



# Dublin Historical Society

Dublin, New Hampshire 03444 • Founded 1920

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## Dublin Before Summer People

**B**efore the 1870's few, if any, summer people came to Dublin. How then did Dublin's earlier economy operate? In answering that question we are fortunate to have the Rev. Levi Leonard's town history commemorating Dublin's first century (1752-1852).

Its full title is *The History of Dublin, N.H., containing the Address by Charles Mason and the Proceedings at the Centennial Celebration, June 17, 1852; with a Register of Families*. Published in Boston in 1855, the volume runs to 432 pages and, as originally issued, included a full-size copy of Thomas Fisk's 1853 map. The information that follows is taken from that history. [Ed. note: Dr. Leonard's history, with substantial additions by the Rev. Josiah L. Seward, was republished by the Town in 1920 as Leonard & Seward, *The History of Dublin, N.H.*]

At the time of the 1852 centennial celebrations, most major manufacturing was in the part of Dublin which later (1870) became part of what is now the town of Harrisville. The villages of Harrisville and Pottersville (now Chesham) had the best sources of water for powering machinery. People in the southern part of Dublin wrung their living from the "stubborn soil", in a phrase used by Charles Mason in his centennial address. Mason also noted that Dublin's soil "has demanded of its inhabitants unremitting labor to insure a livelihood." The nature of that labor can be gathered from the figures compiled from the census of 1850 and reported in Leonard's history.

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*A selection of 19th century shoemaker's tools in the Society's collection. The child's boots were made by Jackson Greenwood (1796-1872) for his son, Walter (1827-1892). Judging by the size of the boots, they must have been made around 1837. Jackson Greenwood lived in what is now the Medical Arts building, across from the Post Office.*

Russell Mott photograph.

The Society's **summer meeting** (which is also the annual meeting) will be on the evening of Thursday, August 10. The speaker will be Tim Clark. A formal notice showing time and place will be sent out as the date approaches, but prudent members may wish to mark their calendars now.

The total population was 1,088, equally divided between males and females. Occupations are given for 284 persons, the most numerous being the 196 listed as "farmers over twenty-one years." The principal cash crop at this period was the wool from 2,316 sheep.

Besides the woolen mills in Harrisville, myriad small businesses were operated part-time by one or two members of a family, working from rooms or sheds attached to their houses. Dr. Leonard's history lists the names of twenty-one men engaged in shoemaking. Most of them were also farmers, and several are listed as carrying on other trades as well, but some specialized.

"Besides the general manufacture of shoes for home consumption, John Piper and Joseph F. Hayes manufacture in each of their shops two thousand pairs of sale-shoes per year, worth fifty cents per pair. Joseph Morse manufactures two thousand five hundred pairs of shoes per year, which are valued at one thousand five hundred dollars. Many females are employed in binding shoes for the above-named manufacturers." (p. 276)

In 1852, Samuel W. Hale, later (1883-1885) Governor of New Hampshire, operated a shoe-peg mill at the site of the present dam on Stanley Brook, where he manufactured five thousand bushels of shoe-pegs annually, at seventy-five cents a bushel, some of which were shipped abroad and sold in Liverpool and Hamburg.

One of the largest of Dublin's industries was Bemis, Symonds & Co., which comprised a mill and factory in

Pottersville (now Chesham) on the upper reaches of Minnewawa Brook. There, in 1852,

"They manufacture two hundred and fifty gross of mop-sticks at five dollars per gross, one thousand five hundred dozen of washboards at one dollar per dozen, and they sell one hundred and fifty thousand feet of boards at seven dollars per thousand." (p. 276)

A mill on Stanley Brook near the bend in Page Road turned out 7,200 gross of clothespins in 1852 at eight cents a gross. This mill, whose ruins are still visible, continued to produce clothespins into the 1920's.

Another of Dublin's businesses was the production of potato starch, made from some of the 19,145 bushels of potatoes grown in Dublin according to the 1850 census. Dr. Leonard records that in the 1830's Luther Carlton was converting ten to fifteen thousand bushels of potatoes into starch at the former Eli Greenwood mill in Pottersville. Southern New Hampshire was the center for starch production, and all the towns of the area produced starch for America's shirts, cuffs and collars.

