



## Washington Historical Society Newsletter

FALL 2006 EDITION

### President's Message



I was able to benefit from Charley Eastman's two years of dedicated leadership in assuming the Society's Presidency this year. This report follows our 2006 season which featured a succession of dynamic presentations thanks to the work of Frank Musmanno and his committee.

Our Society is entirely self-financed and is open to all. We maintain the museum and barn in Washington and old schoolhouse on East Washington Road. The barn experienced much greater attendance this year and received several donations of historical artifacts. This year the barn painting was finished and Phil Barker, Jim Gaskell and others' work inside and out left us with a very acceptable building. Nearly every weekend Rachel and Richard Crane genially hosted the visitors.

Our income resulted from food sales, the July "Flea Market", Barn Dance, and your dues and charitable contributions for which we are most grateful. In the coming year our expenses will include a new foundation for the rear of the museum and an updated fire and security system for both the museum and barn.

We meet on the second Monday of each month from April through November at Camp Morgan Lodge. The popular Pot Luck dinners begin at 6 PM and the presentation follows a brief business meeting at 7 PM.

Our Society depends on its volunteer members and your supportive efforts are gratefully acknowledged by the officers and board. Bring your friends and neighbors to the meetings and help us continue to grow and become even more vital in the Town of Washington.

Bob Evans, President, Washington Historical Society



### UP-DATE ON NELLIE NEWMAN

*By Tom Talpey*

Many members will recall the 1869 Diary of seventeen year old Nellie Newman, found in an antique shop in Florida by Jerry Johnson, who subsequently donated it to our museum collection. It was reported on by

Charlene Cobb in an article entitled "A Peek into the Past" in our Spring 2004 newsletter, after being deciphered by Charlene, Gwen Gaskell and myself.

For two years we have been searching diligently for a picture of Nellie and this past summer finally obtained one. It turns out that Tom and Valerie Britton, of Troy, NH, in searching for genealogical information on the Newman family, ran across Nellie's name on our web site. Tom is the great grandson of Nellie's elder sister Emma and one day this summer Tom and his wife stopped by to visit. The museum was being hosted that day by member Yertie Nelson, who immediately telephoned Gwen who urged the Brittons to return when we could spend some time visiting with them. After establishing contact by mail and several exchanges of email, a date was set in late August when Tom and Valerie could visit again. They returned with a treasure of family pictures and information which they have generously shared with us. Two pictures of Nellie which they brought are shown here. It is conceivable that the picture on the left might have been taken when she was 17, on one of the occasions mentioned in her diary when she went to Hillsborough to have her picture taken. In the second picture she appears to be somewhat older, with a necklace and bracelet, with her hair done up for the occasion. It was scanned and enlarged by Valerie from a 2"x3" tin-type in the Britton's possession. Unfortunately, Nellie died "of a fever" in 1875 at age 23, which sets an upper limit on the age that she could have been at the time that the tin-type was made.

		
<p>Nellie Newman in her late teens, believed taken circa 1869-71</p>		<p>Nellie Newman in her early 20's, believed taken circa 1873-75</p>
<p>Pictures courtesy of Tom &amp; Valerie Britton of Troy, NH.</p>		

Nellie's uncle, Solon Newman, ran a photographic studio in Hillsborough starting about 1868. The studio was taken over by Charles McClary from 1871 to 1875 and subsequently passed through seven other proprietors, mainly through family connections, until it was sold in 2002. One proprietor, William H. Manahan, Jr., ran the studio for over 50 years, from 1899 to 1953, when it was turned over to Cyrus Phelps. When the business was sold in 2002 the negatives, numbering close to 100,000, many of them glass plates, were donated by Donald and Catherine (Phelps) McCulloch to the Hillsborough Historical Society and now comprise what is called the Manahan-Phelps-McCulloch Collection. I have been working as a volunteer cataloging, organizing and scanning this collection and, although it seems reasonable that one or both of these pictures might have been taken in that studio, we have not been able to establish the studio connection of either picture with certainty.

