



# Epsom Historical Association

## NEWSLETTER

*Catch up to the Past*

November 2006

### NOVEMBER PROGRAM

#### N.H. Militia

Speaker: Thomas Graham

Sunday, November 19,

2:00 pm

The old Epsom Town Hall will be the location for the November meeting of the Epsom Historical Association which will feature a program on the early NH Militia.

Travel back in time and tour through New Hampshire's military history from its beginnings in 1623 to the present day National Guard. Tom Graham II will present this 25 minute video overview of the past 370 years of New Hampshire's impressive military history. Mr. Graham serves as the historian for the New Hampshire National Guard and will take questions after the presentation.

Epsom played an important role, with members of its militia making the trek to Bunker Hill, and maintained a strong militia (the 18th Regiment) throughout the first half of the 1800's. Prominent citizens of the local militia included members of the McClary family, Simon Ames Heath, John Ham, Daniel Cilley, James Babb, Josiah Crosby and General Benjamin L. Locke.

The program is open to the public and refreshments will be served.

### *IN OUR ENHANCED ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER THIS ISSUE*

The electronic edition of the Newsletter this month includes an excerpt from the Andrew J. Hall Civil War Diary; a recap on the history of the McClary Cemetery, September's program; Epsom's Town Pound and Tramp House; articles from early New England newspapers; genealogy, Hannah Brown McCrillis.

If you wish to receive the electronic expanded newsletter by email in place of the shorter paper mailed copy, send your email address to [Epsomhistory@aol.com](mailto:Epsomhistory@aol.com), and we will make the change. The electronic enhanced version allows the Historical Association to provide a more colorful version with additional information that it otherwise could not afford to print and mail. It is in Adobe Acrobat PDF format for easy viewing and printing.

### *MYSTERY PHOTO*



Can you guess the surname of the family that occupied this old house? No longer standing, it was located in the part of town called "New Portsmouth." The family later re-located to New Rye. Some of the family that lived here are buried nearby this old house in a small family burying ground.

## ANDREW J. HALL

### Civil War Diary Excerpt

The following is a loose transcription from the Civil War diary of Andrew J. Hall. The original, as in most small diaries, is difficult to read and understand, as there is little in the way of punctuation, and many words are spelled incorrectly. This makes the original hard to read and understand at times, but the excerpt below has been re-written to be better understood. Andrew J. Hall was born in Epsom and moved to Illinois before the Civil War where he married and had two children. Following the war the family returned to Epsom, and are buried in the McClary Cemetery.

*This book belongs to A.J. Hall - Lebanon, St. Clair County, Illinois*

*I enlisted in the U.S. service at Summerfield, St. Clair, Il, July 8th, 1861. I left Summerfield for Camp Butler in Springfield, Illinois August 21st, 1861. Stopped at east St. Louis over night and took the cars. On the 22nd am, arrived at Camp Butler at three o'clock pm, and was sworn into U.S. service, and bought a horse for one hundred and twenty five dollars on the 26th of August. Received our saddles and receipted for them at thirty-five dollars on the 30th of August.*

*Left Camp Butler on the morning of September 4th, took the cars at James town on the great Western R.R., changed cars at Decater Junction of the G.W. & S.C. R.R., arrived at Carbondale Jackson County, Illinois at eleven o'clock pm. No arrangements had been made for our comfort. We tied out horses in the woods back of town without any feed for them, and without any supper for ourselves. Some of us got into an old school house for a shelter. I took one of the seats for my bed and rested as well as circumstances would admit.*

*On the 5th our camp was selected in the timber joining the town, our camp was names Camp Logan. I belong to Co. E, 2nd Regiment of Illinois Cavalry. On the 11th of September we*

*had everything ready for a move at daylight - it was raining very hard and continued to rain all the forenoon after a muddy and fatiguing march of eleven hours. We arrived at Camp Nason near Daquoin on the S.C.R.R. On the 22nd of September, we left camp Nason for Metropoles on the Ohio River, twelve miles below Paducah.*

