.

On April 10, 1900, A. H. Ordway, R. E. Styll, G. W. Willis, C. T. Boyer and W. J. McSween chartered The Ordway Manufacturing Company in Tennessee. (Sullivan County Register of Deeds, Blountville, Tennessee, Vol 70, page 314.) The intention was to move production to a facility nearer to the wood supply. On April 5, 1901, the Ordway Manufacturing Company leased land in Avoca, Tennessee from the South Bristol Industrial Land Company. (Vol 72: page 369)

On March 26, 1902, the State of Tennessee authorized the Ordway Chair Company to issue capital stock of \$100,000 to A. H. Ordway (father), A. R. Ordway (son), E. J. St. John, W. B. St. John and A. R. Yates, corporate officers, for the purpose of manufacturing chairs, furniture and other articles made of wood.... (Vol 74: page 1).

On April 5, 1902, J. H. Caldwell, Margaret Caldwell and the South Bristol Land Company sold three tracts of land to The Ordway Manufacturing Company for \$1,414.14 (Vol 73: page 182)

On Dec 23, 1902, the State of Tennessee authorized the Ordway Manufacturing Company officers; A. H. Ordway (father), William F. Howland (son-in-law), E. J. St. John, A. R. Ordway (son) and W. B. St. John, and the board of directors to increase capitalization of the corporation to \$300,000. (Vol 73: page 458)



