

Dublin Historical Society

Dublin, New Hampshire 03444 • Founded 1920

Newsletter No. 36 – August, 1996

1996 Summer Meeting

Louisa Clark Spencer will be the speaker at the Society's summer meeting on August 22, 1996, at 8:00 p.m. at the Robertson's barn on Gerry Road. She will draw from her memories, as well as from old letters and family stories told by her parents, to recall episodes from two periods at the Eli Morse Farm – the 1880's and post World War II.

By way of background for her talk, we offer two brief sketches: one of the Eli Morse Farm, which has been in Louisa's family for four generations, and one of her late father, Grenville Clark, who was by any standard one of the most distinguished figures ever to have lived in Dublin.

The Eli Morse Farm

The Eli Morse Farm stands near the outlet of Dublin Lake, where Lake and West Lake Roads now meet. The original part, the wooden ell on the West, was probably built by Alexander Scott in 1760, when he moved to Dublin from Peterborough. There he conducted the first licensed tavern in Town, serving travellers passing from Peterborough to Keene and soldiers marching westward to join the provincial army during the French and Indian War.

The next owner of the property was Eli Morse, who came to Dublin from Sherborn, Massachusetts, in 1765 as one of the first permanent settlers. Eli was an important figure in the political history of the Town, first as the Proprietors' Clerk starting in 1764, and then as Town Clerk, Selectman, Treasurer and Moderator in the period from 1771 to 1784.

Eli built a grist mill and sawmill on the property. The grist mill still standing was built in the 1830's or 1840's on the original 1767 mill foundation, with some framing timbers salvaged from the earlier building.

Thaddeus Morse, Sr. (son of Eli) acquired the property in 1804. He enlarged the house in 1822 when the two-story federal style brick portion of the house was built. Thaddeus was also involved in Town affairs, serving as Selectman, Treasurer, agent for the school and ministerial funds, school inspector and a Justice of the Peace. The property continued in the Morse family until 1883, when it was

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Grenville Clark

Grenville Clark was a citizen of whom Dublin may well be proud, and we are privileged to learn more about him from his daughter, Louisa Clark Spencer. His public work, largely done behind the scenes, exerted great influence on his times. In addition to being a distinguished Wall Street lawyer, he contributed to U.S. preparedness in both World Wars as the originator, in 1915, of the "Plattsburgh Movement" for training officers and as the author of the Selective Service Act of 1940.

After graduating from Harvard College in 1903 and Harvard Law School in 1906, he began practice with Carter, Ledyard and Milburn, where a fellow clerk was Franklin D. Roosevelt. In 1909, he and two Harvard classmates founded the firm of Root, Clark and Bird, later best known as Root, Clark, Buckner and Ballantine. Its successor firms, Dewey, Ballantine and Cleary, Gottlieb, continue as two of the leading law firms in New York.

As a lawyer, Clark specialized in banking and railroad law, but always found time for public duties. As Chairman of the Bill of Rights Committee of the American Bar Association in the late 1930's, he exerted his influence in several unpopular causes, including successful opposition to the deportation of Harry Bridges as a suspected communist. In 1937, although an old personal friend of the President's, he organized the legal profession's opposition to Roosevelt's

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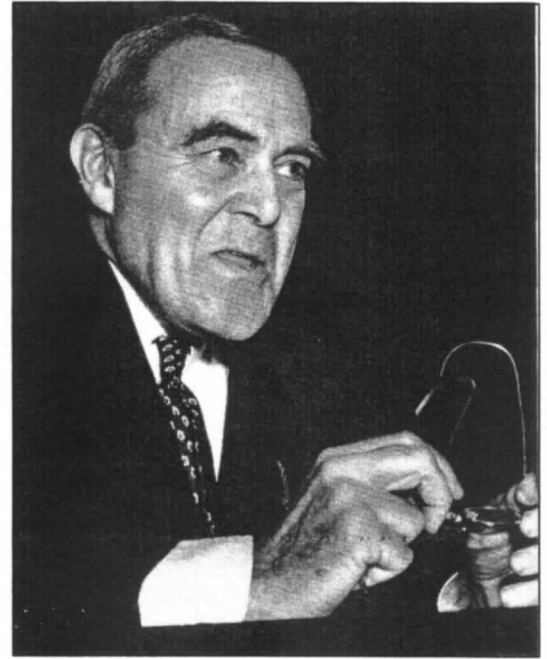
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scheme to pack the Supreme Court.

Following World War II, Clark spent the last two decades of his life as an advocate for world peace through world federalism. In support of that movement, he assembled a number of distinguished persons at the Dublin Conference of 1945. Characteristically, although he had organized the conference, Clark took the role of Secretary, leaving the Chairmanship to Justice Owen Roberts.