*On the night of the 22nd we camped near Blairsville. On the 23rd we camped on the Saline Creek, and on the 24th camped near Viana. Nothing of interest has occurred on our march until tonight when we came into Viana. We found several Union flags proudly floating over the town and three salutes from a cannon was fired as we entered the town. This was cheering to us for we had been traveling a country where the inhabitants strongly sympathized with the South. They gave us many a sour and surly look.*

*After we had camped for the night, a German came into camp and reported that we would find the road blockaded by rebels 14 miles from Viana on our next days march. Our men were also stating that they had seen the trail of a large gang of horses across the road several miles back in the woods before we got to Viana. We also remembered that for the last 25 miles, nearly every house was vacant. Sometimes we would see some woman and children, but no men. This began to look suspicious and began to create considerable excitement. Some thought that the trail we had seen was a company of mounted rebels that were watching our movement. It is necessary here to state that our force amounted to about 940 men (cavalry) commanded by Col. Noble, and our arms consisted of forty carbines and about cartridges enough to load them once. These are all the arms that we had to defend ourselves with - this is what caused the excitement.*

*We could have been whipped very easily. Some expected that we would be attacked before morning. Some were in favor of keeping their horses saddled so as to be ready for a retreat in case we should be attacked; others declared that they would fight with clubs and die on the spot*

## SEPTEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS McCLARY CEMETERY AND EARLY TOWN CENTER

*before they would leave the ground. As for myself, I did not approve of the management. I thought it was not right to take us into the enemy's country without arms. I was not the least excited, for I did not think that we were in any danger. I went to sleep with my head on my saddle and had a good nights rest. I woke up in the morning and found everything all right.*

*Lieutenant Col. Hogg, with twenty men, scouted all night, but discovered nothing unusual. On the 25th we took up our line of march and arrived at Metropoles and camped at the Old Fort Massac, a little above Metropoles, on the bank of the Ohio River, twelve miles below Paducah, Kentucky. No provisions were made for us. We had to buy bread and meat for our supper and sleep on the ground without any straw, the ground being very wet and we only had one blanket. We could not sleep very comfortably. We were in this condition four nights, then we got some straw to sleep on. Soon as we came into Metropoles, our boys got a secesh flag from a yawl, which was soon distributed among the boys.*

*Sept. 28th. I must state that since we have been at this camp we have been having hard bread and it was full of worms. The boys had become very much dissatisfied. They thought they were imposed on and they were determined to oppose the insult, so they formed a funeral procession of about twenty-five or thirty men and started with a barrel of wormy crackers towards the river to bury them. Before they got to the river there were two or three hundred soldiers in the procession. The crackers and worms were buried together in god order, then another barrel was taken to the quartermaster's tent and turned out on the ground, and three groans were given the quartermaster. The processions then marched back in front of the Colonel's tent. One of the soldiers made a brief but eloquent speech. Three cheers were given for the speaker and three groans for the quartermaster, and they then retired to their quarters.*

Available online at [Epsomhistory.com/epsom/](http://Epsomhistory.com/epsom/)

An approaching weather front kept the September meeting from being held at the McClary Cemetery, and instead met at its inclement weather alternative, the old town hall. Instead of actually viewing and surveying burying sites and the town center, a series of photos and slides were prepared and shown to those in attendance along with the prepared text of the program.

The program combined the history of the 'burying ground' with that of the growth of Epsom Center, as the majority of those early settlers are buried at that location. Among the revelations were that the actual first meeting house was erected on that site about 1736, and was replaced by a second meetinghouse on the same location within the bounds of the burying ground in 1764. It also came to light that the purchase of land to enlarge the old burying ground was made in 1872 by the McClary Cemetery Corporation and bought from Hiram Holmes. Holmes, along with Henry Knox and Horace Bickford, bought back the land with the provision that it only be used as a burying place, and the trio sold off lots until sold to the town in 1902. It was in 1872 that the term McClary Cemetery came into use. The program also highlighted the early trust funds, including that which replaced the old stone wall with the current iron fence, and followed the installation of water and other improvements to the grounds. Along the way some of the funerals and obituaries of Epsom's early citizens were read, and a list of many of the more well known inhabitants was given.

