



Hampden Historical Society

Newsletter – Spring 2021

2021 at the Kinsley

While the Board continues to deliberate on ways in which we may be able to open our doors safely to the general public, we are still closed at the writing of this newsletter. Under consideration is the ability to open the Archive by appointment only. The Museum, however, would remain closed for the foreseeable future.

Please keep a watchful eye on our website (www.hampdenhistoricalsociety.org) and for emails regarding further details about our opening. Like everyone else on the planet we would like nothing more than to open our doors wide and share all that we have to offer. But, we must do so in a safe manner to ensure the health and well-being of our volunteers and our visitors.

We have said it before but it's always worth repeating: We deeply appreciate everyone's support and understanding as we weave our way through this difficult time in our nation's history.

2021 Bake, Book and Yard Sale Fundraiser

The Society has traditionally held its annual Bake, Book and Yard Sale in June. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it is our hope that by mid-August we will be able to hold this significant fundraiser again.

While the Museum and Archive continue to be closed for the time being to the visiting public, we would like to ask for consideration of donations for our yard sale as you begin your spring cleaning. If you have donations for the yard sale, please give us a call or email us and we will find a convenient time to have items dropped off at the Kinsley House. The Yard Sale has always been one of our larger fundraising efforts and we look forward to getting back into the swing of all that is normal in the not-too-distant future.

Steamboat Lore of the Penobscot

Written by the late Reginald Clark (1916-2010)

Supplemented by Bob Hawes & Sandra Clark Boynton (2021)

In 1833, a group of Boston merchants formed the Boston and Bangor Steamboat Co. which in 1834 launched the 157' Steamer – BANGOR I. History tells us she was a side-wheeler, fore and aft, rigged with a speed of 10 knots and we are led to believe she was entirely successful. The fare from Boston to Bangor was \$6.00 on this small Steamer that consumed around 25 cords of wood per trip. She was sold in 1841 or 1842 to Turkish interests employed in carrying pilgrims to Mecca.

The Steamer BANGOR II came out in 1842 or 1845 and was an iron ship built on the lines of a yacht and called handsome, being the first sea-going, propeller-built steamer in the United States. She caught fire on her second trip to Bangor and beached at Dark Harbor, Islesboro. It was rebuilt and remained on the Bangor run until 1846. After that she was sold to the U.S. government being refitted as a gunboat and served in the Mexican war. During the 1840s, Captain Menemmon Sanford acquired the Boston and Bangor Steamboat Co. which now became the Sanford Steamship Co. Captain Sanford, before he died in 1852, controlled more steamers on the Eastern seaboard than almost any other individual in the country. For his entry into Maine waters he placed the Express and Charter Oak in service. Cornelius Vanderbilt competed but only briefly. The Boston to Bangor run rates were reduced from \$7.00 to .50 cents in a rate war, with Captain Sanford and his family coming out the winners.

The year 1845 saw the inaugural by Captain Sanford of the so-called outside route direct from Cape Ann to Monhegan, navigated by time and courses. PENOBSCOT I was the first to try what was to become the accepted practice of the overnight Boston to Bangor run. The PENOBSCOT was replaced in 1849 by KENNEBEC I. During the

period between the 1840s and 1850s, various boats ran on the Boston to Bangor run and it is hard to name them all as in those days they were constantly moving those early steamers from one run to another. The steamer, MENEMMON SANFORD, launched in 1854, was one with a colorful carrier. On July 5, 1856 on the Boston to Bangor run she ran ashore on Thatcher's Island off Cape Ann, the blame being placed on the officers celebrating the 4th too well. Later being repaired and put back in service, she continued along serenely until disaster again overtook her in July 1862 when she struck Dry Salvage Ledge near Cape Ann. Freed on November of that year, she went to war later to be wrecked off the Florida Capes.