Ordway Manufacturing Company, Avoca, Tennessee

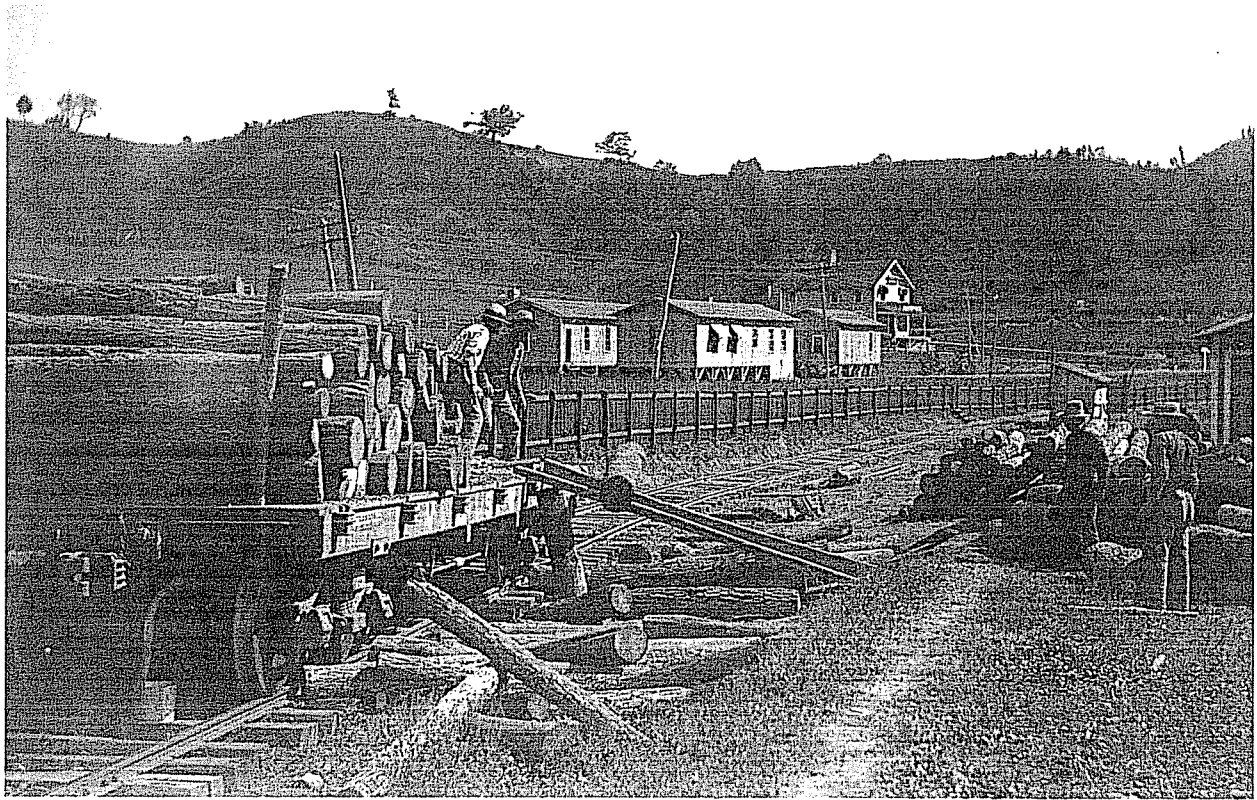


Ordway Bentwood Platform Rocker
Bristol, Tennessee Historical Society Collection

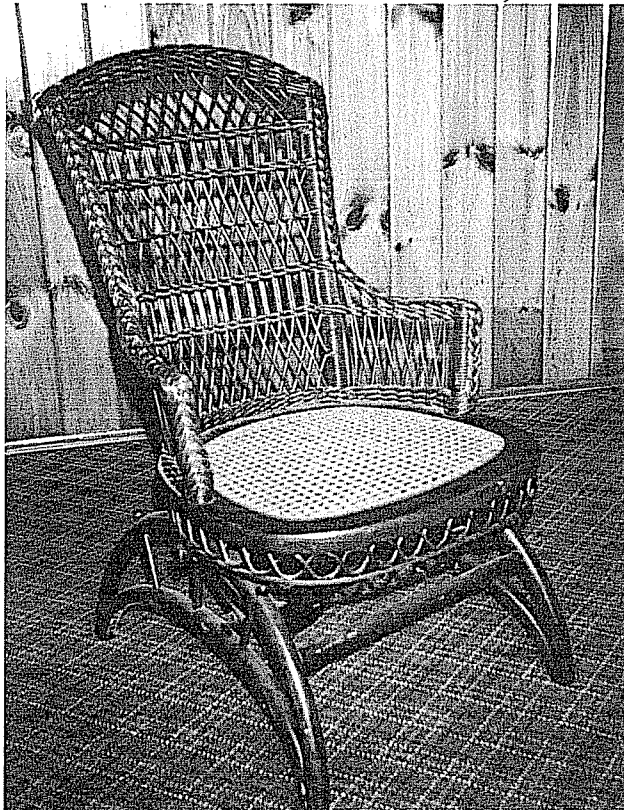
On December 15, 1903, the Ordway Manufacturing Company executed a deed of trust (real estate and tools, implements, apparatus, machinery, letters of patent, fittings, etc. belonging to said company) to John Anderson and C. J. St. John in exchange for issuance of \$50,000 in bonds in the form of a loan from the National Bank of Bristol, Tennessee. (Vol 74: page 254) At about this time, disagreements arose in Tennessee and Ordway resigned as president and returned to Framingham, Mass. (1911 obituary, Framingham Tribune, March 20, 1911)

On April 17, 1906, the Ordway Manufacturing Company of Tennessee breached the covenants provided for in the National Bank of Bristol loan and the property was sold to H. Jones for \$17,500. (Vol 80: page 345)

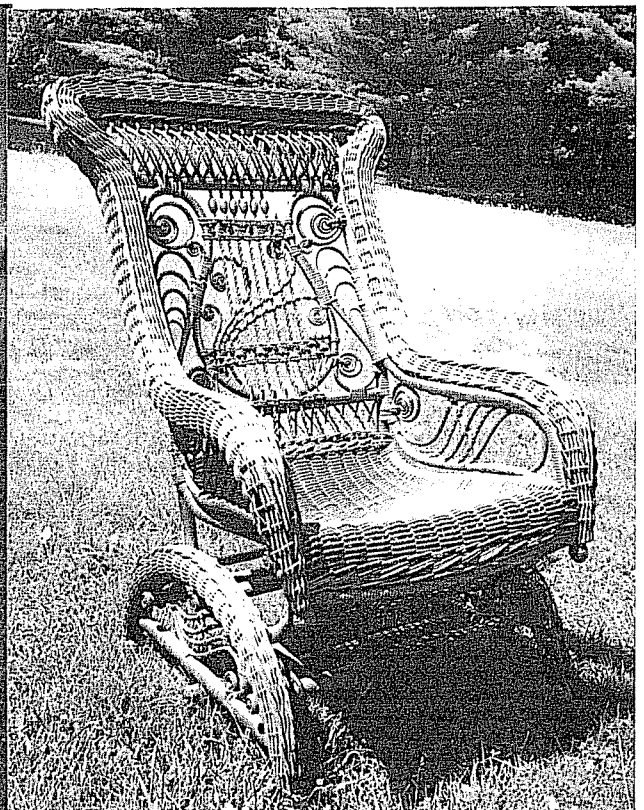
On May 13, 1914, H. E. Jones, trustee of the Ordway Syndicate, sold certain land and buildings to I. J. Mullen of Chestnut Ridge, Pennsylvania for \$475. (Vol 102: page 364). On May 25, 1914, the Ordway Syndicate sold the balance of the Avoca holdings to the Mining Refinery Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (Vol 102: page 422). Today, 2002, The Ordway Cemetery and a residential development grace that section of Avoca where the Ordway plant existed.