**AUCTION.**  
**W**ILL be sold at Public Auction, on Saturday, the 8th day of September next, at four o'clock P. M., on the premises, the old Congregational meeting house in Epsom. The building is about 50 feet by 40; the timber in the frame is large and with the rest of the wood work is believed to be sound and good.  
Concussions at time and place of sale.  
FREDERICK SANBORN, } Committee  
MOSES P. GRAY, } of the  
JONATHAN L. CILLEY, } Proprietors.  
Epsom, Aug. 30, 1849. 38

# EPSOM'S TOWN POUND AND TRAMP HOUSE

The first mention of a town pound was in March of 1788 when Francis Locke was selected as pound keeper. The pound was near the parsonage, and in 1795, at town meeting it was voted "that any person or persons may move the pound in Epsom further back on the parsonage lot so that the front thereof may stand parallel with the wall back of the schoolhouse, provide it be placed and underpinned as well as it is now and without any expense to the town." It remained at this location, still with Francis Locke as pound keeper until 1808, when in the town warrant is was asked "to see what method the town will adopt to erect a pound for the use of said town." It was voted that a pound be erected on Capt. Samuel Locke's land near the house of Reuben Locke, lately occupied, on the turnpike road; that the pound for the use of the town be built of stone, thirty five feet square within side at the bottom and four feet thick at the bottom; and two feet at the top, and six feet high of stone with a cap of yellow pine 8 inches by 10 inches free of sap; that the building of the pound be set up by the Selectmen at public auction to the lowest bidder. This site was down near what was later Knowle's store, on the new turnpike road, which bypassed the older route up Center Hill to get to the coast. The town center was shifting, and the property owner, Samuel Locke, was elected pound keeper. Samuel Locke was one of several tavern/store owners in the area, another was John Batchelder, who was pound keeper in 1810. The job returned to Samuel Locke who held it until his sudden death in 1816, and in 1817 it was held by his son Daniel Evans Locke. By 1820 Abel Brown assumed the duties of that office, followed by John Ham Jr. for two years before Mr. Brown once again took over its upkeep for the next several years. Town reports and records lapse, and the next mention of the town pound was in June of 1876, when Andrew S. Evans, who lived not far from the pound, wrote to the Selectmen – "I hereby notify you that the pound in this town had been and is now out of repair. I therefore hereby request you to put it in repair in accordance with the

law of this State. If this request is not complied with I intend to bring suit against the town."

The resolution of the matter is unknown.

It is not exactly known when the town started to pay expenses for transients and tramps through town. Budgets from the mid 1880's already show that individuals in town were paid a dollar for the care of each tramp – with the Chesley Brothers in one year receiving \$57 dollars. The care for tramps and the fate of the town pound coincide in 1902, as this article from the early 1940's in the Union shows, and completes, our history of each.

## Epsom Tramp House at Epsom Has New Location

"Special to the Union. Epsom, Aug. 21. – The Epsom tramp house is one of the first victims of the construction project on the Concord-Dover road, Route 9, being built through the town. The tramp house was situated directly in the path of the new road, as it straightens out to cut off a curve east of the Epsom Post office.



*Above - Henry Dowst Photo - Tramp House - was across from Clayton Mason house on Route 4 North of Circle, near where road went to town dump.*

The building was loaded onto a trailer truck, and the movers planned to set it down in a nearby field.

However, the owner of the land put up a vigorous protest, and the tramp house moved on. After making various attempts to find a situation for the wandering tramp house, it finally came to rest nearly three miles nearer Concord, on town land west of the Four Corners. The tramp house was built in 1902 by Jackson C. Philbrick, father of M.C. Philbrick, Epsom's veteran town clerk. The decision to have a town shelter for tramps came after a stormy session at the town meeting when some objected because the town had paid \$60 to local factotums for feeding and lodging 60 itinerants the previous year.

The building was erected on the site of the old town pound, using the stone wall for a foundation. The total cost was \$96.32. The stove came from the old Congregational church which formerly stood at Epsom. The house was fitted with bunks, and was otherwise comfortably equipped.

