



Epsom Historical Association

NEWSLETTER

Catch up to the Past May 2009 No. 3

Special Presentation

EARLY EPSOM HISTORY

Friday Evening 7 pm

May 1 Epsom Public Library

Carleton Rand of the Epsom Historical Association will reprise his program on early Epsom History first presented in June of 2001. Once again the Epsom Public Library and the Historical Association team up to bring two special presentations on the history of the town. Since the first lecture was seven years ago, the library is having the original program repeated, and will continue the history in a program set for the fall of this year.

The program traces the founding of the town by following the first twenty home lots and the people that settled them. The early settlers, including the McClary, Wallace, Blake, McCoy and Locke families, struggle to set up the town and meet the requirements of settlement, including the building of a meetinghouse and acquiring its first preacher. Creating the first road, a garrison for protection, and a kidnapping, are just a few of the tribulations faced as the inhabitants of Rye, Greenland and Newcastle set out to establish their new community. The program will be held at the Epsom Public Library, Friday evening May 1st at 7:00 pm. The public is cordially invited to attend.

May Meeting

EPSOM HISTORY from old NEWSPAPERS

Sunday Afternoon 2 pm

May 17 Epsom Public Library

The Epsom Historical Association will present its second program of the year at the Epsom Public Library Sunday afternoon, May 17th at 2 p.m. The program will be a presentation of Epsom news, taken from old newspapers starting around the time of the American Revolution. Presented as a newscast, items feature everything from fires, weather, crimes, death, public notices and advertisements. Commentary and 'the rest of the story' bring the old news back to life. Politics and public events of the day will also be featured.

The tavern house of Mr. Dearborn Batchelder, of Epsom, N H was destroyed by fire a few days since. Loss \$1500 or more, besides several hundred dollars in money. The property had been insured in the N. H. Mutual Office; but the owner suffered his policy to expire a few weeks since, without renewal.

The public is invited and a short business meeting will precede the program followed by refreshments.

Genealogy

PLACING ABIGAIL SHERBURNE 1793-1880

The family of Nathaniel Sherburne and his wife Molly Sanders lived in Epsom where the George Carlson family current resides on New Orchard Road. Conventional wisdom, meaning the early printed genealogies, gave the family as follows:

Nathaniel Sherburne married in Epsom Nov. 26, 1789, Molly Sanders, daughter of George Berry Sanders and Anna Perkins Page.

Children:

John, born Epsom, 1790

Mary, born abt. 1795, Epsom

Elizabeth, born 1798, Epsom

David, born Aug. 7, 1800, Epsom

Recent research brought to light the Stevens family of Canterbury, NH, through the Stevens Genealogy and the History of Canterbury, Vol. 2. Stated in both, is Jesse Stevens having married Nov. 30, 1814, Abigail Sherburne, born in Epsom, NH Mar. 16, 1793, the family resided in Canterbury.

Epsom had no shortage of Sherburne families, primarily in the New Orchard Road area. The Kimball farm has a Sherburne cemetery in one of their fields (Joseph/William), while yet another branch (James) has a cemetery plot on the current property of Al Bickford. These families are fairly well documented, and there was no place or missing/unknown Abigail's among them. A cursory look at the Nathaniel Sherburne family above would indicate the same, but on closer examination, this is not the case.

Nathaniel and Molly Sherburne were having children every two or three years, yet there is a five year span between first born son John and first born daughter Mary. Looking at the 1800 census for Epsom, in the household of Nathaniel and Molly, there is one male and three females under the age of 10. Though the early census does not give names, it does show the possibility of a missing female under the age of 10. Looking at the birth date for Abigail Sherburne Stevens (1793), it would fit nicely between son John and daughter Mary.

Not knowing much about the family circumstances, a personal appeared in local newspapers in 1807, and read as follows:

TAKE NOTICE

This is to forbid all persons harboring or trusting, John Sherburne, Abigail Sherburne, Polly Sherburne, Betsey Sherburne, David Sherburne jun. and Nancy Sherburne, my children, on my account, as I shall pay no debt or debts of their contracting after this date.

