

ANDROSCOGGIN HISTORY

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No. 16

WOMEN IN MAINE COTTON MILLS -- 1908

Miss Eva L. Shorey investigated working conditions in Maine cotton mills as a special agent of the Maine Industrial Bureau. Selections from the Bureau's Annual Report were published in the *Bridgton News*, December 18, 1908. With this issue, we begin a reprint of those selections.

The Mill Procession

A person has only to stand in the vicinity of the cotton and woolen mills of Lewiston, or of any city in Maine where there are large textile factories, and watch the thousands of men, women and children who come pouring out of the mill doors when the bells ring at noon or at night, to realize what a large percentage of the working people of our State spend the greater part of their lives behind the brick walls of these towering buildings, the constant crash of the machinery in their ears and the moist, lint-laden air in their lungs from 6.10 in the morning till 6 at night, five and a half days in the week, year in and year out. In this procession, which at certain hours fills the street with hurrying forms, are men and women, old and middle-aged, young people, boys and girls, the great majority, either themselves or their ancestors, from various parts of the world. Many are conversing in foreign languages for there are French-Canadians, Germans, Swedes, Poles, Greeks, Armenians, Syrians and Portuguese in the crowd. . . .

Textile Operatives in Maine

In 15 Cotton Mills were employed (in 1905) 6,469 women 16 years old and over; 590 children under 16; men, 5,323; total wages, women and children, \$1,986,638; men, 5,323, earn a total wage of \$2,050,210.

Woolen Mills, 2283 women and 150 children, earn \$846,368. Men (4654), \$2,029,697.

Nationality of Employes [sic]

In the two cities of Lewiston and Auburn are located more cotton mills than in any other city in the State. There are eight cotton mills in Lewiston, employing 5,173 hands, of whom 2,958 are women and 264 children. there are also 4 woolen mills, with 216 wage-earners, of whom 61 are women. In Auburn, the Barker mill, manufacturing cotton cloth, employs 300, of whom 111 are women. The number in each mill is as follows: The Bates Manufacturing Company employs 1,960 hands, of whom 1,216 are women, and 132 children. [Cont. p. 4]

NAMING OUR TOWNS: LEWISTON

by Douglas I. Hodgkin

I believe that I have a solution for the question of why Lewiston has this name. It probably was named for **Job Lewis**, a Pejepscot Proprietor.

During this year's bicentennial celebration of Lewiston's incorporation as a town, the question has often arisen concerning the origin of the city's name. There has seemed no ready answer, once we note the myth that "a drunk Indian named Lewis drowned at the falls . . . and the falls were named for him. The township was named for the falls."¹

Historians shed no light on the matter. Elder notes that when the Pejepscot Proprietors made the grant to Jonathan Bagley and Moses Little in 1768, the town was to be called "Lewistown," but he does not explain why.² Leamon says the stipulation was made "for no apparent reason."³

An important clue, however, is Chadburn's placement of her discussion of Lewiston in Chapter 14, "Maine Towns Bearing the Names of Proprietors of the Eighteenth Century." She notes that many towns' names were based upon grants from proprietors.⁴ However, she does not link Lewiston's name to a particular proprietor.⁵

We find that indeed there is a proprietor named Job Lewis holding a one-eighth share of the Pejepscot Company. He was a leader during the period 1739 to 1752. He served as moderator in 1744 and on the 1751 committee to negotiate conflicting claims with the Kennebec Company.⁶

Apparently his services were appreciated. Election as moderator was reserved to "their most distinguished partner."⁷ Moreover, after Lewis in 1752 had given one of his own hundred-acre lots out of compassion for a man captured by Indians, "moved by this 'act of charity,' his partners took up the gift as their own, reimbursing Lewis with another lot."⁸ Lewis died in 1755, but the proprietors probably remembered and honored their colleague thirteen years later with the naming of a town.

Although we have no direct proof that the town was named for Job Lewis, it seems far more [Cont. p. 2]

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plausible than the story about a drunken Indian.

