



Washington Historical Society Newsletter

SPRING 2002 EDITION

President's Message

I went up to the Museum today to try to locate some dated information on the cemeteries. Our archivist was there and supplied me with four or five copies of information, which had been compiled previously by volunteers, and it had all the information that I needed. There were several very dedicated volunteers who took pictures of every gravestone in the cemeteries and compiled all of the information from the stones. What a remarkable file we have!

And while I was there I was introduced to a lady from Goshen, who is not one of our WHS members, but who was volunteering her time to help with computer work for our Society. Is it any wonder that NH has the highest rate of volunteerism of any state in the country?

Our Society has come to be what it is today because of some very dedicated volunteers doing all sorts of things. Early on it was the cookbook and food sales, parades, displays, fundraising, refurbishing the building to become the Museum, taking care of the grounds, gardens, and snow. Now the annual Cafe and flea markets. Being officers and directors and archivists, not to forget hosts for the museum, and committee members: there is a never-ending list of the possible connections that a person can have in the name of volunteerism, to the Washington Historical Society.

Have you volunteered lately? It is really a rewarding experience. On April 20th we will be having our spring freshen-up day. How about coming to the museum and lending a hand? Your efforts would truly be appreciated. And if you have a special talent or interest, just ask us and we just might have a special need for it. My heartfelt thanks to all of the nice folks who are volunteering now.

Phil Barker

IT'S TAPPING TIME

by Gwen Gaskell

In our archives at the museum there is a board about 5 inches wide and 24 inches long. It seems that in 1881 O.W. Batchelder decided to keep a record of when he tapped, when he took the buckets down and how many pounds of sugar he made. The only information missing was how many buckets he had put out. He was making hard sugar, as that was the main sweetener for cooking and table use in those days.

It was cooked beyond the syrup stage, beaten and poured into pans to harden, then scraped or broken up for use, probably kept in a big crock with a cover.

Orrin W. Batchelder came to Washington in 1879, at the age of 50, and settled at what is now known as Chestnut Glen Farm on the Old Stoddard Road or Highland Lake Road. Perhaps it took two years of "spare time" to build a sugarhouse and gather up the equipment needed to make maple sugar. In 1881 the record began on "the board." His wife died 5 years later and he moved away. It took "spare time" to do maple sugaring. In the spring one was busy mending fences, planting crops and cutting fire wood for the next winter; in the summer and fall it was haying, tending gardens and clearing more fields or erecting new buildings and keeping old buildings in repair. Winter and early spring weren't quite so busy; the coldest days could be spent repairing harnesses and maybe building wooden pails and tubs. Then the wooden gathering tank would have to be soaked to prevent it from leaking, in preparation for the warmer days soon coming. In later years the lucky ones had tin pipelines. One had to tap the trees when the first warm days and cold nights started arriving. The warmth of the sun draws the sap up the tree and the cold nights drop it back to the roots again.

Tapping used to be a much harder job than it is now. All of us in my family used to get involved in it, and the job depended on the size and ability of the child. A 3/8 by 3 inch hole was drilled into the rock maple tree under a limb with a hand drill, spouts were tapped in with a hammer, and buckets were hung from the spout. At first wooden buckets were used, then came tin and in my days galvanized metal buckets were used. Covers were put on to keep out the rain, dirt and bugs. In about a day's time the buckets would fill up, one drop at a time, with sweet sap that looks like water. This had to be gathered into large pails and carried - OOPS, your foot just went through the crust of snow and you got a boot full of COLD sap! - and dumped into the tub that the pipeline is attached to, which runs down the hill to the large holding tank beside the sugarhouse. The sap then flows into the large evaporating pans over a very hot wood fire to get boiled down into maple syrup. Before pipelines were used, the sap was carried to a big tub on a scoot pulled by oxen or horses. A scoot is a low wooden sled with wooden runners, used year-round for moving heavy objects.



