



Hampden Historical Society

Newsletter – Fall 2021

Christmas Bazaar... Sadly, not this year.

It is with great sadness that we again this year have made the decision NOT to hold our Annual Christmas Bazaar given the resurgence of COVID in our region. While we are doing our best to follow CDC guidelines regarding closure, masking, social distancing and other responsible measures, it isn't possible for us to ensure the safety and health of our volunteers and guests for such an event within the confines of our facility.



But the good news....

By now you likely have received information regarding the sale of raffle tickets for our Christmas Raffle, which has always been held hand in hand with the Bazaar. We deeply appreciate your support of this initiative. The sale of tickets will help ensure that our financial health remains strong as we continue to navigate this unusual time.

In the meantime, we wish you all a safe, healthy and joyous holiday season. We look forward to seeing you again in 2022 if not before!



Update From Your Board of Directors

Well, I think we can all agree that it is difficult to believe that fall is upon us and winter is lurking just around the corner. What is even more difficult to believe is that we are still continuing to find our way through the pandemic that doesn't seem to want to go away. Even though we haven't been able to get together the way we normally would, the Board of Directors has continued to muddle its way through the work that needs to get done. With that, here is a little update to keep you informed. And, as always, should you have questions or concerns along the way, please don't hesitate to let us know.

While the Kinsley House was open to the public for a short month midsummer, we have again closed our doors to the public. The Archive is available, by appointment only, for research purposes. However, the Museum remains closed until further notice. During this time, our volunteers have continued to work on projects, especially in the Archive, that were set aside during the time of our construction. There is always catch-up work to be done and our volunteers have been diligent about getting the job done. This is all very good news, except that now we will be so organized that we probably won't be able to find anything! A good problem to have, I guess.

We also have continued receiving items for our collections. Our members and supporters have been generous, and we are keeping Jerry Stanhope very busy with the cataloging of gifts to the Society. Thank you all for continuing to remember us.

In other matters, the Board will be developing a strategic plan for projects that need attention. As you know, we have several structures, all of which need ongoing maintenance and upkeep. Among the projects will be a new roof and interior work to the Carriage House. Thanks to the generosity of our

members and other supporters as well as receipt of a recent bequest, we are able to ensure that our facilities remain in good condition for the future. We have also embarked on a lengthy process to develop a plan for how best to move forward with digitizing all of the information in our Archive. A slow and deliberate approach is under way and it will take time but we have begun the journey.

As always, we are looking for new members and volunteers. If you, or someone you know, is interested in joining us, please reach out. Now in our 51st year, our future is bright thanks to all of you.

NOVEMBER

The dry, dead branches of the trees
The barren fields that just the other day
Were grassy beds of beauty,
The garden, sere and brown-
All these are beautiful to me
Because I know
That April will find tiny blooms
Amid the snow.

Mildred Thayer - 1912-2005
Hampden Highlands



From Whence They Came

The 1800 census of Hancock County (of which Hampden was then a part) contains a bonus feature—a special column entitled “from whence emigrated.” This data is of historical value in tracing migration patterns from the densely populated parts of New England to Eastern Maine towns. From the 1800 census we find a list of 904 individuals comprising 133 families that were cataloged for Hampden. Of the family “heads” we can say that all were immigrants to Hampden! To be 21 years of age and a Hampden native in 1794, one would have to have been born by 1773. Robert Wheeler, son of Benjamin, is one of the few who could make this cut, being born in 1770 after his family arrived on the Souadabscook. It is claimed that Robert was the first white child born on the Penobscot River above Castine. A true “local” son, he was present at the Battle of Hampden in 1814.

At that first “official” town meeting in 1794 the Wheeler Family (considered Hampden's “first family”) was presumably represented by 1st generation sons, Benjamin II and Robert. Of Benjamin I's four sons that were in the area only Benjamin II is listed as an “early settler,” probably indicating that Robert owned no property. Born in Durham, NH in 1863, Benjamin II would have been 31 years old when he and his wife Joanna (Crosby) Wheeler were hosting this official group of townspeople. We assume that the meeting was held at Benjamin's home, which he had constructed at the upper end of Dudley Street. At that April meeting 29 names were in the record; there were 41 town offices to fill!

