

ANDROSCOGGIN HISTORY

June, 1997

Newsletter of the Androscoggin Historical Society

No. 21

DEATHS AMONG OUR DIRECTORS

We have been extremely unfortunate to lose three members of the Board of Directors during the past year. **Walter L. Perry, Jr.**, died on 3 October 1996. He had served as a member of our Board of Directors since 1986. He was very much involved in community service, including membership in the Mechanic Falls Fire Department, the Maine Antique Power Association, the Downeast Country Music Association and the Planetary Society.

Harold W. (Hal) Dutch died on 20 January 1997. He was an active member of the Society as a member of the Board (1983-1997), Vice president (1985-1987) and President (1987-1990). He contributed articles to this newsletter, most notably a series on our Society's history. He also was a leader of the Poland Spring Preservation Society and many other community organizations.

Ethelyn O. Penley died 22 April 1997. She provided us with devoted, meticulous service as Membership Secretary, 1979-1992. In 1993 she was elected an Honorary Director. She also was a member of Stanton Bird Club and Horizons 55.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At our annual meeting on May 27, 1997, Mary M. Riley was elected as the new Recording Secretary of the Society. Other officers were re-elected as follows: A. B. (Bob) Palmer, Jr., president; David C. Young, vice president; Michael C. Lord, executive secretary; Alma Palmer, membership secretary; Susan Sturgis, treasurer; and Richard L. Trafton, attorney.

The new members of the Board of Directors for 1997-1998 are Edward Hodgkin and Bernice Hodgkin. Those re-elected are Gridley Barrows, Leslie M. Eastman, Natalie G. Foye, Franklin Goss, Douglas I. Hodgkin, Eva Labonte, Merton Leavitt, Warren B. Randall, Mary M. Riley, Norman E. Rose, and Gordon V. Windle. Honorary directors are Florence Gremley, Ingrid Dutch, Geneva A. Kirk, Robert G. Wade, and Leslie M. Wight.

AHS ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Our Society now has its own home page on the World Wide Web. Thanks to the efforts of David C. Young and Joyce I. Scruggs, we can extend our visibility and accessibility to people interested in Androscoggin history throughout the world. Our address is <http://www.rootsweb.com/~meandrhs>

As of the end of May, the site already illustrates a variety of ways this resource can serve us and others. It contains information about the Society, including the dues schedule and officers. The texts of all past newsletters are included, with a table of contents for each. There is a list of books on local history by AHS members, as well as a list of recently reprinted town histories.

We also find Dave Young's compilation of "lost returns" of the 1790 Pejepscot census, a compilation of Keen(e) family genealogical material, the text of the Andrew R. Giddings diary of 1795, a reproduction of pages from the Lovejoy Family Bible, and a reproduction of a map of Androscoggin County. There are also links to other Androscoggin and Maine sites.

Our thanks to David and Joyce for their work, as well as to ROOTSWEB Genealogical Data Cooperative for server space.

INTERN ASSISTS THE SOCIETY

Todd M. Zinn of Newville, Pennsylvania, a history major in the Class of 1997 at Bates College, held an internship at our Society office and museum during May. The purpose was to learn about the operations of a local historical society.

Todd engaged in a variety of projects, including answering letters that required genealogical research, archival preservation of our glass plate negatives and stereoscopic cards, rehanging framed pictures and documents on our walls, labeling book bindings, and preservation of items in our sword, saber, and bayonet collection. Executive Secretary Michael Lord found him a pleasure to work with and enthusiastically described Todd's work as a valuable contribution.

ROBERT GIVEN'S ALASKAN DIARIES

In 1898, during the Alaskan Gold Rush, a group of men from Maine formed a corporation, elected officers, invested funds, and started for Alaska by train. First they went to Seattle and Vancouver, then through part of the Inland Passage north to the Aleutian Islands. They stopped at Dutch Harbor and on to St. Michael, Alaska. Robert Given of Auburn, Maine, left his little family and struck out with the other men. After one year, the corporation dissolved and Robert Given cut logs for the wood-burning Yukon River steamers for the next year and a half. He then left from St. Michael for Seattle and Maine. In 1922, he and his wife moved to California and raised oranges until his death in 1956 at age 87. The Society has the originals of his diaries as well as a transcription. The following are selections:

May 16, 1898. We started from Lewiston Wednesday the 11th at eight A.M. on the M.C.R.R. Changed at Lewiston Junction to the G.T.R.R. which we took as far as Chicago by way of Montreal and Port Huron, from there by the C.W.W. to St. Paul, and M.P.R.R. to Seattle arriving at 8 A.M. (being an hour late) Monday 16th, making five days to a minute after deducting three hours for the time set back by traveling west.

June 13. We arrived here, (Vancouver) at 11 P.M. last night. . . . The crows are as tame here as the doves are at home which seems funny, but they think they are all right here for there is a fine of \$50 for killing them.

June 22. We are out of sight of land today, with a good swell on which made some sick and others about the same as that. I was stake holder for a bet between J. R. Smith and W. H. Roe that the other would be sick first.