NATHANIEL SHERBURNE

Epsom, Oct. 20th, 1807.

Nathaniel Sherburne clearly states the names of his children, apparently in order of age, and allows the placement of Abigail Sherburne Stevens as his first born daughter in 1793. The article in the paper also gives another unknown daughter, Nancy. A look at the 1810 census still only shows three daughters, so it is assumed this daughter may have died between 1807 and the 1810 census. Further ties can be seen in the following:

John Sherburne, first born son of Nathaniel and Molly named one of his sons, Jesse Stevens Sherburne. He also had a daughter named Nancy, perhaps after his sister.

Elizabeth Sherburne married John S. Rand of Deerfield, and also had a daughter, Nancy V.

Abigail Sherburne Stevens, who married in 1814 Jesse Stevens, also had a daughter Nancy. The children of Jesse Stevens and Abigail Sherburne are as follows:

Harriet, born 1815

Mary Ann, born 1818

Sylvester, born 1820

Caroline, born 1822

Susan Tilton, born 1825

Nancy Vicena, born 1829

Albert, born 1833

Sarah Gage, born 1836

Jesse Stevens was born Sept. 29, 1788 in Canterbury, son of Simon Stevens and Elizabeth Boynton. He died in 1849, leaving Abigail to raise many young children. This derailed his plans for a proper education for his son Albert, who cared for

his mother and eventually removed to Concord, where he did quite well. There is yet another Epsom connection to this Stevens family. Jesse Stevens had a brother Thomas Jefferson Stevens, born in 1801 in Canterbury. He married Elizabeth Smith, and had 8 children, relocating to Illinois. There his first wife died in 1853, and he married for his second wife, Mrs. Eliza Bensing Simpson, widow of James Simpson, who died in Concord in 1853 and was born in Philadelphia. Eliza was the daughter of Simon Grant and Hannah Babb of Epsom, NH.

The updated genealogy of Nathaniel and Molly (Sanders) Sherburne is as follows:

Children:

John, born Epsom, 1790, died 1865 in Chichester, married 1816 in Pittsfield, Abigail Page (unknown)

Abigail, born Mar. 16, 1793 in Epsom, died 1880 in Canterbury, married 1814, Jesse Stevens

Mary, born abt. 1795, Epsom, married 1817 in Epsom, William Rand of Deerfield, she died 1884

Elizabeth, born 1798, Epsom married 1823 in Epsom, John S. Rand of Deerfield, she died 1882; John S. the brother of William, children of William Rand and Mary James of Deerfield.

David, born Aug. 7, 1800, Epsom, married Fanny Prescott, 1832 in Epsom, he died 1837 in Epsom

Nancy, born about 1802, probably died before 1810

Nathaniel, according to his gravestone, died Aug. 20, 1818, and is buried behind the home of George Carlson. Though there are records that there were additional buried there in the family plot, this appears to be the only known marker at this time. Molly Sanders was still living in 1858, and no record of her death or burial is known.

Using age and date of death, Nathaniel Sherburne was born in 1766, and is of the Portsmouth, NH Sherburnes. There is conflicting data as to his parents, but it would appear his parents were Nathaniel and Jane (Nutter) Sherburne. The parents and genealogy of this Jane Nutter also remains unknown. For more genealogy on the Sherburne families, visit the Records section of the Epsom History website - epsomhistory.com.