Who was Job Lewis? He was married in Boston to Sarah Palmer on 24 May 1720 by Rev. Mr. Samuel Miles, Presbyterian.⁹ Their children were Hannah, who married Samuel Waterhouse, and Abigail, who married Nathaniel Bethune.¹⁰ When Lewis died, his share of the Pejepscot Proprietary went to Waterhouse.¹¹

Lewis lived in Boston most of his life, where he was constable 1720-1 and town auditor in 1736.¹² In 1735 the Boston town meeting voted that he and three others be a Committee to Audit the Town Treasurer's Accounts for the next year.¹³ In the Selectmen's Minutes of 1753 there is entered an agreement between the selectmen and Joshua Winslow, Job Lewis, and John Welch that the latter would ensure that Samuel Phillips and others would live up to their agreement that they would keep the sea off a certain highway and pay the damages resulting from the failure of Phillips *et al.* to do so.¹⁴

Job Lewis was a large land holder on the Maine coast. He owned a "thousand acre lot" in Woolwich,¹⁵ where he built a blockhouse at the Chops, the strategic outlet to the sea between Woolwich and North Bath from Merrymeeting Bay. In 1746, he and Arthur Noble petitioned Governor Shirley for soldiers to be placed at their respective garrisons for the defense of the settlers.¹⁶ For fifty pounds in 1738, his colleagues sold him land from Medomak Point up the Medomak River to the falls, and then two miles above the falls, including land and timber one mile on each side (Waldoboro area).¹⁷

In 1740 and 1741, as a proprietor, Lewis signed petitions seeking transfer of lands from North Yarmouth to sort out arbitrary boundary lines that were causing hardships. This included transfer of Merriconeag Neck to Brunswick (now in Harpswell), of Small Point to Georgetown (now in Phippsburg), and of Sebascodegin Islands to Brunswick (now in Harpswell).¹⁸

He was a witness to the signing of a treaty with the Penobscot, Norridgewock, St. Francis, and other Indians in 1749 at Falmouth (now Portland).¹⁹

A copy of his signature was published as part of a collection of "Autographs of Boston Merchants of the Middle of the Eighteenth Century."²⁰

¹ Phillip R. Rutherford, *The Dictionary of Maine Place-Names* (Freeport: The Bond Wheelwright Co., 1970), p. 3.

² Janus Elder, *A History of Lewiston, Maine*, ed. by David and Elizabeth (Keene) Young (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1989), p. 12.

³ James S. Leamon, *Historic Lewiston: A Textile City in Transition* (Lewiston Historical Commission, 1976), p. 1.

⁴ Ava Harriet Chadburn, *Maine Place Names* (Portland: The Bond Wheelwright Co., 1955), p. 286.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 306-307.

⁶ Robert Michael Gerrity, "The Pejepscot Proprietors: A Study of Eighteenth Century Absentee Land Ownership on the Maine Frontier" (M. A. thesis, University of Maine, 1973), p. 34.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹ Boston (Mass.) Registry Dept. *Records Relating to the Early History of Boston*. Vol. 28, *Boston Marriages, 1700-1751* (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1898), p. 88.

¹⁰ Marshall Kirk, New England Historic and Genealogical Society, letter to Geneva Kirk, September 1995.

¹¹ Gerrity, p. 35.

¹² Kirk, *op. cit.*

¹³ Boston Registry Dept. *Op. cit.* Vol. 12, *Boston Records, 1729-1742* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1885), p. 135.

¹⁴ Boston Registry Dept. *Op. cit.* Vol. 17, *Selectmen's Minutes, 1742/3-1753* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1887), pp. 304-306.

¹⁵ Henry O. Thayer, "The Transient Town of Cork," in *Collections and Proceedings of the Maine Historical Society* (2nd Series, Vol. 4; Portland: Brown Thurston, 1893), p. 294.

¹⁶ William Goold, "Col. Arthur Noble, of Georgetown," in *Collections of the Maine Historical Society* (1st Series, Vol. 8; Portland: Hoyt, Fogg & Donham, 1881), pp. 123-124.

¹⁷ James Phinney Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of the State of Maine* (Vol. 24; Portland: Fred L. Tower Co., 1916), pp. 332-335.

