

ANDROSCOGGIN HISTORY

October, 1996

Newsletter of the Androscoggin Historical Society

No. 19

NAMING OUR TOWNS: TURNER

The original name of Turner, Maine, incorporated 1786, was Sylvester-Canada, later simply Sylvester, in honor of Captain Joseph Sylvester, who with his company was granted a township for their services in 1690 against Canada. However, when the line between New Hampshire and Maine was determined, it was found that the grant lay in New Hampshire. On petition of agents for the proprietors, James Warren, Joseph Joslyn, and Charles Turner, the General Court of Massachusetts made a new grant on 25 June 1765. After some delay the town finally was settled. W. R. French quotes a Dr. Howe:

"There was still some difficulty in the selection of a name for the new town. The settlers cherished with warm affection the name of Sylvester . . . ; but the proprietors felt a strong predilection for the name of Turner, from the consideration that Charles Turner, Esq., of Scituate, had been one of their prominent members, and had served their corporation from the period of its organization to that of his death, with great ability and fidelity, as their Treasurer; and also in consideration of the valuable services of Major William Turner, who had been their standing Clerk during the whole period, and had been very active in lotting out, and pushing forward the settlement of the plantation, and whose civil and military services to the commonwealth and nation had justly acquired an enviable reputation.

"But on presenting the two names to the General Court, that body decided at once, from the great respect which it held for the character and services of the Rev. Charles Turner, who had for many years stood in the front rank of its Senate, as a beacon light, to direct its counsels through the gloomy and portentous struggle of the Revolution, that the name should be Turner [W. R. French, *A History of Turner, Maine* (Hoyt, Fogg & Donham, 1887), p. 40]."

Rev. Turner was "born in Scituate, Massachusetts, in 1732. He was graduated from Harvard in 1752 and was a minister in Duxbury for twenty years. He was a Whig, active in state affairs, one of the agents for the claimants, the first treasurer and collector for the proprietors." He served in the Senate of Massachusetts most of the years 1773-1788. He moved to Turner in 1791 and preached

part time there and in Hallowell. He died in Turner in 1818 at age 86.

REPRINT OF LEEDS HISTORY

Heritage Books is issuing a reprint of J. C. Stinchfield's *History of the Town of Leeds* with new material added by David C. Young. "Over three-quarters of this book is devoted to genealogical records of the early settlers of Leeds, Maine . . . regarding more than forty of the town's leading families. Additional noteworthy chapters include the records of Marriage Intentions from 1801-1901 and the Genealogy section containing Leeds men who were living at the time the book was published (c1901) and listing their children, parentage and paternal and maternal grandparents." There are also narrative chapters that cover a variety of facets of the town's history. "Six families have been added to this edition. Three are headed by African-American Revolutionary soldiers. There is also a 'Schedule of Settlers on Townships on Pegyscot (Pejepscot) Patent: Littleboro (Leeds)' between 1781 and 1794, from the original at the Maine Historical Society. Another list of settlers in Leeds dates from around 1800 and is copied from Pejepscot Claim papers in the Androscoggin Historical Society. A lot map for the town of Leeds, drawn by the surveyor for the Pejepscot Land Company in the early 1800s, enhances this edition. The new master index will give the researcher access to the treasures within this book. This everyname index includes women's maiden and married names, and also contains subjects and towns. Illustrated with fifty portraits and town views. Reprint 1997, paper, 600pp., \$31.00." If interested, contact Androscoggin Historical Society, 2 Turner St., Auburn, ME 04210. Telephone 1-207-784-0586. The Society receives the profit from those that we sell.

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of Androscoggin Historical Society is Tuesday, October 22, 1996, at 7:30 P.M.