However, the knights of the road showed their appreciation by stealing the bed clothing and breaking up the bunks for fuel. After various efforts were given to furnish the building, efforts were given up and now the paraphernalia includes the stove, a pile of cordwood and a saw. Those who wish to keep warm have the privilege of sawing up the cordwood for their use.

Many of the tramps make regular stops at the Epsom tramp house, returning at intervals to take advantage of the town's hospitality. It was formerly the custom to furnish each visitor with a loaf of bread and a can of beans; and sometimes some other supplies were included. One man always called for dried apricots and canned heat to cook them with. At present each tramp receives a loaf of bread and an invitation to move on in the morning.

The year 1937 was a banner one for tramps, as 455 of them were given a night's lodging and a breakfast at a cost to the town of \$182. In 1940 the expense was less than half of this figure. Many of the younger men who were unemployed because of actual scarcity of paying work are no longer on the road, but the old timers make the usual rounds. One of them called this week at the general store near the former location of the tramp house and said wistfully "Well, I see the old hotel has gone!"

## EPSOM CEMETERY INSCRIPTIONS

No. 18

### Wells - Brown Cemetery



Along stone wall behind Pattillo horse farm, New Rye

### Brown

JB AE 54 D1808 (original fieldstone of Joseph below)

Mr. Joseph Brown, In meory of, who died June 27, 1808, ae 54 yrs (Son of Jos. & Abigail Goss)

Abigail (Dolbeer), In memory of, wife of Joseph Brown, died Aug. 22, 1842, ae 85 y'rs & 7 mo.

Mary Ann, daughter of Capt. Eleck and Mary Brown, died Feb. 9, 1834, age 6 yrs 8 ms

Mary M., daughter of Capt. Eleck and Mary Brown, died Dec. 28, 1823, ae 2 yrs & 8 ms

### Wells

Samuel Wells, In memory of, who died Sept. 21, 1855, aged 79 y'rs

Hannah (Brown), In memory of, wife of Samuel Wells who died Sept. 21, 1840, ae 59 years & 5 mo. (dau. of Joseph and Abigail [Dolbeer] Brown)

## GENEALOGY NEWS

### The case for Hannah Brown

The history of Canterbury by Lyford, in the McCrillis genealogy states "William McCrillis, b. about 1750, in Deerfield; m. about 1784, Hannah Brown of Epsom, where he settled." He died in Epsom in 1813, aged 55, putting his year of birth about 1758. Buried next to him in the McClary Cemetery is Hannah, wife of William M'Crillis, died Sept. 20, 1839 ae 80 y'rs. This would put the birth of Hannah Brown about 1759. There were many Brown families that came to Epsom - so who were Hannah's parents?

Looking for Hannah Brown's with connections to Epsom raised a few possibilities. Hannah, born about 1750 married Joseph Marston; Hannah Brown born 1759 married John Tyler; Hannah Brown, daughter of Joseph and Abigail Dolbeer married Samuel Wells. John Brown, who married Sarah Allen, both buried in Epsom (another story for another day) was born 1759 - son of Jonathan Brown and Mary Garland - but no sister Hannah. There was in the area a True Brown, but to date no information on him has been found.

Thanks to data now online at the New England Historic Genealogy Society, the search for the parents of Hannah Brown has concluded. Through the vital records there, and further research, William McCrillis married Hannah Brown, listed in Salisbury, MA, June 9, 1784. There is a marriage intention also given "Marriage intention filed in Salisbury, MA - McCRELLIS (see also McCrillis), Will[ia]m [of Epsom, int.], and Hannah Brown, June 9, 1784. "Baptism records in Salisbury, show that on Oct. 21, 1759, Hannah, daughter of Reuben Brown was baptised. This information completes the search. Reuben Brown had married Deborah Elliott and had at least 7 children born in Salisbury, MA. One son, Samauel, married Rhoda Eaton and came to Northwood, NH; his brother Reuben, married Elizabeth Elliott, and their daughter Sarah E. married Ebenezer Griffin of Northwood - daughter Mary C. married Reuben Swain - daughter Betsey married John Cilley, all of the Northwood area, which gives further ties for this Hannah Brown having connections to Epsom.