¹⁸ Baxter, *Documentary History . . .* (2d Series, Vol. 11; Portland: Lefavor-Tower Co., 1908), pp. 206, 232-235.

¹⁹ *Collections of the Maine Historical Society* (Vol. 4; Portland: Brown Thurston, 1856), pp. 164, 166.

²⁰ Reproduced in Justin Winsor, *The Memorial History of Boston ... 1630-1880*, Vol. 2, *The Provincial Period* (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1881), p. 445.

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of Androscoggin Historical Society is Tuesday, October 24, 1995, at 7:30 P.M.

Topic: History of the Poland Springs

Speaker: David Richards

Location: Our museum in the County Building

DIARY OF GRANGER CUSHMAN CRAFTS

The Society holds the diary of Granger Cushman Crafts for the period January 1 to October 16, 1862. The first part is a comparatively full daily account of life in West Auburn. Crafts left for Moncton, New Brunswick, on May 8, and the remainder is sketchy with many days skipped.

Crafts was born in Hebron, 18 November 1844, making him 17 when he wrote the diary. At age 18, he enlisted in the First D.C. Cavalry, Co. H, to serve the Union in the Civil War. He had not been long at the front before a large portion of his regiment was surprised and captured by Hampton's Cavalry near Sycamore Church, near Petersburg, Virginia. He died at age 20 on 6 February 1865 at Salisbury Prison, North Carolina, from hardship as a prisoner-of-war. (This paragraph researched by Robert L. Taylor.)

Jan. 11 ... Shod the sled today. concert to the Hollow to night "the Polands"

Jan. 28 a fair day. Had an Exhibition (afternoon in the evening. played "Flowers of the Forest + "Romance under Difficulties" went hard. full house

Feb. 5 A clear day worked for Colier all day. father went to the Falls with a load of wood. Spent my evening down to the Hollow to a socible [sic] at Dr. Blake's.

Feb. 7 A clear day. A dance down to the Hollow in the evening. Spent my evening at home

Feb. 8 A clear day. Colier and I made ten pairs of shoes in four hours all but wering [sic] down and bowing the bottoms + tieing of them up

Feb. 17 A fair day. ther [sic] was a spelling school over on the ridge in the evening I went over and there was four other teams went I got home about eleven o'clock.

Feb. 18 ... I spent the evening over at the schoolhouse rehearsing "Uncle Tom's Cabin. Fred has a dance to night, and there is also a dance down to the Hollow in the hall, and there is also a spelling school down to the Hollow.

Feb. 21 A clear day. Hersey got home to-day. We had an exhibition in the evening played "Uncle Tom s Cabin" We played it in about four hours. full house Preb and Fred played for music. Great ball to Lewiston to night.

Feb. 28 It has stopt snowing but the wind blew all day To-day is the last day of winter and we have had a very large amount of snow it is over four feet in the woods. the road is higher then the wall most every where... .

Mar. 2 A pleasant day Mr Lord preached to day. I went to meeting all day. I spent the evening into Holbrook's We had the mails to day

Mar. 3 ... Town meeting to-day I spent the evening at home I had a party they numbered twenty six

Mar. 6 ... I spent the evening into Holbrooks with Sarah Waterman + Abby Washburn + Augusta Goulet I had a good time. The small fry have a party to night into W. Munroe s.

Mar. 15 ... Nat. Ingalls came up on the stage to night. Report came to day that New Madrid [Missouri] was taken [by Union forces on March 13] ... I spent the evening down to Uncle Austin playing whist with uncle Austin + Charly + Sarah.

Mar. 20 ... I work for Colier the shop's crew had some fun with Chandler ... There was a family of Dresser's moved into town to day

Mar. 24 A very warm day for the time of the year. the snow settled six inches full. I commenced work for J. Munroe. Co to day ...

Mar. 25 ... I went and slid on the crust in the morning...

Mar. 27 ... I worked for J Munroe + Co we had pretty lively time over a broom ...

Mar. 28 ... A company twenty seven went to a walk this morning on to the pond. all the boys wore tall slicks... .

Apr. 9 ... News came to day than [sic] there has been a great fight out west it is reported 54 thousand killed + wounded the battle commenced last sunday morning ...