In 1863, the steamer KATAHDIN, came out for the Bangor run and remained until she blew her final blast in 1894. During that span of 31 years, she was only in one major difficulty and that was in the gale of 1886 breasting tremendous seas for 10 hours off Cape Porpoise. Finally, she limped into Portsmouth, NH with her bulwarks stove in and decks swept clear. The coal supply had been exhausted and interior fittings and inflammable freight had been fed to the furnaces. In 1867, the KATAHDIN's sister ship, the CAMBRIDGE, came out being the last and finest of the Sanford lines. She was the first of the modern locals to have her dining room on the saloon deck rather than in the hole and utilizing the open well deck pattern of saloon and state room arrangement. The steamer CAMBRIDGE's brilliant career ended on the morning of February 10, 1886 by striking on Old Man's Ledge off Port Clyde. She was, by the way, the only steamer on the Boston to Bangor passenger run lost in the 100-year service. After the loss of the CAMBRIDGE, the steamer LEWISTON, built in 1856, and the FOREST CITY, built in 1854, ran frequently as relief boats on the Boston to Bangor run.

In 1882, the steamer PENOBSCOT came out, being the first of the Boston to Bangor steamers to have electric lights and was probably the most plush of any that ever served on the line. Being built largely from plans of the officers of the Steamship Co., she never was especially popular being cranky and a bad roller. On June 10, 1894, the CITY OF BANGOR made her first appearance on the Penobscot River. Being one deck higher than the KATAHDIN and PENOBSCOT, and 20-odd feet longer, some thought she was too long to turn in the river. Later the CAMDEN and BELFAST made that same turn and they were 40-odd feet longer than the BANGOR. At

the time of the CITY OF BANGOR and her sister ship, the CITY OF ROCKLAND, that came out in 1901, freight and passenger service increased by leaps and bounds. The CITY OF BANGOR earned the name of "The Floating Gold Mine."

The steamers CAMDEN and BELFAST made their appearance on the Boston to Bangor run in 1907 and 1909, respectively, while the smaller steamers, CITY OF BANGOR and CITY OF ROCKLAND went on the Kennebec run. The BELFAST and CAMDEN remained on the Boston and Bangor run only being replaced in the winter months from 1926 to 1934 by the freighter S.S. CORNISH. After 1925, passenger service was abandoned. During winter months, the CORNISH came as far up the river as Winterport with freight being hauled from there to Bangor. In 1935 during winter months, the CORNISH went on the New York to Richmond run and the BELFAST came back on winter run to haul freight until summer when both the BELFAST and CAMDEN would again go into passenger service.