A maple sugaring "scoot" with sap tub, pulled by a team of oxen owned by Donald Crane (1932-1985). Photo from NH Profiles Magazine, March 1974, courtesy of Ethel Crane.

To make maple syrup the sap has to be heated to a temperature of 219 degrees Fahrenheit, and for sugar it must reach 235 degrees. Actually, these temperatures vary a bit depending on elevation. It takes about 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. A gallon of syrup weighs 11 pounds and a gallon of syrup makes about 8 1/2 pounds of sugar. When you look at the record from "the board" you realize that Orrin Batchelder made a LOT of syrup to make 600 pounds of sugar! "Portrait of a Hill Town" by Grace and Ronald Jager (page 15) states that in 1866 there were 100 maple sugar orchards in Washington, producing over 50 tons of sugar a year. My worst memories of sugaring season: cold hands and feet - the zing of the saw rig cutting the dry wood for the hot fires - heavy stacks of buckets to carry -- sap down the boot - dry, sore hands washing the buckets during April vacations.

Best memories: the sweet warmth of the sugar house while boiling - sitting and working in the warm spring sun - riding home through the woods on the scoot, behind the horses or tractor, with our arms and legs against the warm cans of syrup made that day - Mom having supper ready to go on the table - selling syrup and putting the money in "the jar" in the cellar way to pay the property taxes. Now-a-days tapping is done with a much shorter hole in the tree and plastic spouts that connect to a continuous plastic pipeline running to the big holding tanks. If the sugaring season is over when you read this, plan next spring to visit various sugar houses in town or nearby to see the more modern and even the very latest techniques in the art of making maple syrup.

Transcribed from ``The Board''

		Tapped	Took up buckets	Made
O. W. Batchedler	1881	March 17		500 lbs sugar
	1882	March 25	April 28	600
	1883	April 4 & 5	May 1	500
	1884	March 17 & 18	April 30	550
	1885	April 1	April 28	650
George Trow	1886	April 2-5	April 25	500
	1887	April 1-7	April 27	500
	1888	March 30	April 29	475
	1890	March 15-26	April 28	1800
	1891	March 25-30	April 20	1700
	1898	March 21	April ??	1200
Carroll Farnsworth		No record		
Harold Hunt	1946-1953	No record		
Ed Hetherington	1958	March 13	April 15	46 gallons syrup
Lino Merzi	1978	April 6		10 gallons syrup
	1979	March 21	April 21	13 gallons syrup
	1980	March 24	April 22	16 gallons syrup
	1981			14 gallons syrup

No more records are on the board. If this year, 2002 were on it, tapping started in early February and is going strong in mid-March, this being the second warmest winter on record at the Concord, NH weather station.



Charles Trow (1837-1921) cooking maple sugar, probably in the Newman sugarhouse, circa 1900., Photo from Historical Society Museum collection.

Taverns

by Tom Talpey, Marcellus Liotta and Gwen Gaskell

One of our members recently donated to the museum collections an original copy of the 1830 issue of the Farmer's Almanac, now called the Old Farmer's Almanac and published by the Yankee Publishing Company in Dublin. One item in it pertaining to Washington is a table of Road Distances Between Taverns along various stagecoach routes emanating from Boston, where it was published. These apparently were regular stage ``stops'' for refreshment and/or lodging.

The route departing from Doolittle's City Tavern in Boston to Burlington, Vt., just south of Montreal, passed through Washington. From Amherst, NH, to the Vermont border it was called the 2nd NH Turnpike, entering Washington along

what is now Route 31 and departing via Lempster Road. Of note is the distance from the tavern in Hillsborough to the tavern in Washington, which is given as 7 miles. Our best guess is that this distance must have been from Hillsborough Upper Village to the center of Washington. (There is a yellow building, with a plaque near the door designating it as the Wilson House 1806, on the south side of the road just west of the telephone company building in Hillsborough Upper Village.)