Apr. 10 ... Reports came to day that there was not but 5000 killed and wounded of our troops in the last battle and 10000 of the Rebels... . [The Battle of Shiloh was the "biggest and bloodiest encounter of the war so far" (Peter J. Parish, *The American Civil War*, p. 170). Casualties for the Union were 1754 killed, 8408 wounded, 2885 captured; for the Confederacy, 1723 killed, 8012 wounded, 959 missing (Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative*, Vol. I, p. 350).]

Apr. 17 ... Uncle William went to Lewiston to day with a wagon for the first time.

Apr. 19 ... The flume of the mill down to the hollow gave out and the water + logs rushed down and scarred both briges [sic]

Apr. 30 ... I heard the frogs to day for the first time... .

BALLOON FESTIVAL OPEN HOUSE

The Society held an open house on August 19, 1995, during the Great Falls Balloon Festival. Of the 57 persons who came, several had never visited us before and some had been unaware of our existence until seeing the listing in the festival program. Many thanks to those members who staffed the premises.

**ROUND TABLE OUTREACH PROGRAM ON
GENERAL CHAMBERLAIN AT AHS
by Warren B. Randall and Douglas I. Hodgkin**

In the first of what may become a semi-annual practice, the Chamberlain Civil War Round Table presented an "outreach" program under the auspices of the Androscoggin Historical Society at our most recent meeting on September 26.

The program featured a talk by author John Pullen, who compared the leadership qualities of General Joshua L. Chamberlain in the Civil War and of General George S. Patton in World War II. He rated Chamberlain as slightly superior to Patton. The two generals were equal on many leadership criteria, such as courage, tactical proficiency, ethical values and personal integrity, creativity, bearing and demeanor, and aggressiveness. However, Chamberlain exhibited greater self-knowledge and self-control.

Pullen served as an artillery officer in General Patton's command during the last months of combat in Europe. In 1957 he published "The Twentieth Maine," a regimental history that is credited with starting the return to prominence of Chamberlain, the regiment's commanding officer at Gettysburg.

Also present were Warren B. Randall, a co-founder and first president of the Round Table, and Alfred D. Nicholson, the current president. They discussed the ten-year history of the organization and its plans for the future. Randall, a member of our own board of directors, is a Lewiston native, now living in Brunswick. Nicholson is an Orrs Island resident.

The aim of the joint meeting was to make more widely known the programs and activities of the

Round Table, and perhaps to gain membership in the Lewiston-Auburn region. There are some thirty members now in this area. Dues are \$20 (individual), \$30 (family), \$10 (associate or long-distance), and \$50 (includes audiotapes of speakers). Any person who wishes to join should write Chamberlain CWRT, P. O. Box 1046, Brunswick 04011.

The Round Table plans to hold additional meetings with local sponsors in other communities such as Augusta, Waterville, Camden, Wiscasset, Portland, and the Biddeford-Saco area.

WOMEN IN COTTON MILLS (Cont. from p. 1)

Of the women employed, three-fourths are French-Canadians, and the other fourth is made up of Irish, Americans, Scotch, Poles, Greeks, Russians, etc.

The Androscoggin Mills employ 1,123 hands, of whom 503 are women and 62 children. Of the women employed, 342 are French-Canadian, 113 Irish, 33 Americans, and 15 Poles.

The Continental Mills employ 900 hands, of whom 575 are women, and 40 children. Of the women employed, three-fourths are French-Canadians, and the other fourth is made up of Irish, Americans, Scotch, Poles, Greeks, Russians and a few others.

The Hill Manufacturing company employs 590 hands, of whom 365 are women, and thirty children. Of the women employed, 318 are French-Canadians, 25 Irish, 14 Americans, 4 Greeks, 1 Englishman and 1 German.

The Barker Mill employs 300 hands, of whom 111 are women. The Avon Spinning company employs 85 hands, of whom 47 are women. Of the women employed, 95 percent are French-Canadians and 5 percent Irish. The Avon Manufacturing company employs 135 hands, of whom 91 are women. The number of hands employed by Libbey & Dingley is estimated at 80, of whom 50 are women. [Continued in next issue]

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