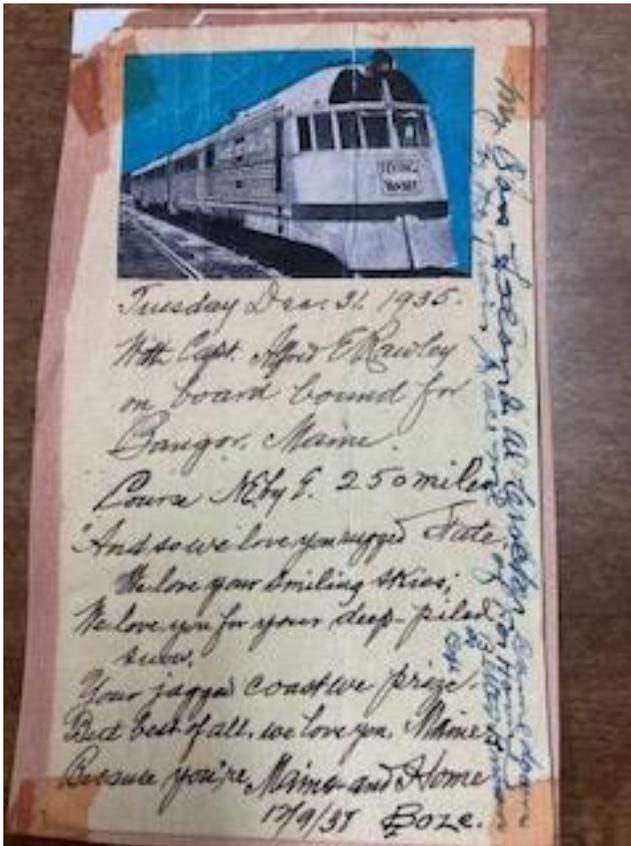


When the Boston boats, as they were called, passed the location of the old Hampden Steamboat Wharf, they always saluted both on inbound and outbound trips. Tugs and tankers payed their respect to the old landing as they also saluted – a custom now long forgotten. As the Boston boat blew from Hampden, I can remember my grandmother, the late Mrs. A. E. Rawley, called by phone the boat agent in Bangor telling him the boat just passed Hampden. The agent, who in my time was Mr. Galen Goodwin, could tell anyone waiting for friends the exact time the boat would dock at Bangor.

On December 27, 1935 my grandfather, the late Captain A. E. Rawley, took the BELFAST on her last

trip to Boston on the Boston to Bangor run, which was now being abandoned after more than 100 years of service. It was a sad day. I drove my grandfather to Winterport to take his final command on his, and the ship's, last trip. Many were at the wharf at Winterport along with reporters to wave farewell to the last of the "Great White Fliers" as she gave the final blasts on her whistle and departed the waters of the Penobscot forever.

We have several articles at the HHS regarding Capt. Rawley's last trip on the Belfast. They are usually nostalgic, but here is a story that's a little more cheery. How did Capt. Rawley get back to Hampden? Well, it seems he rode home on the Flying Yankee of the Central Maine Rail Line. The accompanying photo (postcard) can be found in Capt. Rawley's scrapbook.



We print the message here since it is a little difficult to read:

Tuesday Dec. 31, 1935.
 With Capt. Alfred E. Rawley on board bound for Bangor, Maine.
 Course NE. by E. 250 miles.

“And so we love you rugged state,
 We love your smiling skies,
 We love you for your deep-piled snow.
 Your jagged coast we prize.
 But best of all, we love you, Maine
 Because you're Maine and Home

12/9/38 Boze.

Written on the side by Capt. Rawley is the message: “My son Leon and Al Rucker came down to the trains to see me off for Home.” “Better known as Boze” (Boze was apparently a nickname for Al Rucker). We aren't sure who wrote the poem, it may have been written by Rucker just for this occasion. You'll notice that the card has two dates; one at the top reads, Dec. 31, 1935. We assume that is the day that Capt. Rawley returned to Hampden. Then at the bottom of the card is the date 12/9/38. It looks as if the card was written at two different times. In any case it's a neat piece of trivia and we really like the phrase: “Course NE. by E. 250 miles,” probably Captain Rawley's last nautical trip message.

When Harry Truman was interviewed after leaving the White House and the Presidency. He was asked, “Mr. President what did you do on your first day home from Washington?” Mr. Truman replied, “I took the bags up to the attic.” Well, we hope Capt. Rawley, after his ride on the Flying Yankee, had a more exciting time on his first day back to “Maine and Home.”

I (ROH) was 11 months old when Capt. Rawley took this ride on the train but the Flying Yankee continued her trips to Boston long enough that I too, many years later (circa 1953), rode on this train to Boston and return to see the Boston Poultry Show. Not nearly as noteworthy as Capt. Rawley's trip, but for me, at the time, an exciting expedition.

Here are some memories of the Belfast, one of the finest boats ever to cruise the Penobscot, from Sandra Boynton, great granddaughter of Capt. Rawley.