Dublin before summer people relied on a number of small businesses, run full- or part-time, to help augment the farmers' meager incomes. As the number of summer people declines, and as advances in computer software make cottage industries feasible once again, perhaps Dublin will return to this kind of economy.

— Rusty Bastedo

## President's Letter

Last March Dave and Marsha Whitney hosted a maple sugaring field trip at their sugar house at Frost Farm for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at the Dublin Consolidated School and the pre-school class at Dublin Christian Academy. Several members of the Historical Society were posted at three stations where the process of maple sugaring was demonstrated and explained. The weather cooperated and the thirty children and their teachers learned a great deal about making maple syrup the old-fashioned way. We were able to show old photographs from the Society's archives, as well as the records of maple sugar production in 1853. The morning ended with a tasting of Frost Farm syrup on ice cream.

I would like to thank Society members Dave and Marsha Whitney, Bob Weiss, Hank Campbell and Walt Schnabel for their help in organizing and presenting this very successful demonstration.



*Daniel Fox carries sap buckets at the Society's maple sugaring demonstration at Frost Farm in March. The yoke, made by Bob Weiss, is traditional, but the plastic buckets have a distinctly modern air. Photograph by Andrew Tuller.*

Our Curator, Barbara Schnabel, is planning several special exhibits at the 1841 schoolhouse museum:

**SPECIAL EXHIBIT**

Sunday, May 14 (Mothers' Day) 2-4 p.m. hooked rugs

Sunday, June 18 (Fathers' Day) 2-4 p.m. antique tools

Saturday, July 22 (Dublin Day) all day souvenir china

An exhibit of Grange memorabilia is planned for the fall. Please check the Dublin Advocate for further details.

The Trustees are also exploring ideas for Society field trips to places of historical significance, including: the monument at the site of the first settlement in Dublin (1752); the sites of all ten schoolhouses that served Dublin in the 1850's; and the mill buildings in Harrisville owned by Historic Harrisville, Inc. The Board would welcome suggestions for other excursions, as well as help from members in planning and organizing future outings.

– Paul Tuller



*DCA pre-schoolers Ben Sproul, Ben Kontyko and Olivia Thomas learn the art of tapping sugar maples.*

Photograph by Heidi Thomas.

## Society News

Just because we are a historical society doesn't mean we don't keep abreast of modern information technology. The Archives have acquired two new Macintosh computers – one for the Society and one for the Town – cross-linked so that all files are available on both. One of the reasons for this upgrading was to be able to send and receive e-mail. The address, which reaches both the Society and the Town Archives, is [dublinhistory@monad.net](mailto:dublinhistory@monad.net)

### e-acquisitions

Along with e-mail, we now have access to the world-wide web, which enables our more sophisticated browsers – President Paul Tuller, Treasurer Ruth Hammond, Curator Barbara Schnabel and Town Archivist Nancy Campbell – to explore sites like *e-bay*, *amazon.com*, *bookfinder* and others. All one has to do is enter “Dublin, N.H.”, and all sorts of interesting things appear on the screen. The archives' first e-venture was buying a small book on Abbott Thayer, published in 1923, through *bookfinder*.

Sometimes quite surprising things turn up. Searching *bookfinder.com* under “Leonard, Levi W.” for schoolbooks written by Dublin's nineteenth century minister, we came across a collection of his ms. sermons, prayers and other papers. We were able to buy this important collection with

money from the Archives Fund, which was established some years ago to make acquisitions of this kind possible. The Fund's funds have come from several sources, but mainly through the very substantial support of two generous (and anonymous) donors, to whom the Society is extremely grateful.

The **museum** has to date bought two items at e-auctions. One is a china toothpick holder with a hand-painted picture captioned “The Mountain Brook, Dublin, N.H.” It was made in Austria around the turn of the last century “expressly for Henry D. Allison, Dublin, N.H.” This will be the thirty-first piece in our growing collection of Dublin souvenir china. The collection will be on display for Dublin Day in July.