The Brittons also brought us copies of a wealth of other pictures of the Newman family, including Nellie's mother, both of Nellie's sisters, Clara and Emma, Emma's husband George Reed of Stoddard, pictures of their two daughters, Cora and Ellen, and the Reed farm in Stoddard where Emma lived and brought up a family after she was married. (Tom Britton is the grandson of Cora.) There was also a marvelous picture of Nellie's father, George, with seven of his brothers, all born in Washington. Copies of these photos have been added to the

museum collection. They also had four sisters, and another brother who died when he was 24, making thirteen children in all--what a family!

## ELECTION CAKE

*We understand that in the recent elections, out of 415 votes cast by the registered voters in Washington, there were 94 votes for a straight Republican ticket and 94 votes for a straight Democratic ticket. To commemorate this momentous event, Charlene Cobb sent us this recipe.*

Loaf cakes made with yeast were popular in New England, especially around holiday time and at church suppers and family feasts, as far back as the early 1800's. Election Cake (also known as Dough Cake and March Meeting Cake) often was baked on election days and **allegedly sold and served only to those who voted a straight ticket.** [How would one tell?-ed.] The loaf is deliciously moist and spicy.

2/3 cup warm water	2 teaspoons cinnamon
2 packages dry yeast	1/2 teaspoon cloves
3 & 2/3 cups flour	1/2 teaspoon mace
1 cup butter, softened	1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
2 eggs, beaten	2 teaspoons salt
2 cups brown sugar	1 & 1/3 cups raisins
1 cup sour milk or buttermilk	2 cups chopped dried figs
1 teaspoon baking soda	1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans
	1 tablespoon flour

1. Grease two 9 x 5 x 3 inch loaf pans.
2. Pour the water into a large mixing bowl and sprinkle the yeast over. Stir and let stand for 5 minutes.
3. Add 1 cup of the flour and beat until well blended. The mixture will be quite stiff.
4. Add the butter and beat until smooth, then add the eggs, brown sugar, sour milk or buttermilk, 2 & 2/3 cups flour, the baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, mace, nutmeg and salt, and beat for 3 minutes.
5. Toss the raisins, figs and walnuts in the tablespoon flour to coat them, then add them to the batter, and stir to mix throughout.
6. Divide the batter evenly between the two pans. Cover loosely with a towel and let rest for 1 & 1/2 hour.
7. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. near the end of the resting time.
8. Bake the cakes for about 55-65 minutes, or until a broomstick inserted in the center of a loaf comes out clean. Start testing for doneness at 45 minutes.
9. Remove from the oven and let cool in the pans for 5 minutes, then turn out onto racks to cool completely.

## Richard Crane's Memories from Down on the Farm

*As told to Rachel Crane*

William and Emma Crane lived on a small farm in the area of the Eccard Farm. The farm was so rocky that Roscoe Crane, son of William and Emma, once said they had to sharpen the sheep's noses so that they could eat between the stones in order to survive. Will and Emma had nine children of their own, as well as taking in two more, when Doris and Dane Crain's parents died of the flu.

Will Crane had a wooden silo by the barn, across from the "Red" house, which he filled with corn ensilage each fall. What a job this was, using hand sickles, horses and wagon, and the old ensilage cutter with lag carrier. This

machine was powered by a "put-put bang" engine (make and break engine.) The old lag chain carrying the chopped corn up to the top of the carrier often broke, or one of the poplar wood staves would break and then it had to be replaced.

One year when the last corn stalks were going up on the carrier, William was so happy he threw his old straw hat high in the air and hollered "shoot it!" It so happened George C. Woods, a trapper and hunter, was standing nearby with his trusty old shotgun. He quickly raised "old trusty" to the sky and fired, blowing the top right out of the hat which landed on the cutter, went through the knives, up the carrier and into the silo. They then finished off the hard cider jug contents, celebrating the end of filling the silo once more.

NOTE: I believe that George Woods lived on the road that goes up over the dam in East Washington village and comes out on the Sleeper Road. One could also go onto the old Smith Pond Road, which ends up on Route 31.