CEMETERY INSCRIPTIONS

No. 43

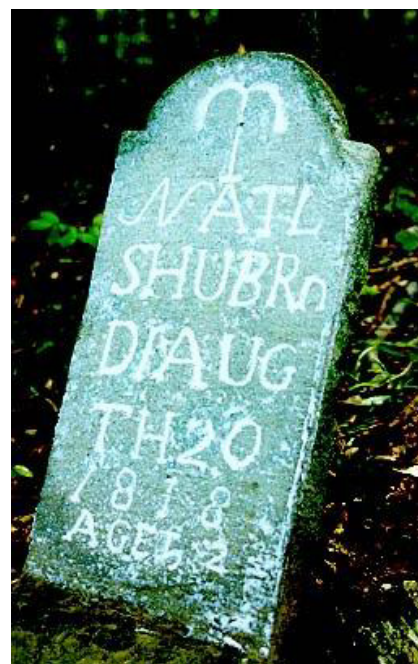
Nathaniel Sherburne Cemetery,

Behind the old George Dowst home (now Carlson),
New Orchard Road

Sherburne

[Natl Shubrn \(Nathaniel Sherburne\)](#), DI Aug th20
1818 Age 52

Former owners of the property indicated that there were additional gravestones, but none were visible in 1997.



The Remains of Maj. Andrew McClary

New Hampshire Statesman, (newspaper) July 31,
1858 issue 1939, Col B –

“The grave of Major McClary. The fact that Major McClary, who was killed at the battle of Bunker Hill, was buried in Medford, had been handed down to us more as a tradition than as a well settled fact, as the place of his burial was known to but few, if any, of the present generation. . . .

Three or four years ago a gentleman of Medford ordered a fence to be built around his garden, which bounded on Water Street, a new street leading from Forrest street easterly, across the estate of the late Mr. Bishop, near the junction of Ashland street; and in digging the post holes there was found, all along by the side of the fence, human bones, which created much surprise and inquiry. There was then living in the city an old native citizen, Mr. Andrew Blanchard, who died last year, aged about 93 years, and he cleared up the mystery. He said he remembered that the men of Stark’s regiment, who were wounded or sick, were attended to in a certain house in Medford, and when any of them died they were buried in the field with the Major. These remains, therefore, in regular order, parallel, horizontal Christian fashion – are not Indian, but of the New Hampshire men who were carried wounded from Bunker Hill, and died in Medford. The bones which were disturbed were in about thirty graves. They were gathered up, enclosed in a box, and buried in the burial ground on Cross street.”

From “Medford in the Revolution, Military History of Medford, MA 1765-1783”, by Helen Wild, 1903

“Major Andrew McClary of Epsom was killed by a cannon-ball from a vessel after he had come to Medford to procure bandages for the wounded and was returning over Charlestown Neck. He was of Colonel Stark’s regiment and was brought here and “interred with the honors of war.” Our local historian, Rev. Charles Brooks says, “He lies about

fifty or sixty rods north of the old burying ground.” Also that “twenty-five of the general’s men who had been killed were brought here and buried in the field about fifty or sixty rods north of Gravelly Bridge.”

“The late John Russell found bones there in 1849, when engaged in digging for a cellar and fence at a point almost directly in front of us. That the finding was a matter of interest is indicated by the fact that instead of tossing them aside he took them to his home, where many people went to see them. What disposition was made of them is told by this record from the report of the selectmen, 1848-49: “Cash paid Jacob Brooks for burying box of bone from land of NH Bishop, supposed to be the bones of Revolutionary soldiers, \$2.50.” Further evidence of the interest in this matter is found in the fact that Jacob Brooks, the town sexton, a few years later, when his grandson was assisting him in mowing the grass here, told the boy the story, and pointed out the spot with the admonition ‘Remember what I tell you. Some time some one will want to know.’”

The McClary Family by John C. French (printed for local NH Newspaper and the History of Manchester)

“The third son (of John McClary, brother to Maj. Andrew) Andrew, was sent to Dummer Academy to be educated, and died there during the war, aged sixteen. He was buried at Medford, by the side of his uncle, Major Andrew McClary”

From NH Provincial and State Papers:

Losses (paid) if Maj. Andrew McClary. An acct of sundry loses susstain’d by Major Andrew McClary, in a Battle fought between the regular Troops and the American forces on Charles Town Neck on the 17th of June last past, and sundry other services done toward his burying.