Although the town was officially incorporated in 1794, there is some evidence that town business was conducted as early as May of 1784. Records of any earlier meetings have undoubtedly been lost and the first meeting on record was held on April 7, 1794.

So here they were a bunch of migrants in a way since most had not been born in the area, gathered in a private home to form a new town. The town to which they aspired had no schools, no churches, no public buildings of any kind. There was a saw mill, a grist mill and lots of small farms. Hampden had started its shipbuilding days and in 1794 had launched two schooners; the *Dispatch*, owned by John Crosby, with Robert Wheeler as the mariner

and the *Venus*, owned by Benjamin Smith, with Nicholas Crosby as the mariner. The infamous “Brick Store,” which later stood at the east end of Elm Street West was not constructed until 1807 and Sterns Mill Lumber Company didn't get going until 1836.

Hampden's main entrepreneur, John Crosby, came to Hampden from Woolwich about 1795. He started out as a farmer but later built his “Long Wharf” at the east end of Elm Street East and carried on an active shipping trade with Europe and the West Indies. By 1800, Hampden, not Bangor, was the largest town in Eastern Maine. The fall of water in the Souadabscook, to the extent of 120 feet two miles from its mouth was our ticket to ride.

Most of our early settlers came from our own (then) state of Massachusetts. Cape Cod contributed the greatest number. Fifty-five families in the 1800 census had come up from “the Cape.” A similar situation occurred with the settling of Orrington; from a total of 127 families in that town in 1800, there were 62 who had arrived from Cape Cod. Some of these families had been recently caught up in the Indian unrest and probably a quiet spot on the Penobscot looked welcoming.

So—55 families from Cape Cod, six from Boston, two from Worcester, two from Plymouth and one from New Bedford. Thus, Massachusetts contributed 66 families or about 50% of Hampden's initial total. Of course, we were still attached to the state of Massachusetts, which may have helped account for this large contingent. Howes Mayo (Mayo Road) was part of the Cape Cod group along with Perez Hamlin (1st cousin twice removed to Hannibal Hamlin), Aaron Walker (one of the founders on the Eastern Star Grange) and Ruben Newcomb (a name that shows up in many Hampden pedigrees). From Boston came Gabriel Jhonnot (friend to George Washington, owned the Gibbs House) and Elisha Delano came from New Bedford. New Hampshire donated five families, which included Benjamin Wheeler and John Swan; Rhode Island two, which included Simeon Gorton (caller of the first meeting and Bob Hawes); and from Connecticut came Dr. Hodges, a physician.

Several towns in the province of “Maine” produced one or two families although seven came from Gorham and five from Standish. Martin

Kinsley (Kinsley House) moved from Bridgewater; Jacob Curtis (Dam Site) from Saco; Andrew Patterson (George Patterson) from Georgetown; and John Crosby (the Long Wharf) from Woolwich.

Some appeared to come as related families; the Amos and Abel Hardy families came from Limington; Benjamin, William and Ephraim Murch all arrived from Gorham; the Samuel and Richard Casey families came from Boston; and from Standish, the families of Jonathan and Jeremiah Simpson. A total of 10 families indicated they arrived from “Place Not Known.” (How could you not know where you had previously lived?)

Then there were the true “foreigners” - from England came William Pruden and William George. And although Gabriel Jhonnot is listed as being from Boston, he was originally a French Huguenot. Three families came from Canada: Samuel Emerson (Emerson Mill Road), Richard Blaisdell and Mordecai Thayer. The first two of this trio, the Emerson and Blaisdell families, were technically Americans. They had emigrated to Canada to take advantage of the empty farms resulting from the expulsion of the Acadians (folks of French descent) from the Maritime Provinces. That was a dark period in Canadian history (1755-1764) and the British soon realized that the army needed farms and farmers to supply their food and drink. Empty farms in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were turned over to American immigrants who were invited up from several New England states. But the time came when these new residents were expected to pledge allegiance to England. Not wanting to become British subjects, many of these immigrant families, the Emersons and the Blaisdells among them, returned to the United States. My mother was an Emerson and her Emerson genes resulted from the marriage of one of Samuel Emerson's sons to one of Richard Blaisdell's daughters in St. John, New Brunswick. This couple then settled in Hampden along with several other Emerson sons.