#### WHO INVENTED BALED HAY, ANYWAY?

This was a question I asked my father one hot summer day. My father, Roscoe Crane, stopped working for a few minutes, took a drink of cool spring water and said "I'm not sure, but I think it was Lowell Abbott."

Lowell Abbott was a farmer who lived on the old Farley Road in Hillsborough, which leaves Danforth 4 Corners Road at the top of the big hill past the Lyman Farm (presently owned by R. Crane.) This road turns into two ruts, then up a squirrel path, up a tree and into a knot hole.

Lowell was kind of a slow to moderate person who didn't often get things done in the right season of the year. He planted his garden in July and cut his hay in November. One year he got his hay raked into windrows and as it was still wet, to some extent, it froze in long rows. This didn't bother Lowell much; later in the day he hitched up his horse and, taking a log chain, he went to the field. He hitched the horse to the end of the row of frozen hay and pulled it back to the barn. At the barn he chopped the hay "log" into three-foot pieces and stacked them into the hay mow. (This is why we credited baled hay to Mr. Lowell.) Father then said "If we don't get busy we'll be as bad off as Lowell was." Note: Lowell Abbott died as the result of being gored by a Guernsey bull.

#### THE DEMISE OF THE OLD ENSILAGE CUTTER

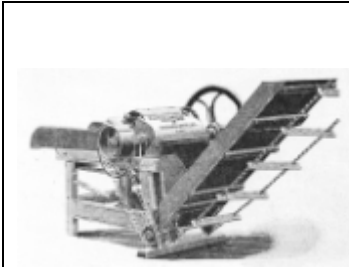
In the 1940's I had most of the Hillsborough shop class rebuilding the old lag carrier. Badly worn chain links were replaced and new poplar paddles and side rails were installed. Cutting corn that fall was slow and more difficult, as many of the men who usually helped out with this job had been drafted into the Army. (Walter Chamberlain and Harley Fowler were two of those drafted.)

On a hot and late afternoon the old cutter needed some tightening of its nuts and bolts, so Frances and Perley Crane quickly completed the task between loads of long green cornstalks. Starting up the old cutter, now run by an old 1932 Chevy automobile engine, the first bundle of corn was thrown in. A loud "bang" was heard and metal flew in all directions. The large flywheel on the cutter broke free, rolled toward the house, turned down the hill and finally lost speed as it spun into the alders at the bottom of the hill. At this time, Frances looked at Perley and hollered "Perl, where in hell did you leave the monkey wrench?" Sure enough, he had left it right on the cutter table in front of the knives; thus the old chopper had come to an abrupt halt, shattered far beyond any hope of repair.

#### A NEW CUTTER IS ACQUIRED AT AUCTION

The next day, Father, Mother and I were on our way to a farm auction in Claremont to purchase a replacement. Sure enough, a practically new, little used Papec chopper with a moving lag table feed and blower to replace the lag carrier was being offered for sale. The auctioneer, Ted Langdell, from Milford, NH, knew father and saw that we were interested in the "chopper." Said Ted to father, after hearing his tale of woe, "If you want that machine, you be here when I get ready to sell it."

Another man was also interested in buying the cutter, but he was nowhere in sight when the chopper came up for bid. Father was there, however, and the auctioneer called for a starting bid (of a pre- arranged price) father held up his hand.... Down came the gavel and the auctioneer said "Sold." The other gentleman who was also interested in the cutter, came running from out behind the barn. He was hollering at the top of his lungs saying he wanted to bid on the chopper. "Where were you when I was selling it?" asked the auctioneer. The man replied "Out in the out-house." Whereupon the auctioneer replied "Well I guess you're s\_\_\_ out of luck this time." This was a great chopper and blower, with no problems, and we filled many a silo with it before we went out of the dairy business.



*Typical Ensilage Cutter of the type described. Loading table at the left, cutting knives in cylindrical shield at the center in line with the flywheel, lag carrier headed off to the upper right towards the top of the silo. Lag chains and wooden staves visible beneath the carrier bed. The one bought by Richard's father at the auction used a blower instead of the older lag carrier chain system to load the chopped ensilage into the silo.*

Illustration from the *Encyclopedia of American Farm Implements*, by C. H. Wendel, published by Krause Publications, Iola, WI. Used with permission.