Topic: Wildcat Bank Notes

Speaker: Frank Trask

Location: The County Building

LEVI M. NELSON'S DIARY

Levi M. Nelson was born 27 June 1804 in New Gloucester, Maine, son of David and Elizabeth (Hunting) Nelson. He married 29 October 1827 Louisa Gordon of Connecticut. He died 22 November 1880, having lived most of his life in New Gloucester. The Society has his autobiography, which he began in June 1829 and which he continued much like an intermittent diary with often lengthy entries that continued until September 1858 and one entry in May 1862. Some early selections:

Dec. 6, 1830. . . . We continue to live with our Parents enjoying much prosperity. our Son Roswell grows nicely -- has become a great Boy which Promises us much joy

Apr. 14, 1831. This day moved from New G. into Poland on a farm formerly owned by William Skillinger it is situated on the East side of Black Katt mountain. It is a very Large farm containing 280 acres with a fine Orchard two Barns + A two story house. But the society is in such a poor state + so many ill bread human beings are settled in all directions around it, that it makes my Wife often scold, & I Left to feel very disagreeable . . .

Nov. 9 1831. have sold my farm to James H. Mirise [sp.?] calculate on movving back to N.G.

Oct. 10, 1833 . . . Maine . . . has been compelled to withdraw her support from the chief Magistrate [President Jackson] of this great Union of States for his gross + Most abusive Derigation of constitutional Power for it is very plainly to be seen that he is a relentless unfeeling Tyrent fit for no office + desearvin of none . . .

Sunday, June 22, 1834 this Day did not attend meeting in consequence of expecting my Bees to swarm + it so hapned that I had a very Large swarm come out . . . There is nothing more dreary + Lonesome than to stay home on Sunday in the summer when the Days are so very Long from meeting . . .

May 11, 1835 . . . I have to assist me in carrying on the farm one man + a Boy which is more help than I usually have had. Our Dairy will consist this summer of eleven cows it being one less than we kept last year but it is enough for one woman to take the charge off in all conscience. the First Parish in this town seems to be in a bad situation owing to some misunderstanding between the minister + one of the members of the church respecting the subject of belonging to a temperance society which has resulted in the calling of a council for the member charges the minister with telling an absolute falshood . . . The council Met consisting of Chapin of Pownal Hobarts of Yarmouth White of Gray Jones of Minot + Adams of Lewiston. after hearing + putting the evidence on Oath the council acquitted the Rev Benjamin Rice Honorably + saw no suitable reason why such a

malicious a thing should have been brought before the people.

Aug. 8, 1835 . . . Louisa Started on her journey July 28

Aug. 17, 1835 Got up Monday morning at 2 Oc. heated some water killed a Pig + Dressed him + got ready to start for Portland before Day light father went to market with a load of cheese + to help me along on my Journey we arrived in Portland at one quarter past 10 Oc. Did our marketing . . . I stayed + walked Round the city with Brother Adison Davis who was returning home to Boston the boat started at precisely 7 Oc. was precisely 11 hours in Reaching the wharf in Boston harbour I was very sick all night long . . . [He spent the day in Boston] went on the common saw some independant companys train or go through numerous evolutions . . . the next Day he [Davis] took a carriage + caryed me to Worcester to visit cousin Jonnathan + other cousins found them all well stayed till next morning had some nice fruit enjoyed my visit remarkable well took the stage next morning at 9 Oc. for Lisbon connecticut . . . arrived at cousin Brewsters about Dark ascertained that Louisa was over to Lisbon . . . stayed all night . . . next morning . . . I took my Beard of + cleaned up changed my apparel + cousin Brewster caryed me over to Lisbon where I one more greeted Louisa . . . [Later they took a boat from Norwich, Ct., to New York City, saw some sights in one day, took a boat to Albany, a train to the Erie Canal, and a canal boat to Rochester for 2¢ per mile plus board. They visited with relatives.] The Land all arround in that vicinity is of an even surface + the soil of the richest sort + most suitable kind for raising Wheat + making all other kind of vegetables grow most to perfection . . .

May 1836 [After his father's death,] I had some Little thoughts of Buying the other part of the Farm of the Heirs for I had a Deed of one half before for my services But on mature reflection I thought a smaller farm would be much more conducive to my happiness so I concluded to sell to my Brother Otis + buy a smaller farm. During all this time I wrote a Letter to Brother Jedediah Gordon at Henrietta NY for information respecting the rise of real estate in that country + he wrote that it had risen 30 per cent within one year that at ounce punctuated all my hopes for that country . . . Property had got so high that I could not see my way clear at preasant to go there but still I think I shall go if I am prospered in a few years So I Looked round and took council + mad a purchase of a farm near the centre of the town of New Gloucester a small farm of 70 acres + numerous buildings in prime order . . . consequently I shifted Quarters on the 17th of October. . .