Returning to Hampden: those who made their settlement here good by the 1st of January 1784 were afterwards confirmed in their titles by Massachusetts upon payment of the nominal fee of \$6.50. If they came after that date, and settled before January 1st of 1794, they received their allotments of one hundred acres for \$50. Previous to the survey and allotment, the residents here were very much in the same

situation of “squatters,” as many of the early settlers on western lands are called.

Immigration to this country began in 1607, when a group of 100 colonists founded Jamestown, Virginia. In New England, 99 settlers founded Plymouth in 1620. From 1630 to 1640 an extensive movement of settlers from England to America became known as “The Great Migration.” Immigration was “merely” a matter of finding space on a ship and getting to the eastern coast. Folks just walked off the ship – no visa, no passports, no checking for head lice! After certain states passed immigration laws following the Civil War, the Supreme Court in 1875 declared regulation of immigration a federal responsibility. Thus as the number of immigrants rose in the 1880s and economic conditions in some areas worsened, Congress began to pass immigration legislation. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and Alien Contact Labor laws of 1885 and 1887 prohibited certain laborers from immigrating to the United States.

Between 1841 and 1860, most immigrants all came from Ireland, Germany, Great Britain and France. This group aroused hostility and resentment among those settlers who had been new immigrants themselves not many years earlier and so it continues. It was not until after World War I that the U.S. passed a quota law on the number of immigrants allowed in, based on their country of origin. A 1921 quota law allowed each country to send to the United States each year only three percent of the persons of that nationality living in America in 1910. The Immigration Act of 1924 changed the quota to two percent and made 1890 the base year. Since then, many changes have been made to those laws and as we know we were just in an emergency situation on our southern border in regard to immigration from Haiti and the Central American countries.

And so - The emigres from three countries, four states and 23 Maine towns came together on a bright and sunny morning (we hope) on the 7th of April, 1794, in a little clapboard house at the top of Dudley Street (with a supposed good view of the Penobscot) and following a gestation period of at least 10 years, and birthed the Town of Hampden. One of the items on the agenda that day was this question: “To see if swine shall run at large.” The vote was “No, they shall not run at large” and I think we can all live with that.

- Bob Hawes

Sources:

- World Book Encyclopedia, 1969. Chicago Field Enterprises
- History of Penobscot County, Maine, 1882. Cleveland Williams Chase & Co.
- History of the Wheeler family in America. Bangor Public Library
- Historical Sketches of Hampden, Maine – Hampden Historical Society Archives
- Early Penobscot County Settlers. Down East Ancestry, v. 1. June 1977
- U. S. Census of Hancock County for 1800.

Kinsley's - Believe It or Not!

WHO OR WHAT IS BURIED AT THE OLD ACADEMY?

In 1923, a basement (cellar) was constructed under the Old Hampden Academy Brick Building. The work was done by H.W. Matthews. It is kind of an interesting place to visit. One can see the old burnt beams under the first floor from the fire in 1857 that almost destroyed the school for the second time. It has been used for a variety of things such as a locker room for the school football team.



An example of a burnt beam under the old Hampden Academy brick building

What is interesting, though, is on the floor in the Northwest corner of the old basement is what appears to be a cement casket. Constructed so that it is totally sealed by cement. There are no markings on it.

There is no mention of pouring such a cement structure in the contract with H.W. Matthews. Thus, was this cement box part of the original basement construction or was it added later?



The cement box (casket) located in the basement of the old Hampden Academy brick building

Much speculation has gone into what is contained in this cement box. David Greenier has joked it is the first Hampden Academy Mascot. However, could it be a long-forgotten time capsule? Possibly some important documents or valuables inside? A body of a student, teacher or principal so devoted to the school they wish there remains to be placed in the school?