## **RICHARD'S QUESTION OF THE SEASON**

How much cream does it take to make a pound of butter? Send your guess to [Jimgwen\(at\)gsinet.net](mailto:Jimgwen(at)gsinet.net)

## **LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT SEASON AT THE MUSEUM**

*By Gwen Gaskell*

It is the job of the Museum Committee to decide on the subject of the displays for the next summer and we do try to come up with items of interest and information to add to the public's education. We have featured mills, boarding houses, original settlers of Washington who still have descendants living here, schools, people of Washington's past and this year we focused on the summer camps for young people over the years. We are open to suggestions and consider ourselves fortunate that this summer we received the gift of a large collection of World War II memorabilia, including a collection of model ships of the war. This was given in memory of Winslow Feener. The collection will be in our display next summer along with some uniforms, flags and other items in our collection. We hope that this will be a display of much interest to many. We will have more to report on this in the spring issue of our newsletter. **If any members have photographs of themselves in WW II uniforms, standing or head and shoulders only, we would like to have the loan of them to scan, enlarge and exhibit next summer in this display.** Please contact Tom Talpey or Gwen Gaskell.

Before the museum opens for next summer we have a large and expensive job to do in repairing the back section of the foundation. The back of the basement was built on new fill when the building was built about 30 years ago and it has been cracking the foundation walls as it settles as well as that portion of the floor. These cracks let in air, moisture and insects which are not good for the collection and patching does not do the job, so we have to dig in and get the job done correctly. Any help you may wish to give toward this project will be greatly appreciated for without contributions the job will draw the society funds down to "bare bones" once again.

The museum committee has asked that I thank everyone who helped by hosting the museum and school house this past summer and we know that our visitors also visited and enjoyed the barn which was hosted every week by Richard and Rachel Crane. We THANK all of you and hope you enjoyed your volunteer time.

Jim and I also thank everyone who helped us with the society fund raisers at the Sheep and Wool Festival in May and at the Wool Arts Tour in October.

**Happy Holidays to all of you.**

## **THE PEDESTRIAN**

*by Tom Talpey*

One of the entries which caught my attention in the 1869 diary of the teenage Washington girl, Nellie Newman, which we have dubbed "Nellie's Diary," was on the page for Monday, January 25, 1869, where she wrote "Weston in Concord." The following day she recorded "...Mr. Weston, the Pedestrian, passed through here about 8 o'clock, had walked forty miles was going 23 more to Keene, started from New York to travel 5000 mi. for \$25,000."

That seemed like a LOT of money for the year 1869. Curiosity getting to me, I started by looking him up in an old Encyclopedia Americana where I found that his full name was Edward Payson Weston and that he earned his living by walking all over the country (and Europe) for bets, contests and prizes. Using the more modern Google internet search I gleaned many more details of his career. In addition, he published a journal of the trip, called "The Pedestrian," a copy of which I used to verify some of the details. \*

His fame began at age 22 when he made a boast while dining with a friend that if Abraham Lincoln won the presidential election he would walk the nearly 500 miles from Boston to Washington, DC, to attend the inauguration. In a speech as he was starting out he announced (quoting from his pamphlet) that he "had made no money-bets, but had wagered six half-pints of peanuts" that he could do it in 10 days. He engaged two men to follow him in a carriage to bear witness that he actually walked the entire distance and to carry spare clothing and supplies, together with stacks of advertising flyers which he would leave off at various stops along the way to help defray the expenses of the trip. One of his major sponsors was the Grover & Baker Sewing Machine Co. However, most of the places where he stopped would not charge for food or lodging, presumably because of the publicity which his visit generated.