From 1931 to 1950, he was a member of the President and Fellows of Harvard College, the seven-member corporation that serves Harvard as a board of trustees. The American Bar Association honored him with its gold medal in 1959. In recognition of his public services, he is pictured on a U.S. postage stamp in the "Great Americans" series.

It was through his wife, Fanny Dwight Clark, that Grenville Clark came to Dublin, first as a summer resident and later as an all-year-rounder. The Clarks were benefactors to the Town, giving the public boat landing at the west end of the Lake. They were also instrumental in establishing endowment funds for the Community Church, and were generous contributors to those funds. When Grenville Clark died in 1967, he left a bequest to the Church, and an additional sum if the Church raised not less than \$30,000 from others within two years of his death. This goal was accomplished and the total bequest was added to the permanent funds in 1968.



GRENVILLE CLARK
(1882-1967)

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acquired by Mrs. Sarah Silsbee Peele of Salem, Massachusetts. Mrs. Peele passed on the property to her three children, Willard Peele, a bachelor of Beverly, Massachusetts, Jane Peele Hunnewell (Mrs. Walter Hunnewell!) of Wellesley, Massachusetts, and Mary Peele Dwight (Mrs. Daniel Appleton Dwight) of Boston.

Thereafter the Dwights lived in Dublin six months of the year, from May through October, and within a few years

Willard and Jane sold out their portions to Mary. Mary and her husband Daniel died in 1909 within weeks of each other, and the place passed to their younger daughter Fanny Dwight, who in that same year had married Grenville Clark of New York.

Ownership of the Eli Morse Farm continues in the Dwight/Clark family, being now owned by Grenville and Fanny Clark's daughter, Louisa Clark Spencer.



THE ELI MORSE FARM

**Furnishing the Archives
Building – Can You Help?**

To soften the atmosphere created by steel shelves and formica work surfaces, we would like to provide users of the new Archives Building with a moderately civilized environment for their research work. Does anyone have, or know of, a good solid table, about 8 ft. x 3 ft.? We also need two or three good-looking but sturdy wooden chairs – oak windsors would be ideal. An area rug of about 6 x 10 ft. would really add a touch of elegance. Can anybody help? (This is the second time of asking.)

SAMUEL WHITNEY HALE: A Distinguished Dublin Ancestor

Samuel Whitney Hale, Governor of New Hampshire, was once a Dublin landowner, resident, storekeeper and shoe-peg maker.

Hale was born on April 2, 1823, the son of Samuel and Saloma Whitney Hale, in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, where he attended the district school and academy. He came to Dublin in 1845 and lived in the Samuel Davison house (the white house across from the General Store), where he ran a store called the John M. & Samuel W. Hale store for three years, from 1845-1848.

Manufacturer

As an aspiring young businessman, Samuel left the store business in 1848, for what appears to have been a more lucrative endeavor, the manufacture of shoe-pegs at a mill near the dam at the outlet from Mud Pond (later the site of The Dublin Electric Company). Here he "manufactured five thousand bushels of shoe-pegs a year, from white birch timber, and sold them at from fifty to seventy-five cents per bushel. Large quantities of these shoe-pegs were sent to Europe and sold in Liverpool and Hamburg". Wood for this venture probably came from the Dublin Christian Academy property, which was owned jointly by Hale and Nathan Whitney.

In 1859, the Hales moved to Keene, eventually buying the house on the corner of Main and Winchester Streets, now the Hale Administration Building at Keene State College. Hale went into the chair manufacturing business in 1860, when he and Stephen D. Osborne formed a partnership for the purpose of manufacturing cane-seat chairs. "Lumber, labor, and transportation were all readily available, and the company prospered. Women and children were engaged to 'seat' and 'back' the chairs (with cane) at their homes". The business continued to grow and by the mid 1860's, Samuel and Stephen purchased property in South Keene and began the Keene Chair Company. "Both production and profit increased at this larger plant, and the firm was soon valued at \$150,000". Prosperous times did not last long and the company lost money in the 1870's because of a recession.

During the 1870's Hale became involved in the building of the Manchester to Keene railroad. By the end of 1878 the section from Greenfield to Keene was completed, "with the last spike being driven by Samuel W. Hale of Keene..."

In addition to his local business interests, Hale owned stock in a furniture company in San Francisco that did business with the Keene Chair Company. "After he became a principal stockholder, the ties between the two companies increased until Hale sold his stock...in 1876".