Ordway Manufacturing Company
Avoca, Tennessee



Lester Ordway's Rocker
(Don Dwarska)



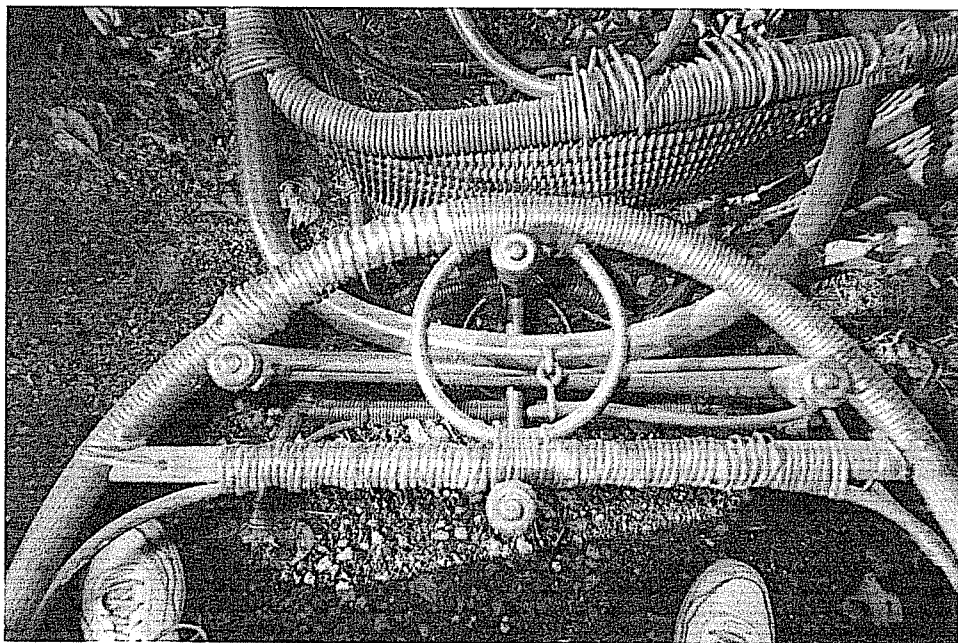
Linda Palmer Brown's Rocker



Peter Littlefield's rocker



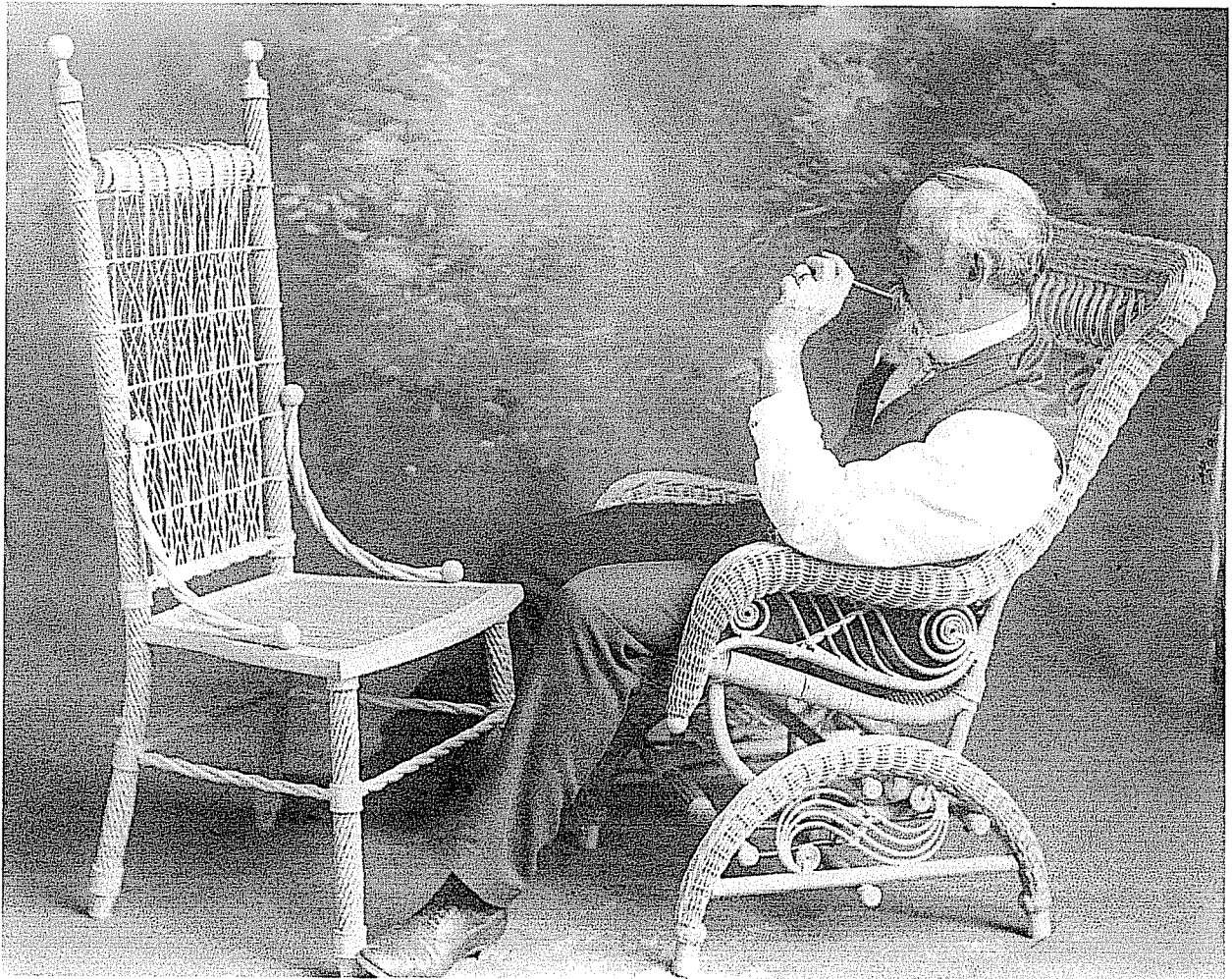
Photographer' chair



Platform Rocker Mechanism

EMELINE LITTLEFIELD ORDWAY FAMILY

Joshua Albert Hale Ordway was born on January 18, 1844 in West Newbury, Mass., the son of Joshua Hale Ordway and Sarah Jane Scribner. In 1850, he was living with his parents in West Newbury, Mass. Joshua Albert Hale Ordway was 17 when the Civil War began. He enlisted on July 18, 1864, was mustered in on August 5, 1864 and mustered out on November 12, 1864. He served as a drummer with a Massachusetts Regiment. (His great grandson, Peter Ordway, has his drum.)



Joshua Albert Hale Ordway

Joshua Albert Hale Ordway was referred to as Albert H. Ordway, perhaps so he would not be confused with his father, Joshua Hale Ordway. He married Emeline Moody Littlefield on August 9, 1868 in Salem, Mass. Emeline was the oldest child of Moses Hemenway Littlefield and Laura Ann Hills. Emeline was born in Georgetown,

Massachusetts on January 24, 1845. The Moses Hemenway Littlefield family lived in Georgetown across the Merrimac River from Haverhill until about 1850, when they moved to Salem. Emeline was listed as a schoolteacher living with her parents in Salem in 1864-1866. They had four children: Oscar Hale, Annie Griffith, Albert Roland and Janie Scribner.

Ordway family Plot, Edgell Cemetery, Framingham, Mass. Lot # 1085

1.	Oscar Hale Ordway	1869-1900	Globe, AZ
2.	Albert Hale Ordway	1844-1911	Boston, MA
3.	Emeline M. Ordway	1845-1917	Framingham, MA
4.	William F. Howland	1867-1949	Framingham, MA
5.	Albert R. Ordway	1877-1950	North Hampton, MA
6.	Annie Howland	1871-1952	Framingham, MA
7.	Grace (Gates) Ordway	1878-1965	West Springfield, MA
8.	Janie S. Dunlap	1879-1967	Framingham, MA
9.	Chester A. Dunlap	1882-1968	South Charleston, WV
10.	Virginia Dunlap Palmer	1909-1972	Camden, ME
12.	Lloyd Moore Palmer	1910-1982	Rockport, ME



Edgell Cemetery, Framingham, Massachusetts