Starting out from the Boston State House at 12:48 PM on Feb. 22nd, 10 days before the inauguration in 1861, he was spurred on in every town by cheering crowds, and a "cortege of buggies." <http://www.trivia-library.com/a/america-most-famous-walker-edward-payson-weston-part-2.htm>. "In one village [Framingham, MA] he was kissed by a bevy of ladies who requested that the kisses be relayed to the President." A more serious delay took place in Worcester, where he spent some time extricating himself from an arrest for having left a previous debt unpaid in that town. Outside of Leicester, MA, he encountered snow nearly two feet deep, having to stop frequently to rest. He was greeted by cheering crowds everywhere and in the town of South Brookfield he was even escorted by a brass band. In Connecticut he encountered rain, mud and slush, was chased by a dog and sprained his ankle, but still kept on, reaching New York City on the morning of Feb. 27th. Most of the time he would eat as he walked, "munching on sandwiches offered by villagers as he trudged by." He would snatch catnaps and partake of light meals at houses along the way and occasionally stay at a hotel. "His longest snooze, at a Trenton, NJ, tavern, was less than 6 hours." "At the Continental Hotel, in Philadelphia, he refused to ride the new steam elevator, saying 'I will not alter my mode of travel' and walked up to his room. Two days later, after an all-night walk, he reached Baltimore, ate breakfast, and then started out in a driving rain over muddy roads on the final lap. He made the Capitol on March 4 [in the late afternoon], too late

to see Lincoln sworn in but not too late for the Inauguration Ball, which he had enough strength to attend that night." The journal relates that he was introduced to Lincoln, who offered to pay his way home by means other than foot. But Weston declined, saying that since he had failed to get there in time he would vindicate himself by walking back.

After an interlude in which he may have served in the Union Army, and possibly after he had married (I haven't found the proof of when or where, but I did find a reference to his daughter) he turned professional in 1867, at age 28, calling himself "Weston the Pedestrian" and making a 1300 mile hike from Portland, ME, to Chicago in 26 days. <http://xoomer.virgilio.it/globetrottersd/payson.htm> states that by then, "long distance walking had become a glamour sport. Arenas would routinely fill to the rafters for walking matches and record attempts. Weston became a great crowd pleaser, with his black velvet knee breeches, blue sash, white silk hat and kid gloves." On some of his walks he would stop and give lectures at cities along the way. The title of one of these lectures is noted as "Tea versus Beer."



*Edward Payson Weston posing for a portrait near the beginning of his career. He walked through **Washington, NH, in 1869 when he was 30.***

*Photo used with permission from John Weiss & Andy Yelenak <http://xoomer.virgilio.it/globetrotters/payson.htm> and <http://www.runningpast.com>.*

The trip referred to in Nellie's dairy was a wandering 5000 mile trek which started in Bangor, Maine, with plans to walk to St. Paul and return to New York. He never completed it, however, ending the walk in Buffalo, already four days behind schedule. Walking in the winter it was no wonder! Presumably he never got the \$25,000 prize that Nellie mentioned.

Piecing together articles from various local newspapers I have been able to trace an outline of his walk through Washington, as well as the entire state of New Hampshire. He entered the state at Wakefield, on the Maine border, and walked from Union Village to Concord, arriving at the Phenix Hotel on Monday, Jan. 25th, at half past three in the afternoon. After resting for two hours he set out for Hillsborough, stopping during the night at a farmhouse in East Weare. He reached the American House in Hillsborough at three in the afternoon, dined and left at five for Washington. Late on Tuesday evening, the 26th, (around 8 o'clock, according to Nellie's diary) he passed through Washington, halting a few minutes for refreshments (presumably at the Lovell House.) He was "conspicuously dressed in a showy uniform with a lofty white plume stuck in a military cap." Walking via Old Marlow Road and Gilsum, in the cold and dark, through the middle of the night and accompanied by a party of six people in a sleigh, including a reporter for the New York Tribune, he reached Keene at six in the morning on the 27th. (Historical Society of Cheshire County, Monadnock Moment #390.)

There is some question about this reporter, as another source states that the reporter was from *Turf, Farm and Field* magazine-- perhaps there were at least two reporters in the entourage.) He rested at the Cheshire House in Keene until quarter past two in the afternoon and then started on his way in the direction of Westmoreland and Walpole and on into Vermont, "witnessed by a large crowd of boys and girls."