The Belfast left the Bangor Steamboat Terminal (about where the Seadog is now) in the late afternoon and voyaged overnight so the passengers would wake up on Atlantic Avenue the next afternoon. At the start of the trip she stayed inbound until she hit Rockland: stopping at Winterport, Bucksport, Belfast, Camden, and arriving at Rockland at seven p.m. Leaving Rockland at eight, she would head for the open sea and arrive in Boston mid-afternoon the next day. The Belfast was an impressive two-stack

steamship with a telegraph line to the crew and a glamorous saloon where passengers were made comfortable on horsehair chairs to read, smoke or just converse. The dining room was large and always perfectly set. There was a total of 186 staterooms plus 102 berths in the men's cabin and 61 in the women's cabin. Staterooms were priced according to their luxury: there was one at \$5.00; nine at \$3.00; two at \$2.50; 130 at \$2.00; and 44 at \$1.50. All staterooms had portholes and bunks.

The Belfast had been in service on the Penobscot from 1909 to 1935, except for certain winter months when replaced by the S.S. Cornish. She was later purchased by the Colonial Navigation Company and renamed the Arrow. Her sister ship, the Camden, was also sold and both operated between Providence and New York for a few years. With the outbreak of World War II both ships were sold to the government and refitted for war in 1943. They saw service in the Hawaii area. After the war the Belfast was tied up in Puget Sound and in 1947 was being towed to Astoria, Oregon, to be put in cold storage, when the towing line broke. She went aground at Ocean Park, Oregon and apparently she lies there still. Her whistle was removed and sent back to Belfast and installed at the Belfast Packing Company and could be heard over the bay in that city for several years.

It was said of Capt. Rawley: "Never lost a ship; never injured a passenger" and said to be one of the most popular men in the steamboat service. (Captain Rawley passed away on October 22, 1941.)

*Sources: Steamboat Lore on the Penobscot, 4th, ed., 1950 by John M. Richardson
Scrapbook of Captain Alfred Rawley, courtesy of Sandra Clark Boynton
Archives of the Hampden Historical Society*



Annual Appeal Under Way

By now, many of you have received information regarding our Annual Appeal. With the major capital campaign now behind us, the Board of Directors is continuing its mission of preservation through its first-ever Annual Appeal. While ongoing maintenance and upkeep are always a priority, our next major focus has turned to the Carriage House Project.

The project involves scraping and painting the Carriage House, replacing the stairwell inside, and eventually re-shingling the roof, which is over 25 years old. The preservation of this historic structure is critical to ensuring that our collection of antique tools, summer kitchen, carriages, sleighs and wagons continue to be properly cared for and protected.

If you or someone you know would like to contribute to this effort with a donation to our 2021 Annual Appeal, it would be much appreciated. Donations may be mailed to the Society at P.O. Box 456, Hampden, ME 04444, or you can visit our website www.hampdenhistoricalsociety.org and use the "Donate" button.

Thank you for your consideration. Together we can ensure the preservation of our history for future generations.

Nominating Committee Report for Board Memberships

The Board's Nominating Committee has put forth the following nominations for election to the Board of Directors for 2021/22. Should you have questions or concerns regarding the nominations, please contact Committee Chair Mary Poulin at mpoulin24@gmail.com.

Ellyn Chase, President
Jim Husson, 1st Vice President
Jerry Stanhope, 2nd Vice President
Vivian Gresser, Treasurer and Secretary
William Nickerson, Assistant Treasurer
Mary Poulin, Immediate Past President
Karen Bagley, Director
David Parsons, Director
Jeff Fister, Director (replacing Storie Brown)

Ahhh But a Dream

There was a young hen with tradition.
Earning a B.A. was her lifetime's ambition.

But she said, "If I lay,
An egg every day,
I still can't afford the tuition."



Annual Hampden Academy Scholarship

As graduation season approaches, we are pleased to again this year offer a \$500 scholarship to a deserving Hampden Academy graduate. Our ability to offer this scholarship is the direct result of the generosity of our members and supporters. We asked for your help by donating to the scholarship fund and you delivered. Thank you so very much.

Calling all Directories ... Can you help?