CONDITIONAL INHERITANCE

by Douglas I. Hodgkin

Before pensions and Social Security, provision for old age could be precarious. Not all were successful in the accumulation of personal wealth, and, in rural America, personal wealth was tied up in the land that the infirm aged would find difficult to use for continuing income. Families were not always reliable. Town assistance might involve boarding with the lowest bidder, residence at the poor farm, or aid at a minimal level.

However, control of the family estate could elicit a higher level of support from one's family. Transfer of that estate to a son or son-in-law could be made conditional upon the provision of life support. I found this in successive generations of the Additon family of Leeds and Auburn, Maine.

Thomas Additon of Leeds (1794-1869), on 10 April 1855 sold for \$2000 two pieces of land including 90 acres and buildings to son Thomas Jefferson Additon [8:314], who then mortgaged the property back to the father [19:219]. However, the mortgage would be cancelled and the son would own the property if the son would perform the conditions "contained in a bond for the 'maintainance' [sic] of the said Thomas Additon + wife during their natural lives." The father and mother lived 14 and 16 years more, respectively.

On 3 September 1886, Thomas Jefferson Additon (1832-1897) entered into a similar agreement with his son Elwin E. Additon. Thomas J. sold for \$2000 to Elwin his 90-acre homestead farm and another piece of land, together with buildings [120:592]. Elwin mortgaged it back for \$2000, with the stipulation that he could pay \$4000 or fulfill conditions of a bond [120:594]. This bond, registered in the Registry of Deeds [140:455], provided that the mortgage would be cancelled and Elwin would own the property if he shall well and faithfully maintain and support the said Thomas J. Additon and Rosilla S. Additon wife of the said Thomas J. Additon during their natural lives and the life of the survivor of them, in sickness and in health, and shall furnish a suitable horse and carriage on the farm, for the use of said Thomas J. Additon and Rosilla S. Additon during their and each of their lives, and shall carry on the farm where all the parties hereto reside, in a proper and husband-like manner, furnish one half of the seed, pay one half of the money taxes, and all the highway taxes from year to year, (the said Thomas J. Additon to pay the other half of the money taxes and furnish the other half of

the seed) and shall give to the said T. J. Additon one half of the products of said farm and one half of the income of the growth of the stock upon the farm from year to year, after deducting the support of the parties hereto; and after the decease of said Thomas J. Additon, shall furnish all the seed and pay all the taxes, should the said Rosilla S. Additon survive the said Thomas J. Additon and shall furnish the said Thomas J. and Rosilla S. with one undivided half of "thehouse" [sic] on said farm, and shall do their cooking when they desire it, and furnish wood for their fire, prepared for the stove and in good order for use; and shall furnish a home for Annie S. Additon, daughter of said T. J. and Rosilla S. Additon, so long as she remains unmarried; and after the decease either of the said Thomas J. Additon or Rosilla S. Additon, the said Elwin E. Additon shall pay all taxes, and furnish all the seed, and shall give to the survivor one quarter of the net income of the farm and stock and at the decease of both said Thomas J. and Rosilla S. Additon, all stock, carriages, horses, and farming utensils, to be and remain the property of the said Elwin E. Additon. And at the decease, severally, of the said Thomas J. and Rosilla S. Additon, the said Elwin E. Additon shall furnish them with suitable burial. . . .

Annie married one year later. Thomas J. lived another eleven years; his wife, another nineteen.

Elwin Everett Additon (1864-1942) moved to North River Road in Auburn in 1922 after his buildings in Leeds burned the year before. He farmed with his son Orland, who died in 1931 leaving five orphaned children, who then were raised by their grandparents. Elwin's son-in-law Charles Meade then joined him in operating the farm.