Later in life at age 70 he started on March 16, 1909, to walk from New York to San Francisco, aiming to do it in 100 days. Fans turned out by the thousands along the route to cheer him on. "He was snowed on, rained on, attacked by mosquitoes, and menaced by hoboes. Crossing the Rockies winds were so strong that he had to crawl on hands and knees, [making] four miles in 24 hours. But the old man pushed on, hitting San Francisco in 104 days." He deemed it a great failure and the following year he hiked back, "this time starting from Santa Monica, aiming to reach New York in 90 days. He did it in 76." His last big hike was in 1913 at age 74, from New York to Minneapolis. He died in New York at age 90, two years after being hit by a taxi and being confined to a wheelchair. Although he seems to be an unabashed showman, you have to admire the fellow.

There have been numerous long distance walkers over the years who have become famous. One is reminded of Doris "Granny D" Haddock, the Dublin, NH, hiker who on Jan. 1, 1999, at age 89, began a 3200 mile walk from California to Washington, DC, to demonstrate her concern for campaign reform. She walked 10 miles per day for 14 months, staying with supporters and making speeches along the way. Arriving in Washington in Feb. 2000, she was met by over 2200 people. Ya gotta respect Granny D, as well!



*Portrait of Edward Payson Wilson, taken at the Spooner & Wells Studio, less than two weeks before he departed on his walk from New York to San Francisco in 1909.*

*(obtained via email from the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division)*

And, finally, this year a man calling himself "Buckwheat" Donahue completed a walk and canoe jaunt from Miami Beach, Florida, to Skagway Alaska, to raise money and awareness for a Skagway hospital. He had started walking on Oct. 1, 2005, and 327 days later, on Aug. 24, 2006, arrived in Skagway, using a canoe for some of the Alaskan portions of his 7000 mile journey. A map and journal of his trip can be found at [www.buckwheat.info](http://www.buckwheat.info)

\* *"The Pedestrian: being a correct journal of incidents on a walk from the state house, Boston, Mass., to the U.S. Capitol, at Washington, DC, performed in ten consecutive days, between Feb. 22nd and March 4th, 1861."* I obtained a copy of this fascinating, rare 48-page pamphlet through the Cornell University Library Alumni and Friends Access service and have deposited it in our museum. It makes a very good short read for anyone interested in borrowing it.



## \*\* Newspaper References:

The People, Concord, NH., Jan. 28, 1869

The Republican Statesman, Concord, NH, Jan. 29, 1869

Farmers' Cabinet, Amherst, NH, Jan. 28, 1869

NH Argus & Spectator, Newport, NH, Jan. 29, 1869

Cheshire Republican (later Keene Sentinel), Jan. 30, 1869

In addition, the *New York Times* has over 200 references to Weston, mostly around 1909-1910 relating to his walks out west, when he was apparently a regular correspondent for them.

## Local News Items

### Penniman School

During the late summer of 2006 it was discovered that the Penniman School, the old District #4 brick school house, had met its final demise. Roof fell in, many bricks scattered. Located near the top of the hill on Old Marlow Road, northwest of Mellen Pond, it was built in 1827 and quoting from the Jagers' history book, *Portrait of a Hill Town*, "It served as a school for over 60 years, then as a reunion spot for some decades...." There is an interesting account of it as well as two photos, starting on page 105 of that book, and a map (page 103) showing its location. As described by the writers of the older 1886 "*History of Washington*" book, Squire Thomas Penniman was noted "both for his generosity [to the town] and for his operation of a potato whiskey still..." The museum possesses several of the primitive school seats from the Penniman School and they are on display in our District #5 School House in East Washington.

### Telephone connection interrupted

After 58 years of continuous service the telephone to the Edward Bruen house in the center of Washington was shut off when the property was recently sold. This may be a record hereabouts for continuous service under one name.

## BARN DANCE

(October 14, 2006)

*Pictures courtesy Bob & Sue Hofstetter*



Sue Hofstetter and her grandson Jonas



A small portion of the nearly 100 dancers and spectators who attended our October Barn Dance.