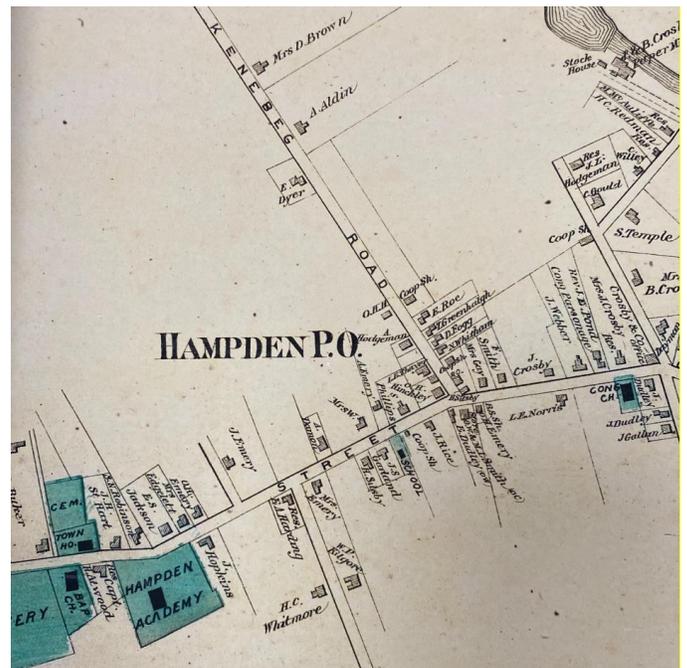
We are looking for old Regional Directories that cover the area of Bangor, Brewer, Hampden, Orono, Old Town collectively. If you or someone you know has any of the old directories, we would be glad to take them off your hands! We currently have directories for the following years: 1926, 1928, 1929, 1949, 1950, 1965, 1970, 1973, 1974 and 1985. Thanks in advance for any help you can provide in helping us build our Archive collection.

Kinsley's - *Believe It or Not!*

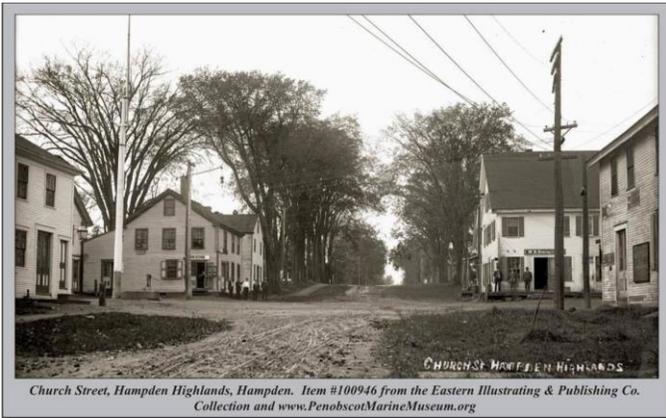
As you travel out the Kennebec Road, going by Hampden Hardware and the Town Office – wait – that can't be right! Or maybe it was. It depends on whether you Believe it or Not.

Old maps of Hampden show that what is now Route 9/202 or Western Avenue was originally named the Kenebeg Road and what is now the Kennebec Road was called Church Street.

The map below is from 1875, showing what is now Western Ave. when it was labeled as the Kenebeg Road. Note: the spelling of Kenebeg with one "n" and a "g" on the end. Was this a spelling error by the cartographer or was this really named Kenebeg? We don't know at this point.



The next picture is of Church Street (now the Kennebec Road) around 1900 looking west. You can see the Liberty Pole to the left and Bangor would be to the right. Look really closely and you can just barely see Harmony Hall up the road on the right. This street was probably named Church Street as there were two churches almost next to each other; the Universalist Church (now Harmony Hall) and the United Methodist Church.



When did the names of these two roads change to what we know now, why did they change the names and what confusion must have resulted from changing these road names? We don't know. Maybe some more research will provide some answers. That is if you "Believe It or Not."

REMINDER

**Annual Membership Dues
Due by May 1**

**Your dues are very important to us
and help cover the annual cost of operations,
maintenance and upkeep.**

**Thank You!
We hope to see you soon.**



Property Tax Time!