To a Coffin for the deceased

Historical and Genealogical Register Oct. 1890 Vol. 44, P. 346, an article on William Henry Montague

“In 1836, when laborers were digging on Winter Hill, they exhumed a coffin, which circumstances with which I am no familiar led those qualified to

judge to believe contained the remains of Major Andrew McClary, who was killed by a shot from a British frigate, after the battle of Bunker Hill. Mr. Montague secured some of the bones and the coffin handles, and preserved them among his relics.”

Dearborn’s account (various sources)

General Dearborn, who was in this battle captain of a company in the Major’s regiment writes the account of his death: “From the ships of war, and a large battery on Copp’s Hill, a heavy cannonade was kept up upon our line and redoubt from the commencement to the close of the action and during the retreat, but with little effect except killing the brave Major Andrew McClary, of Col. Stark’s regiment, soon after we retreated from Bunker Hill. He was among the first officers of the army, possessing a sound judgement, of undaunted bravery, enterprising, ardent and sealous both as a patriot and a soldier. His loss was severely felt by his compatriots in arms, while his country was deprived of the services of one of her most promising and distinguished champions of liberty. After leaving the field of battle, I met him and drank some spirit and water with him. He was animated and sanguine in the result of the conflict for independence, from the glorious display of valor which had distinguished his countrymen on that memorable day. He soon observed that the British troops on Bunker Hill were in motion, and said he would go and reconnoiter them to see whether they were coming out over the Neck; at the same time he directed me to march my company down the road towards Charlestown. We were then at Tuft’s House near Ploughed Hill. I immediately made a forward movement to the position he directed me to take, and halted, while he proceeded to the old pound which stood on the site now occupied as a tavern house, not far from the entrance to the Neck. After having satisfied himself that the enemy did not intend to leave the strong position on the heights, he was returning towards me, and when within twelve of fifteen rods of where I stood with my company, a random shot from one of the frigates lying near where the center of Cragie’s Bridge now is, passed through his body, and put to flight one of the most heroic souls that

ever animated man. He leaped two or three feet from the ground, pitched forward, and fell dead upon his face. I had him carried to Medford, where he was interred with all the respect and honors we could exhibit to the *manes* of a great and good man.”

Most of the preceding articles have been known, but the account of William Montague was new, and upon finding he was one of the original founders of the The New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1845. Perhaps Mr. Montague donated items to the Society. An email was sent to Timothy Salls, Archivist for the Society. He checked into the subject and sent the following reply via email:

NEHGS did have the “supposed thigh bone of Major Andrew McClary”. It was presented to NEHGS by Mrs. Jennie Montague Morris of Philadelphia on 13 January 1892. This was sold at auction on 18 May 2000. Here is the information from the auctioneer: buyr #222; cat# 708; Lot# 1490 708; Qnty: 1; Desc: Thigh Bone, Supposedly from Major Andrew McClary. Donated in 1892 by Jennie Montague Morris. Here is the contact information for the auctioneer:

John McInnis Auctioneers

76 Main Street Amesbury MA 01913

(978) 388-0400

<http://www.mcinnisauctions.com/index.php>

I have found no indication that Mr. Montague donated the coffin handles. A footnote on page 342 of the memoir for Willaim Henry Montague written in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* vol 44[1890]:341-352 indicates that the source of much of the information for the memoir was from memoranda provided by Mr. Montague that was recorded by John Ward Dean and William B. Trask. I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if you have any other questions concerning this matter. - Timothy Salls.

An email to auction house asking them for additional information or passing the information on to the purchaser of the bones at auction, has gone unanswered. The mystery lingers on.



At Medford, MA, photo courtesy of JohnAtwood. "IN MEMORY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE SOLDIERS WHO FELL AT BUNKER HILL BURIED IN THIS TOWN AND INTERRED IN THIS SPOT. 1849"

CHARLES J. BROWN 1865 DIARY

Several years ago, three diaries of Charles Jeffrey Parsons Brown were returned to Epsom via a winning EBay bid. The diaries, 1860, 1861 and 1863, included some of his service during the Civil War. The three diaries were transcribed and scanned, and both are available online at epsomhistory.com. Recently a fourth diary for 1865 was found, and as in the previous case, has been returned to Epsom. It remains to be scanned and transcribed, but it will be added to the online information.