June 29. We . . . had a picnic dinner today [near Sitka]. We bought a big thirteen pound salmon last night for two bits. . . . We also took our dirty clothes along and washed them (mighty, wasn't the water cold!).

July 16. . . . The passengers set up a great howl when they heard of the navel [sic] battle at Santiago on July 4. A fellow nicknamed Chicago, lets and sells books and papers on board here, went over and bought some of the latest editions paying .25 each, he's letting them, he won't sell any, for .15 an hour.

July 22. . . . it seems funny to a state of Maine man to have it light enough to read a newspaper at midnight [at St. Michael].

July 23. . . . decided that some of us had better go to work, that is if we could get it as we would probably be here ten days or two weeks. . . . Talbot, Frank and I went to work on the night gang [as freight loaders] at \$50 a month including Sundays.

Aug. 26. . . . We pitched a tent and camped for the first time on Alaska soil [at Tananah].

Sept. 8. We went up the creek prospecting but found no colors.

Sept. 10. . . . business is rushing at Rampart building cabins, mostly wages \$1.00 an hour. There are two or three thousand people there at present.

Sept. 12. . . . we held a meeting tonight and decided six of us had better go to Rampart and work, the rest stay and build a cabin, house the provisions and prospect.

Sept. 13. Rus, Ward, Talbot, Mc, Frank and Henry were chosen to go to Rampart and work. We have been sorting our provisions for the boys to take to last them six months.

Oct. 14. Art, Russ and I started out at daylight and staked on Dewey Gulch. . . . Being the first, had the privilege of naming it so called it Auburn Gulch.

Feb. 14, 1899. Wardie dug a new water hole p.m. The water is full of wigglers.

Feb. 27. Talbot isn't any better, his legs are quite black, has the scurvy I am afraid. Henry has it too I guess. Art has a lame leg also. We are all starting in drinking spruce tea for a prevention.

Mar. 13. The Lewiston and Auburn Mining Co. divided property among its six members today. Art and Talbot who are going to pull together take one third, Ward and Tom the same. Rus and I ditto.

Dec. 22. The thermometer did not rise from bulb during day. Divided the night into three fire watches. I took it until midnight, Tyler until three A.M., Rus the remainder.

Dec. 23. We had no way of telling how cold it was. For thirty two hours, it was below 65. At 9 A.M. 45 below and windy.

Dec. 25. 44 below. Clear and windy. Rus, Tylor and I took dinner and tea at Rileys'. . . . Semp's [?] beer, tea, coffee, cocoa, soup, fish fried, escalloped oysters, roast moose, green potatoes, onions, corn, sausage, pickles, chow chow, bread, butter, cake, cookies, pies, plum pudding, fruit, confectionary, etc. Had fine time. . . .

Jan. 10, 1900. . . . Got letters from home dated September 11-16.

May 11. . . . The mosquitoes sang their song all night last night for the first time. Fixed up the bunk for the skateaters, or rather, not for them. . . .

June 17. All is quiet on the Yukon except the mosquitoes.

BALLOON FESTIVAL WALKING TOURS

Any person interested in giving a guided walking tour for Lewiston or Auburn with the new walking guide put out by the Chamber of Commerce should contact Gail Turner of the Great Falls Balloon Festival at 777-1578 (h) or 657-3040 (w) or Michael Lord at our office 784-0586. The tours are Sunday, August 24, 1997.

LETTER TO EDITOR RE BUCKNAM DIARY

NAMING OUR TOWNS: MINOT

Maine Maritime Museum
243 Washington Street
Bath, Maine 04530
3 February 1997

Dear Mr. Hodgkin:

I noted with interest the transcript from Nathan Bucknam's diary that was published in your June 1996 newsletter. Your members may like to know that the original of this intriguing diary is in the holdings of Maine Maritime Museum's library. Because it documents a young boy going to sea for the first time, because it records all or much of his sea-going career, because it includes the period of the Civil War, it is an important historical document. I think it is fascinating that Bucknam's seafaring aboard 63 vessels over 16 years took him out of the North Atlantic only once (to Rio de Janeiro). As the part of the transcript which you printed noted, he hoped to get to California during the Gold Rush, but so did every other seaman, and the vessel had a full crew before Bucknam arrived at the wharf.

Should any of your members wish to see the original, its accession number is G72.37, and its call number is SM-48/4. The library here is open most weekdays from 9:30 to 5:00 (except holidays); calling ahead is safer.

Sincerely,
Nathan R. Lipfert
Library Director

Minot was part of the Bakerstown grant that also included what are now Auburn and Poland. In 1802 the part east of the Little Androscoggin River was incorporated as Minot (divided in 1842 to establish Auburn). Petitioners for the new town sought the name Rayment, but Dr. Jesse Rice, the agent for the proprietors, inserted the name Minot to honor Judge George Richards Minot, who had assisted in passing the act of incorporation and who had just died.

Judge Minot (1758-1802) served as clerk of the house of representatives of Massachusetts beginning in 1781. He was secretary of the state convention that ratified the United States Constitution in 1788. He became judge of probate for Suffolk County in 1792. He also was a member of the court of common pleas and became chief justice in 1799. In 1800 he was one of the judges of the Boston municipal court.