Elwin also made inheritance of part of his estate conditional, this time in a will [File 22812]. Upon his death in 1942, among other provisions, he left to Charles K. and Louise M. Meade the homestead, tools, equipment, supplies, and thirty head of stock, provided (1) they "shall provide for my beloved wife, Mary A. Additon, a home together with comfortable care and maintenance" during her lifetime, and (2) they would furnish the five children of son Orland "a home for each and every one of them if they desire it until they respectively reach the age of twenty-one years, and furthermore, provide each and every one of them with such care, support, and clothes as may be necessary, and a high school education or its equivalent. . . ." Meade's mother-in-law lived another 10 years. The youngest of Orland's children reached age 21 in eight years.

[Sources in Androscoggin County deeds and probate records]

SKINNER TRANSCRIPTS

We continue to catalog Ralph Skinner's transcripts of his radio addresses that are available in the Society's files.

1964

May 10 Auburn's Episcopal Church
 May 16 How the Salvation Army Came to Lewiston
 May 17 How the Salvation Army Keeps Growing
 May 23 Trinity Episcopal Parish
 May 24 Trinity's Granite Church
 June 5 The Advent Christian Church
 June 6 Two Auburn Churches Became One
 June 7 Auburn's United Baptists
 June 13 Lewiston's Lutherans
 June 14 A Monument to Faith
 June 23 The Price of Federal Aid
 June 27 Three Denominations in One Church
 June 28 An Old Faith in a New Locale
 July 4 The Adventists Arrive
 July 5 The Advent Christian Church
 July 11 How St. Mary's Parish Started
 July 12 Beautiful Church on a Busy Street
 July 18 Maine's Seventh-Day Adventists
 July 19 Auburn's Seventh-Day Adventist Church
 July 25 The Greeks Come to Lewiston
 July 26 The Archbishop Arrives
 Aug. 1 Auburn's First Catholic Church
 Aug. 2 St. Louis Meets the Test
 Aug. 8 Lewiston's Beth Jacob Synagogue
 Aug. 9 Auburn's Beth Abraham Synagogue
 Aug. 15 The Newer Catholic Churches
 Aug. 16 The Growth of Holy Cross Parish
 Aug. 21 Maine's Beloved Economy
 Aug. 22 The Danville Churches
 Aug. 23 The Marston's Corner Church
 Aug. 29 Church of the Nazarene

Aug. 30 Auburn's Pentecostal Assembly
 Sep. 5 Where Auburn Got Its Start
 Sep. 6 What One Man Did for Auburn
 Sep. 12 Danville's Union Church
 Sep. 13 The Stevens Mills Church
 Sep. 19 South Auburn's Two Churches
 Oct. 12 The South Auburn Baptist Church
 Oct. 17 Auburn Methodists Move Ahead
 Oct. 18 A New Church for a New Age
 Oct. 24 The New Universalist Church
 Oct. 25 The Mormon Church in Maine

1965

Jan. 2 The Settlers Had to Have Shoes
 Jan. 3 Auburn's First Shoe Factory
 Jan. 9 Sweat Shops and Shoe Factories
 Jan. 10 Auburn Shoe Industry Takes Shape
 Jan. 16 Shoe Industry Spreads to North Auburn
 Jan. 17 When Seat Shops Spattered the Auburn Map
 Feb. 7 Early Shoemaking Inventions
 Feb. 13 Roak Sets the Shoe Pace
 Feb. 14 Big Fire and a New Start
 Feb. 20 Auburn Shoes in 1860
 Feb. 21 Auburn Shoes and the Civil War
 Feb. 28 All Auburn Shoe Firms Speed Up
 Mar. 6 Cushman, Shoes, and Machinery
 Mar. 7 Roak Block . . . and Steam Power
 Mar. 13 Auburn Shoes Show Style
 Mar. 14 Shoemaking Methods and Styles
 Mar. 27 From the Bench to Front Office
 Mar. 28 The Wise and Cooper Story
 Mar. 29 Shoe Factories Had Problems
 Apr. 4 Unionism Take Shape
 Apr. 10 Fitz Brothers Lasts
 Apr. 11 The Men Who Made Lasts
 Apr. 17 Makers of Shoe Patterns
 Apr. 18 From Shoe Patterns to Cutting Dies
 Apr. 24 Auburn Shoes in the 1880's
 Apr. 25 Auburn Adds Moccasins

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