Charles J. Brown was the son of William Brown and his wife Lucretia Billings Gray. He was born in Epsom March 31, 1829 and married Mary 'Annie' Chapman Sept. 6, 1849. They had one son, Charles William Brown, born Jan. 13, 1850. Late in life they moved to Byfield, Massachusetts where they died, the home of his sister, Susan E.P. (Brown) Forbes. They are buried in the McClary Cemetery, he having died in 1911, his wife in 1908.

Their son and his wife, Isabella E. Shellar are also buried in the McClary Cemetery. They had two children, a daughter Phyllis, of whom nothing is known, and a son Carleton G. Brown, born April 6, 1900 in Massachusetts and married Pauline Webster. Nothing more is known of him.

MYSTERY PHOTO IDENTIFIED

At the last meeting of the Epsom Historical Association, a photo was displayed of a Grist Mill Dam in Epsom, NH. Quickly it was known that it was not the Grist Mill at Short Falls near the old covered bridge. The other choice was perhaps the Grist Mill by the old Knowles Store. Looking at the photo, it was hard to place the dam, and nobody around could remember how the backwater looked. After viewing other photos in the Historical Association's collection, a possible candidate appeared. With magnifying glass in hand, it was clear that the structure of the dam in both pictures was the same. The mill dam was indeed that across from Knowles store.



ABOVE- Photo of the Grist Mill Dam in Epsom.
BELOW - Photo from archives, which when enlarged shows the internal structure of a part of the dam. They are one in the same.



Tentative 2009 Program Schedule

Friday May 1 – *SPECIAL PRESENTATION* with the Epsom Public Library, a repeat of the early history of Epsom presented June 2001 with a new Part 2 to be presented in the fall. Epsom Public Library, 7:00 pm.

Sunday May 17 – Epsom History through old Newspapers. From death and tax notices to fires and a variety of news events, learn more about the history of Epsom as read by the people living in town during the actual events. Epsom Public Library, 2:00 pm.

Sunday July 12 – Recipe Cookbook kick-off and summer social. Time and place to be determined.

Sunday September 13 – History of the Old Meetinghouse. A look back at the formation of the Epsom Free Will Baptist Society through the building of the old meetinghouse. Old Meetinghouse, 2:00 pm

Friday October 16 – *SPECIAL PRESENTATION* of Part Two of early Epsom History from the formation of the first Church, the Revolutionary War to the beginning of the Civil War. Epsom Public Library, 7:00 pm.

Sunday November 15 - History of the Bickford and Huckins mill with personal anecdotes, photos and stories concerning the mill presented by Al Bickford. Epsom Public Library, 7:00 pm

Sunday December 6 – A members only event – the annual Christmas Social, details to be announced. Epsom Public Library, 5:00 pm.

IN OUR ELECTRONIC EDITION - Members of the Epsom Historical Association who provide email addresses, receive an expanded version of the newsletter by email. In this edition:

Placing Abigail Sherburne 1793-1880
Nathaniel Sherburne Cemetery
New Diary 1863 arrives
Grist Mill Falls photo identified

EPSOM HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWS

The Epsom Historical Association has signed the lease for the use of the old library with the Epsom Library Trustees. The lease, mandated by the Selectpersons, allows the Association to continue to work on completing a museum and research center at the Epsom Historical Center. The trustees have agreed to upgrade the electrical system and refinish the floors. The Association will tackle the ceilings and painting of the interior. Once that work is completed, the Association will begin to solicit items to be displayed. The facility will remain closed until all the work and displays are complete. Membership in the Epsom Historical Association hit the 100 member mark during the month of April. Tom Graham, historian of the New Hampshire National Guard presented a wonderful program on New Hampshire and the American Revolution as our first program of the year last March. (photo)



Work on the new Cookbook continues on target, and its release should be in just a few months. Thanks to the committee and all those who have contributed to this wonderful project.