Minot also was a distinguished historian who produced a work on Shays's Rebellion and two volumes on the history of Massachusetts, 1748-1765. He was one of the ten original members of the Massachusetts Historical Society and president of the Charitable Fire Society of Boston several years.

Sources: Ava Harriet Chadburn, *Maine Place Names* (Portland: The Bond Wheelwright Co., 1955), pp. 317-319; Georgia Drew Merrill, *History of Androscoggin County* (Boston: W. A. Fergusson & Co., 1891), p. 757; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. 7 (New York: James T. White & Co., 1897), p. 133; and *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. 13 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), p. 31..

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you have not already renewed your membership in the Androscoggin Historical Society for 1 June 1997 to 31 May 1998, please do so without delay. Circle the amount of the membership level that you choose.

Annual member \$5.00 **PRINT** Name(s)_____

Contributing member \$10.00 Address_____

Life member \$50.00 Post Office_____State_____ZIP_____

Please send me information on becoming a Corporate/Business Member.

Mail this form with your check to **Androscoggin Historical Society, Alma Palmer, POB 67, Minot, Maine 04258**

SKINNER TRANSCRIPTS

We continue to catalog Ralph Skinner's transcripts of his radio addresses that are available in our files:

1966

- Jan. 1 The Bates Name In Lewiston History
- Jan. 2 The Bates Mills Get Going
- Jan. 8 Lewiston Mills and the Civil War
- Jan. 9 Bates Fabrics Went Big During Civil War
- Jan. 15 The Bates Mills, 1850-1878
- Jan. 16 The Mills Upgrade Again
- Jan. 22 Textiles . . . and the Roaring Twenties
- Jan. 23 Recovery from the Crash
- Jan. 29 The Maine Mills Part in World War Two
- Jan. 30 Five Maine Mills in One Firm
- Feb. 5 Bates Manufacturing Management Changes
- Feb. 6 Late Bates Manufacturing Changes
- Feb. 12 The Story Behind Goff Block
- Feb. 13 The Goff's Corner Story
- Feb. 19 James Goff, Land Developer
- Feb. 20 How Goff Block Was Built
- Feb. 26 Goff's Corner Days
- Feb. 27 Early Settlement Politics
- Mar. 5 Squire Little Calls on the President
- Mar. 6 Dana Goff, Early Railroader
- Mar. 12 The Approach to Auburn Hall
- Mar. 13 The First Auburn Hall
- Mar. 19 A New Hall Takes Shape
- Mar. 20 The Auburn Hall Stores
- Mar. 26 Auburn Hall, Municipal Building
- Mar. 27 Auburn Hall Stands Alone
- Apr. 2 School Use of Auburn Hall
- Apr. 3 Auburn Hall, Civic Center
- Apr. 9 Streets Names in Early Auburn
- Apr. 10 More on Those Old Auburn Streets
- Apr. 16 Graves of War Veterans
- Apr. 17 Veteran's Graves without Markers
- Apr. 18 Green Light for Home Health Services
- Apr. 23 Auburn's 25 Cemeteries
- Apr. 24 Mount Cemetery
- Apr. 30 Paul Hildreth Pioneer
- May 1 How Did Hildreth Do it?
- May 7 Hildreth Hit It Right
- May 8 The Indians Called It "Amitgonpontook"
- May 14 Paul Hildreth, Lone Pioneer
- May 15 The Second Man in Lewiston
- May 21 Our Valley, Two Centuries Ago
- May 22 Harris Expedition to Lewiston
- May 28 Lewiston's Second Settler
- May 29 Lewiston's First Mill
- June 4 The Unnamed Pioneers
- June 5 Year 1773, Lewiston Population 29
- June 11 Amos Davis Kept a Diary
- June 12 Little and Bagley Were There
- June 18 Little and Bagley, Business Men
- June 19 Amos Davis Arrives
- June 25 First Settlers Had Their Pick
- June 26 The Herricks Join Davis
- July 2 Community Life Starts in Lewiston
- July 3 No Place for a Pioneer
- July 9 Tales of the Pioneer
- July 10 That First Hard Year in Lewiston
- July 16 Grandfather Paul Hildreth
- July 17 Hildreth's Grandson Remembered
- July 23 The Price Paul Hildreth Paid
- July 24 Land Terms for First Settlers
- July 30 Paul Hildreth, Ferryman
- July 31 Dispute About the Ferry
- Aug. 6 The End of Hildreth's Ferry
- Aug. 7 Hildreth Tries Litchfield
- Aug. 13 Whose Land Was It?
- Aug. 14 Paul Paid for His Land
- Aug. 21 Time Changed the Hildreth Holdings
- Aug. 27 The First Settler Steps Aside
- Aug. 28 Curse of an Old Land Deal
- Sep. 3 Paul Hildreth's Good Fortune
- Sep. 4 Hostility Toward Little
- Sep. 10 A Mob Goes after Little

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