The following piece was taken from one of the Society's newsletters from many years ago. Given that most of us recently paid our property taxes in town for 20/21, it is rather interesting to think of what the taxes were in the late 1700s compared to what we pay today. Read it and weep!

"Until 1784 the town of Thomaston was the most easterly along the Penobscot that was officially recognized and taxed as such. No records are available for 1785. In 1786, the towns of Camden and Belfast were taxed for the first time. The present towns of Searsport, Stockton Springs, Frankfort, Winterport and Hampden were also taxed for the first time as one unit with the official name being Plantation #3, on the west side of the Penobscot River, from Belfast up the river to include Widow Wheeler's Mills. The tax for that year was 159 pounds Sterling. No records are available for 1787.

For 1788, the tax was 34 pounds under the same name for 1786. In 1789 we find that name changed to Sowadabscook Plantation with a tax of 16 pounds. In 1790 the name reads: Sowadabscook Plantation now Frankfort, tax: 13 pounds. In 1791 the name for the entire territory was still Frankfort, tax: 13 pounds. No records are available for 1792. In 1793 the name was still Frankfort, tax: 28 pounds. In 1794 the plantation split up into three towns—Frankfort, Winterport, Hampden. The tax for the town of Hampden for that year was 21 pounds. This was the last year that the taxes were assessed in the English pound. For the years 1795 to 1800 the taxes for Hampden were \$72 each year."

Note: Widow Wheeler was the wife of Benjamin Wheeler, who settled on the Sowadabscook Stream in 1765, and built the first grist mill and saw mill in Hampden.

FROM OUR KITCHEN TO YOURS

The recipe for the Spring newsletter is from Jim and Patsy Husson. Jim's mother, Rita Husson, used to make these cookies for her family as an after-school treat. We know you will enjoy them as much as the kids did then!

Self-Frosted Oatmeal Cookies

Cookie Mix:

1¼ cups sifted flour
¾ tsp. baking soda
¾ tsp. salt
½ cup softened shortening
¾ cup brown sugar
1 egg
2 Tbsp. milk
1 tsp. vanilla
1½ cups quick rolled oats (uncooked)

Cookie Topping:

4 chocolate bars (1 ounce each)
Pecan halves

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare cookie sheet.
2. Sift together the flour, salt and baking soda.
3. Add shortening, sugar, egg, milk and vanilla. Beat until smooth (about 2 minutes).
4. Blend in rolled oats (dough will be quite stiff).
5. Shape dough to form small balls. Place two inches (2") apart on greased sheet.
6. Flatten each with bottom of a glass, covered with waxed paper.
7. .Bake cookies for 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven immediately.
8. Place a small square of milk chocolate on each cookie. Remove cookies from cookie sheet.
9. Press pecan into chocolate on each cookie.
Makes about 3 ½ dozen DELICIOUS cookies!

Thanks Jim and Patsy for sharing this family favorite.

MARCH

March, march on.
We are glad to see you go.
It tells us winter's over
With it cold and ice and snow.

Like a roaring lion, you came in
And so, without a doubt
You will give us pleasant weather
And like a lamb, go out.

For April follows close behind you
With her smiles and squalls and showers.
But underneath the pure white snow
Wait the sweet May flowers.

The Tulips in their lovely gowns
Of yellow, pink and red
Are waiting for the magic wand
In their well-kept flower bed.

March on, March
Unless for you to say "NO."
Blow and bluster all you want.
Just the same you've got to go.

*By Clara (Callie) Baker Dunton, 1954
"Home Made Rhymes"*



Hours of Operation (effective 2021)

The Kinsley House Museum and Archive are currently closed to the public due to COVID-19. Please feel free to leave us a voice message at 862-2027, email us at hampdenhistorical@gmail.com or contact us through our website at:

hampdenhistoricalsociety.org

or via Facebook if we may be of assistance at this time.

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.

HHS Contact Information

Telephone: 207-862-2027

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