Continuing on towards Lempster, it was another 7 miles to the next tavern listed in the Almanac. Presumably this was the old three-story hotel on the corner of Route 10 and Lempster Mountain Road, which recently burned down. Altogether there were 31 taverns listed along the Turnpike, at separations of from 3 to 10 miles. The distance from Boston to Burlington, Vt., is given as 210 miles and probably took a week to travel. This table caught our attention and we began to wonder about taverns and stagecoach traveling in Washington's early years.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century witnessed a very active tavern business in New Hampshire. This business was due to two major factors, the nature and extent of traveling and local customs. Traveling was obviously slow. There were the options of walking, riding by stage or wagon, or horseback. River travel was also available. There must have been a relatively fair amount of traveling. It has been estimated that in places there were taverns to accommodate travelers about every three miles, which is normally about an hour's walk. European visitors to the area noted in amazement the large number of taverns.

Here in Washington in addition to the Second New Hampshire Turnpike, mentioned above, there was the Croydon Turnpike, starting at the corner near the Shedd Free Library and running from Washington through Newport to Lebanon. Another major road in town went up Faxon Hill and turned onto King Street heading south to Stoddard. Bed, food and drink were available along all of these roads.

The second factor centered on local life. Churches were very cold. After services, people tended to congregate in taverns to warm up and socialize, accompanied with a few drinks. The same was true after town meetings. The atmosphere was not like our present bar, but more like an Irish pub. (One of us (ML) once spent a week in the small Irish town of Kilfinin. There were 450 people in the town and 16 pubs. The pubs were family oriented and very small. It was the center of social life.) In towns where there were no large buildings, the tavern served as a meeting place. There are records of business transactions occurring in taverns. Wedding receptions, parties, dances, etc., often relied upon taverns. Many taverns were probably small rooms set aside to serve drinks and hospitalities. One of our members, Richard Cilley, relates that his grandmother told him that stagecoaches used to stop at the house he grew up in, and guests were served in the room at the front corner towards the library. Descendants of the owners of the Newman House have told Gwen Gaskell similar stories about stagecoaches stopping and the travelers being served in the front parlor of that house.



Possibly the oldest tavern standing in the center of Washington. Built by John L. Safford in 1779 and operated as a public house in the early 1790s by Abner Sampson. In 1796 his son Ward took over. Photo courtesy of Richard Cilley who grew up in this house.

The first tavern in Washington to which we could find reference was in the 1770's for an inn (no longer standing) kept by Abner Sampson on the "old county road" (now abandoned) near Freezeland Pond. He later moved to the center of town and at one time ran a tavern in the house (built in 1779 by John L. Safford) in which Richard Cilley grew up, located at the corner of route 31 next to the present library. Beginning in 1792 there was a tavern next to the Town Hall, operated by James and Azariah Faxon, where the Faxon House now stands. Near the center of town there was the Brainard Tavern, which burned in 1830 (after the almanac had been printed) in a huge fire on the night of July 23rd, believed to be "the

work of an incendiary." This fire destroyed seventeen buildings in the center of town and nearly took the Town Hall. (A young man by the name of Weston leapt from the belfry to the roof of the Town Hall and extinguished the flames.) The tavern is believed to have been south of the intersection of Lempster Mountain Road, at the junction where Route 31 heads toward Newport. It was never rebuilt.



The Lovell House in the early 1900s. The section with the two-storied porch at the left of the picture was the original tavern, opened in 1902 by David Farnsworth. The brick house (built in 1820) is beyond the photo to the left. The long wing to the right was added later and reached within 10 feet from the Congregational Church. Photo from Washington Historical Society Museum collection.

The Lovell House, built by Reuben Farnsworth next to the brick house, was opened as a "public house" in 1802 by his older brother, David Farnsworth. There is also a record that a still older brother, Manasseh Farnsworth, at one time had a license to operate a tavern and this may have been in the same establishment. Sometime after 1813 David Farnsworth built a large brick house, now known as the Newman House, on Half Moon Pond Road, and it subsequently served from time to time as a public house. (The Farnsworths later turned to the Seventh Day Adventist faith and gave up the habit of liquor.) Over the years and with different owners the original Lovell House was greatly enlarged until it occupied most of the space between the brick house and the Congregational Church in the center of town and became the equivalent of a "resort hotel."