The second purchase is a Past-Master's badge which belonged to Ethel Piper Adams (1884-1967), who was Master of the Dublin Grange from 1923-1929. The badge had been rescued from a chicken coop on Long Island, and was acquired by us in an *e-bay* auction. It will complement our collection of Grange records and artifacts, which were turned over to the Society by the Dublin grange when it dissolved itself in 1966. Curator Barbara Schnabel plans an exhibit of Grange material for this fall.

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## DUPLICATING PHOTOGRAPHS

Another reason for the computer upgrade was to make it possible to copy photographs and other images by means of a scanner, which we couldn't do with the old equipment. The need to copy photographs arises very often in the work we do. Clients frequently ask for copies of photographs in the Society's collection. Then there are times when kindly donors have family photographs that they don't want to part with, but which they are willing to let us copy. The new scanner makes it possible to reproduce these images in-house, rather than taking them to Jaffrey or Keene, as we had to do before.

The resulting copies – both color and black-and-white – are of photographic quality, and can be enlarged, if required, up to 8 x 10 inches. If permanence is the main objective, they can be printed on special acid-free paper. The alternative is to print them on stiff, glossy stock, which makes them nearly indistinguishable from the original.

All this costs money, of course. The special paper and ink are expensive, to say nothing of amortizing the cost of the equipment. Accordingly, the Trustees have voted to charge \$5.00 per image, with a special rate of \$4.00 for Society members.

There is, of course, no charge for reproducing your pictures for our collection. Next time you are looking at photographs in the family album, consider whether there are any that record scenes, events or people of historical interest to Dublin. If so, we would be grateful for the chance to make copies for the benefit of posterity. For an example of what we mean, read on.

## GIFTS TO THE ARCHIVES

**Anne Anable** has very kindly allowed us to make copies - on our new scanning and printing system (see above) – of several photographs from her wedding album. These record not only her wedding to the late Tony Anable in 1964, but include pictures of Dublin personalities among the guests.

Of particular interest as records of Dublin's architectural history are the blueprints and specifications for the Markham house on Snow Hill, given by **Thomas Atmer**, the present owner. These designs were prepared in 1898 for Mrs. Hugh McKittrick by the St. Louis office of Shepley, Ruten & Coolidge, where John Lawrence Mauran was the partner in charge. The Shepley firm, then as now headquartered in Boston,

were successors to the great master of the American Romanesque revival, Henry Hobson Richardson.

**Tom and Anne Blodgett** have sent us a copy of a lengthy and detailed genealogy of Anne's ancestors, who include Allens, Blagdons, Catlins, Grants, and many others.

We are also grateful to **Norman Davis** for a photograph of the late Nathan G. Methley, who lived for many years at the Joshua Stanley farm on Goldmine Road, now owned by John Sirois. Methley achieved fame as a composer and singer of folk ballads. The words of some of his songs survive in our collection, but since he never wrote his tunes down, they are now forgotten.

Through the good offices of **Peg French**, we have received from **Norma Sands** of Jaffrey a copy of Thomas Fisk's 1853 map of Dublin.

Thanks also to **Diana Burnham, Bill Bauhan, Nancy Campbell, Bruce McClellan, Florence Perkins Rawls** and **Paul Tuller** for other welcome gifts.

## GIFTS TO THE MUSEUM

**Brooks S. White** of Quincy, Mass., has given the museum a small, round bandbox, painted and decorated with a stylized figure of a woman in 18th Century costume. The late Almerin M. [Gene] Gowing (1896-1968) painted the box and presented it to his cousin, Charlotte M. Spaulding, around 1910, when they were fellow students at the Peterborough High School. Charlotte Spaulding later became the mother of Brooks White. Gene Gowing, remembered by many as a square dance caller, was the subject of the May, 1997, newsletter.

**Bill Bauhan** has given us a brass sheep bell, exhumed on his back pasture by a prospector with a metal detector. Sheep-keeping was a major industry in Dublin in the middle years of the 19th century (see main article). It is interesting that Samuel Davison (1788-1860), who built Bill's house in 1826, was, among other things, a successful drover.

–J.W.H.

## C R E D I T S

This issue of the Dublin Historical Society Newsletter was edited by John Harris.

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