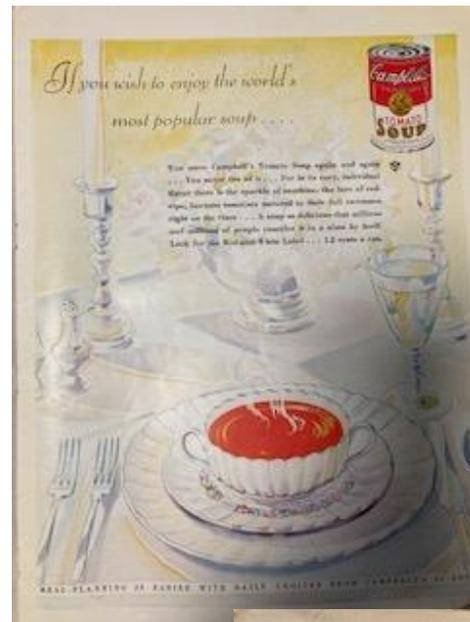
Fascinating; that is if you “Believe It or Not.”

October
by [Robert Frost](#)

O hushed October morning mild,
Thy leaves have ripened to the fall;
Tomorrow’s wind, if it be wild,
Should waste them all.
The crows above the forest call;
Tomorrow they may form and go.
O hushed October morning mild,
Begin the hours of this day slow.
Make the day seem to us less brief.
Hearts not averse to being beguiled,
Beguile us in the way you know.
Release one leaf at break of day;
At noon release another leaf;
One from our trees, one far away.
Retard the sun with gentle mist;
Enchant the land with amethyst.
Slow, slow!
For the grapes’ sake, if they were all,
Whose leaves already are burnt with frost,
Whose clustered fruit must else be lost—
For the grapes’ sake along the wall.

Remember these?

Taken from a recently uncovered 1933 magazine in our archives.



From Our Kitchen to Yours

The recipe this time around is courtesy of member and volunteer Jane Jarvi (as it is adapted from a Sherille Baker recipe). These are absolutely delicious and hard to stop eating! Enjoy

Cranberry Oatmeal Bars

350 degrees, 45 minutes, parchment lined 9 x 13 pan

1½ cups packed brown sugar

½ cup white sugar

2 tsp. cinnamon

2 cups flour

4 cups old fashioned oatmeal

2 cups cranberries

1 cup chopped nuts (pecans or walnuts) – *Optional*

Mix dry ingredients well

Add 1½ cups butter, melted. Mix into dry ingredients

Then add 3 eggs...beaten

2 tsp. vanilla

Finally bake, cool and cut into squares.

The Witch Story – Part III The Role of Orlando Bagley

Well, boys and girls, the witch story continues with an interesting coincidence. Just to bring you up to date I'll tell you that my 9th great grandmother was a woman from Amesbury, Massachusetts named Susannah (North) Martin. She was arrested on the charge of witchcraft on May 2, 1692, tried by jury, found guilty and later hanged along with four other women. This story was written up for the Spring Newsletter.

In our previous newsletter, Kathy Walker told the story of her ancestor, Mary Bradbury, who along with five other women was also tried and convicted of witchcraft on Sept 10, 1692. On Sept 22, the five were hanged but Mary somehow, with family help, managed to escape her jail cell. Her friends kept her well hidden until May of 1693 when the witch fever had pretty much abated. Mary lived until 1700, dying at the age of 85; a happy ending to a sad tale.

Now, returning to Susannah Martin, she was also taken to the Salem Court in 1692 by the local Amesbury sheriff whose name was Orlando Bagley. Flash forward 329 years and among the current members of the Hampden Historical Society are a very fine young couple, Rick and Karen Bagley. Karen is currently serving on our Board of Directors. At our recent HHS yard sale in June, I was working along with Karen and I recounted to her this bit of information regarding Orlando. "OMG," she said, "that's the name of our first American ancestor," ("OMG" is text-speak for "Oh, my gosh!"). Well, we compared a few dates, Karen sent me the pedigree of Orlando and I sent her the bit of information on his arrest of Susannah, and it seems we had a match!

Orlando Bagley Jr. was born in Amesbury, Massachusetts on February 18, 1658. He was 34 years old when he came to arrest Susannah, married to Sarah Sargent, and the father of five children. He was the local constable, a man of considerable influence in his district. Orlando and Susannah shared a previous unpleasantness. Susannah was first accused of witchcraft by William Sargent Jr., Orlando Jr.'s brother-in-law. In turn Susannah's husband, George Martin, sued Sargent for two counts of slander against Susannah. Martin eventually withdrew one of the charges and the court dismissed the second one. But it was a small town, and such events are remembered.