The Newman House, built by David Farnsworth after 1813, on Half Moon Pond Road. Operated from time to time as a public house, beginning perhaps in the first half of the 19th century. Photo from the Washington Historical Society Museum Collection.



In the frame house in the center of town, between what is now the Shedd Free Library and the brick house, we believe there was a tavern kept from 1800 to 1803 by Samuel Jones Jr. His local claim to fame, however, stems primarily from a gravestone in the old cemetery inscribed "Capt. Samuel Jones Leg which was amputated July 7, 1804" after being crushed due to an accident while helping to move a house. Isaac French, a hatter, who "resided in a house which stood near the west end of Benjamin F. Muzzey's store" - the brick house in the center of town - "commenced keeping public house in 1798 and remained in the business until 1800." (It must have been a small house, as there is not much room between the brick store and the house to the west of it.)

North of the center of town, along the 2nd NH Turnpike, close to the track of the present Lempster Mountain Road, near the foot of Fisher Hill and above the alpaca farm, there was a tavern (no longer standing) kept by William Lawrence commencing in 1799. Just south of the center of town, in a house at the northeast corner of S. Main St. and Cross Rd. (later called the McQuesten house), there is a record of a tavern operated by the same William Lawrence in 1806. The roof of this house blew off in the 1938 hurricane and it was torn down. Near Cram's Corner, John Merrill operated a blacksmith shop, but he also had a license to operate a tavern from 1803 to 1805, perhaps on the same property. Several miles south of the town center along Route 31 (2nd NH Turnpike) there is a record of a tavern kept by Joseph Newman from 1798-1800 near the Chase Farm. Further south along the 2nd NH Turnpike there was a tavern in 1800, perhaps owned by Jonathan Philbrick, but kept by William Bell, in "the Wallace W. Dole house," which is between Dole Schoolhouse Road and Smith Pond Road.

Before 1800 there was a tavern (no longer standing) operated by John May, along the Croydon Turnpike, in the vicinity of what is now Pillsbury State Park. On Faxon Hill Road we believe that there were at least two taverns (perhaps not both operating at the same time), one just south of the top of the hill in a house (now painted yellow), which we believe was operated by Nathaniel Draper in 1793. The other (now painted red) was near the intersection with King Street, and we believe Jonathan Brockway operated this tavern from 1799 to 1801. The 1886 Washington History states that "Jonathan Bailey" operated a tavern from 1799 to 1801 in a house which stood "opposite Carr's Mill" at the outlet of the mill pond in East Washington. It was most likely Joseph Bailey who lived there at the time and not Jonathan.

Other early tavern keepers, for whom we have not yet been able to pinpoint a location, include Joseph Robbins and Samuel Smith.

It was necessary to obtain a license from the Selectmen in order to operate a tavern and we found an interesting quote relating to this in the old town history.

Washington, Sept. 10, 1792

"This may certify that Mr. Abner Sampson having made application to us for a license to keep a public tavern in said Washington, we therefore hereby approve of the same, he being of a regular life and conversation, and living in a convenient part of the town for that purpose."

The old Town History book, published in 1886, mentions at least 20 townspeople who were licensed to serve liquors during the years 1792 to 1806, some of them of course taking over from previous proprietors in the same establishment.