SAMUEL WHITNEY HALE

*From the collection of the Historical Society of
Cheshire County.*

Politician

In the 1860's Hale became involved in politics, first serving as Keene's Representative to the legislature from 1866-1867, and then as a Governor's Councillor from 1869-1870. In 1882, after a decade in which his various business enterprises demanded full attention, he served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention. In the same year he fought what one source describes as "a sensational battle", defeating Moody Currier of Manchester (later the founding benefactor of the Currier Gallery) for the Republican nomination for Governor. In the General Election Hale defeated the Democrat, Martin V.B. Edgerly, by a small majority. Even in Dublin, Hale's margin of victory was slim,

Hale garnering 57 votes to Edgerly's 40 votes. Hale was inaugurated Governor in 1883 and served till 1885.

In a day and age notable for corruption in public office, Hale's administration of the affairs of the State were given high marks. One source, published in 1889, says "Governor Hale's administration...was characterized by dignity, moderation, and prudence; and he retired from his high office, at the close of his term, with the respect of political friend and foe".

This success, both in politics and business, was not to last. By the time Hale left the Governorship in 1885, he was faced with the loss of his personal wealth. "Stock in the Keene Chair Co. was signed over to several individuals who had loaned him money. Business slumped, and by 1890 creditors had taken over..." Hale died in 1891 at his brother's home in Brooklyn, New York.

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Descendants

On June 13, 1850, while living in Dublin, Samuel married Emelia M. Hay, the daughter of Joseph and Nancy Sanders Hay, early Dublin settlers. After their marriage, Samuel and Emelia lived in the Joseph Hay house (the green house across from French's Tavern now owned by the Grinnell Mores). They had two children, a son, William, and a daughter.

Two of William's grandchildren live in Dublin today. One of William's sons, the late Rufus Frost Hale, is well-remembered in Dublin as a horseman, having served as President of the Riding & Walking Club and as a steward at the annual Dublin horseshows. His daughter, Barbara, and her husband, Lewis Clark, now spend summers on Lake Road.

Another of William's sons, the Rev. Samuel Whitney Hale, Sr., was for many years Rector of the Church of the Advent in

Boston. His son, the Rev. Samuel Whitney Hale, Jr., lives at Loon Point. Sam and Barbara are thus great-grandchildren of the first Samuel Whitney Hale, former Dublin merchant, Keene businessman and Governor of New Hampshire.

— Nancy E. Campbell

(An annotated version of this article is available in the Dublin Historical Society Archives.)

The Robertson's barn, where the Society's summer meeting will be held, was built c. 1795 by Samuel Fisk and used as a sheep barn by the Fisk family until the early 1880's. The barn was remodeled as a studio in 1929, when the Louis C. Gerry family owned the property. Studio windows and a dance floor were added during the remodeling.

Society News

Official Opening of the Archives Building

Construction of the new Archives Building, a joint project of the Society and the Town is well under way. The official opening is scheduled for Saturday, September 21, at 2:00 pm.

At the opening ceremonies, John Frisbee, Director of the New Hampshire Historical Society, will return to the Town its royal charter, granted in the name of King George III in 1771.

The charter has been in the vault at the N.H.H.S. for over fifty years, having been taken there for safekeeping by the late Hildreth Allison, who feared that no one in Dublin was looking after it.

At the same time and for the same reason, Hildreth deposited "on loan" at the N.H.H.S. about nine hundred documents from the early Town records. These were later transferred to the State Archives in Concord, where they have been ever since, making a long trip for anyone wishing to consult them.

At the official opening, in recognition of the Town's demonstrated interest in preserving its archives, Dr. Frank Mevers, State Archivist, will return those early documents to Nancy Campbell, the Town Archivist.

From the Schoolhouse

Laura Scott continues work on cataloguing the museum artifacts.

Curator Marney Bean has arranged that the Schoolhouse Museum will be open on Sundays during the month of August from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting

The Society's annual meeting will take place over breakfast in the lower Town Hall on Saturday, September 21, at 8:30 a.m. After the business meeting there will be an opportunity for members to tour the new archives building, in advance of the official opening later in the day.

News from the Archives

RECENT ACCESSIONS

Nancy Campbell has donated the service leaflet from the Lucius Harrison Thayer memorial service. **Isabel Clukay** has given us a photograph of herself and Harold, taken on their 45th wedding anniversary. **Nancy Perkins** has provided a map of the Franklin MacVeagh property (c.1919) on Upper Jaffrey Road.

The Jordan-Volpe Gallery in New York has kindly sent us a copy of their exhibition catalogue for the Henry Roderick Newman show. Two of the Society's photographs are included in the catalogue. The author of the catalogue, Royal W. Leith, spent several days at the Society doing research on the connection between Mr. Newman and Joseph Lindon Smith.

Other generous donors have included: **William L. Bauhan, William Morgan, G. Rioux and Peter Shonk.**

To all of them our most grateful thanks.

C R E D I T S

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

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