On April 30th, 1692 a warrant was issued for Susannah's arrest on a charge of witchcraft, and she was taken in on May 2nd. "When she saw Orlando Bagley approaching her on that morning just mentioned, little did she know of his errand. He was a personal friend of long-standing and we can perhaps imagine her surprise when -- he read the warrant.

To the Marshall of the County Of Essex or the Constable of Amesbury: "You are in Their Majestys names, etc." It stated that Susannah Martin was to be "apprehended" and brought to the house of Lt. Nathaniel Ingersall in Salem Village in order to be examined on "Charges relating to high suspicion of sundry acts of Witchcraft done or committed by her upon ye Bodys of Mary Wolcott, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam and Mary Lewis of Salem Village, etc., etc."

Bagley later wrote in his report: "According to this warrant I have apprehended Susannah Martin Widdow of Amesbury and have brong or caused her to be brought to the place appointed for her examination pr Me."

Salem Village this day May, 1692.
Orlando Bagley, Const. Of Amesbury

Then, since there was no other mode of transportation in 1692 (apparently the court did not supply horses), they walked the 20 miles to Salem, taking about 7 hours. The outcome of the examination is known. In all, the lives of 14 women (some died in prison) five men and two dogs were taken during that unfortunate summer and fall.

Sources:

The Lineage of Orlando Bagley- Courtesy of Rick and Karen Bagley

<http://Ancestry.com> – Orlando Bagley

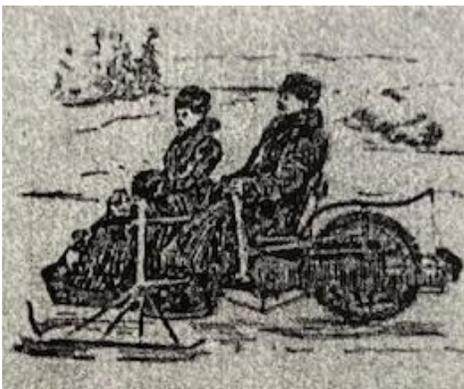
The Salem Witch Trials & My Ancestor Orlando Bagley, Beth Trissel

Bob Hawes

Day's Gone By...

A Horseless Sleigh for Winter You Say?

An adaptation of the Bollee horseless carriage, driven by a gasoline engine to winter use, is described in the *Scientific American*. Doctor Casgrain of Quebec is the contriver of the new form of vehicle. In place of the pneumatic tired wheels of the ordinary Bollee carriage, he substitutes steel runners for the forepart of the carriage, and a driving-wheel, whose rim is studded with steel points, for the rear part. The steering apparatus acts upon the forward runners. The gasoline reservoir, containing seven quarts, suffices for a run of 50 miles.



Taken from The Youth's Companion
September 15, 1898

DID YOU KNOW...

Just preceding the Civil War, Hannibal Hamlin, then Vice-President of the United States, was enjoying a brief visit and rest at his home in Hampden. He felt sure at this time that war was imminent and on occasion he spoke out of doors to many of the towns people. At one time when he felt that he had sufficiently aroused their feelings, he said: "Now we will have a drill!"

"But we have no arms," they said.

"No arms," shouted the Vice-President. "Let every man take a picket from that fence over there for a gun!"

So the men received their first drill from Manual of Arms under the command of the Vice-President of the United States on the Main Street of Hampden in front of Mr. Hamlin's home (which was located on the site where Dunkin Donuts is located).

And then there is this...

Another note on the military side concerns the militia around the 1880s or 1890s. The men were at the town hall busily preparing for their departure to participate in the state maneuvers. Early the next morning they must be ready to embark on the steamer, "Hector," which would carry them to the site. Guess where? To Bangor!

Notes taken from *Historical Sketches*, a publication of Hampden Historical Society

Change of Address

Please let us know when any of your contact information has changed. This includes email addresses, telephone number/s and mailing addresses. It is important to us that we keep you apprised of all that is happening at HHS. You are important to us and we thank you for your help.

Hours of Operation

The Archive and Museum at Kinsley House are currently closed until further notice due to COVID. However, individuals can call or email to make an appointment to visit the Archive for research purposes, but the Museum remains closed. We appreciate everyone's understanding and patience during this trying time.

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