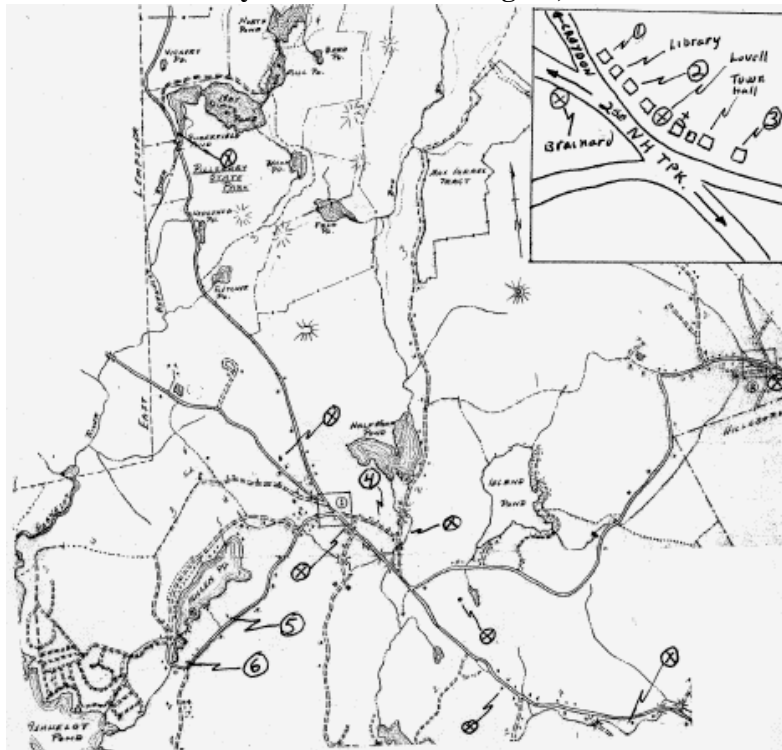
Many of the taverns were active in the years just before and just after the beginning of the 19th century, when stagecoach travel also began to become more popular, as each seemed to depend on the other.

During the years that it was an active inn (1802-1929), the Lovell house had a total of 22 different proprietors up to 1886. And, of course, there were several more owners before the hotel itself was torn down, in stages, between 1933 and 1964. Alice Barker (Gwen's aunt) worked as the last cook there when it closed in 1929, undoubtedly NOT due to her cooking, but due rather to a general decline in business. Presumably intoxicating spirits were sold there in the years before the State Prohibition Statute of 1855, which wasn't repealed until 1933. Washington itself didn't allow beer to be sold in town again until a warrant article in 1964 (which passed by a vote of 59 to 51) once again permitted it. All of the state liquor stores, which opened after prohibition, in other towns such as in Hillsborough, were painted green and Gwen relates that folks going shopping out of town would frequently mention that they were ``going to see Dr. Green!"



The brick store, built in 1820, in the center of Washington, now the home of Lincoln and Lilly Gilbert. We have not been able to find any record that this was ever licensed as a tavern, although the buildings on both sides of it were. Photo taken about 1920(?). From Washington Historical Society Museum.

Early Taverns in Washington, NH



Locations where we believe taverns once stood are indicated by X's.
Buildings still standing, which are believed to be former taverns, indicated by numbers.

Original Tavern Keepers:

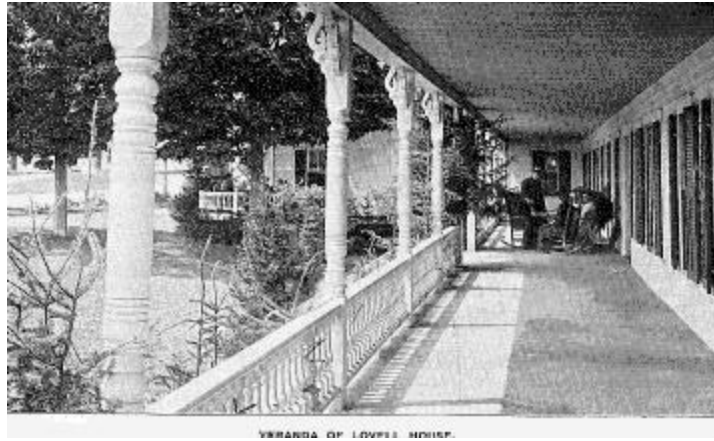
1. Abner Sampson (Cilley House)
2. Samuel Jones, Jr. (Trow House)
3. Azariah Faxon (Faxon House)
4. David Farnsworth (Newman House)
5. Nathaniel Draper
6. Jonathan Brockway

We have so far identified six homes still standing in Washington that we believe were once licensed as taverns, which we have attempted to depict on the accompanying map. In addition, there are at least ten taverns for which we know the location, but which are no longer standing. We also have the names of two licensed tavern keepers whose place of business we have not been able to identify. Add to these a few of the twenty some proprietors of the Lovell House before prohibition started and you have quite a list of tavern keepers for a small town like Washington! At least three of our present Society members are descendants of some of these tavern keepers, none of them incidentally still licensed for the practice!

We want to acknowledge Washington's Grace Jager, as well as Doug Copeley of the New Hampshire Historical Society, for their help in preparing this article. Three books also have been particularly useful: "Portrait of a Hill Town" by Ronald Jager and Grace Jager, "On the Road North of Boston: New Hampshire Taverns and Turnpikes, 1700-1900" by Donna-Belle Garvin and James Garvin and the 1886 "History of Washington," which contains a short discussion of the town's hotels and inns, as well as some data in the genealogical section. We have attempted to summarize what we can deduce about Washington's taverns by fitting together information gleaned from the above sources and by discussions with some townspeople. We apologize if some of our "conclusions" may be classified as being in the realm of "intelligent speculations." This is a work in progress and we intend to pursue such items further. A basic assumption has been that if a person's name was connected with a tavern license, his tavern was probably in the house, which he occupied. If anyone reading this has additional pertinent information we would indeed like to add it to our collection.



*View of the original Lovell House, showing stables and part of the brick store to the left. Believed to be before 1900.
Photo from the Historical Society Museum Collection.*



The veranda of the Lovell House was 109 feet long. Photo from the Historical Society Museum Collection.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

A Trip Back in Time

This year our local Museum will be displaying pictures of old houses as they were and as they are now. At first there were no cars so the mode of transportation was the horse and buggy and the stagecoach. All roads were dirt and not paved as some of them are today.

During this time frame there were no modern conveniences such as electric or gas cook stoves, so cooking was done over the flames in fireplaces or on wood stoves, as we exhibited last year. All of the women wore TABLIERS, that being the French word for aprons, for cooking, cleaning and general wear, to protect their clothing. Laundry facilities weren't as convenient as they are today. As you walk about our display of aprons you will find some plain ones and some very fancy ones, which were worn for special occasions such as dances or greeting guests.

Our town has a lot of history, so please come to our museum this year and take a stroll back in time to compare the way things were then to our modern ways of today. We also have numerous albums with a variety of pictures for your enjoyment, depicting our town down through the years. Come see our displays, visit, sit, peruse the pictures and take a step back into some history of our town named **WASHINGTON**.

HELP!!!!

Our Museum Committee is a group of women who are busy preparing this year's display. Volunteers will be greatly appreciated to assist and work with us during this busy time.

- Join us on April 20th when we will be having our spring freshen-up day.
- Volunteer to help man the museum on Wednesdays and Saturdays, 2 - 4 PM and the Old Schoolhouse on Saturday afternoon, 1 - 3 PM.
- A green thumb will be needed to make our flowerbeds a sight to see. We need someone to swing a paintbrush and also to weed whack our weeds.

PLEASE CONTACT ANYONE ON THE COMMITTEE TO OFFER YOUR MOST NEEDED ASSISTANCE.

MUSEUM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ann Lischke	495-3810	Chairperson
Sue Horner	495-3780	
Louise Bodak	495-6149	
Gwen Gaskell	495-3231	
Shirley Siciliano	495-3941	Helper



The stage from Hillsboro, with Sam Davis at the reins, circa 1910. Photo courtesy of Richard Cilley.