### ANSWER

The photo of this man was taken in 1895. He worked in the building below. The questions are: what was his name, what was his occupation, and where was the building?



His name was William Lent, blacksmith, and his shop was on Route 4 and was later the Epsom Garage of Jim Steele and Ed Demers. Currently you can get your haircut there or buy some insurance.

### FROM THE ONLINE GUESTBOOK AT EPSOM EARLY SETTLERS

*I shall log on to this wonderful site again and study it more. Thanks to the Rand family for sharing so much information! I note some mention of the Marden family among your readers. I wrote and published (hardcover) a 631p. Marden Family Genealogy in 1974. If anyone thinks it might be helpful to their research I do have a VERY FEW copies left. I've also published a large Fitts Gen. (1989) and have just finished a Getchell book. Those are not Epsom names but would be glad to receive email queries from anyone searching those families.*

Sylvia Fitts Getchell

**NEWS OF OLD**  
**from Early Newspapers**

The Argus 4-17-1792 **OSGOOD DWELLING**

On Tuesday the 3d inst. the dwelling house of Col. Samuel Osgood, of Epsom, accidentally took fire, and with their provisions, and some of their furniture, &c was consumed.

The Mirror 1-30-1795

**Unhappy Accident**

On Wednesday last, at a large company of gentlemen and ladies from Epsom, upon a party of pleasure, were crossing the river in this town at Tucker's ferry, the horses belonging to one of the sleighs on descending the eastern bank, took a fright, overset and broke the sleigh to pieces, and threw those that were in it with such violence upon the ice, that one of the young ladies, Miss Hannah Dickey, received such a shock that she has since been \_\_\_ of all sense, and almost emotion – She is at the house of Dr. Carignain, and her life is pronounced extremely dubious.

Newburyport Herald 11-15-1816 **ITEM**

Mark French, of Epsom, in N.H. has been apprehended in Albany for Robbery. A large quantity of plunder was found in his possession.

NH Patriot 3-26-1827

**CURIOSITY**

A correspondent informs us that a sheep was found by Messrs. Brown and Foss in the woods in Epsom, N.H. in the first part of the present month alive, which had not been at any barn or seen any person during the winter; snow for a considerable part of the time more than three feet deep.

9-14-1848 **JOSEPH LAWRENCE DWELLING**

Fire In Epsom. – The large three-story house in Epsom, which, for many years, has stood so boldly in the traveler's eye as he passed on either of the leading roads in Epsom, owned by Mr. Joseph Lawrence, was consumed by fire, last Wednesday morning, soon after sunrise.

NH Gazette 12-17-1784 **JOHN GRAY**

Portsmouth, December 17. On Monday last, the son of Major James Gray, of Epsom, about 16 years old, in attempting to lead a very unruly horse of his father's to water, made the end of the halter fast about his wrist, the horse in prancing hove him down and ran away with him, dragged him over a four broad fence and through the field, until the halter broke. The family supposed the young man had gone to spend the evening with his relations, were unconcerned about him until the next morning, when to their great surprise, they found blood on the fence where the horse had dragged the young man over, then, following the blood, after sometime found him at a considerable distance alive, but perfectly helpless and senseless; his life is despaired of, as it is supposed that most of his bones were broken.

NH Gazette 6-30-1801 **JOHN McCLARY**

“Died at Epsom, the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. the Honourable JOHN M'CLARY, in the 82<sup>nd</sup> year of his age – This family early distinguished themselves among the “*Sons of Liberty*” in New Hampshire, and took a very active and conspicuous part in the American Revolution, both in the Field and in the Cabinet. The daring spirit and martial enterprise of Major M'Clary (a brother of the deceased) was early displayed in the Field; he roused the hardy Yeoman of New Hampshire, and led them to the speedy assistance of their brethren of Massachusettts; - and in the memorable battle of Bunker's Hill, in an exhibition of the most heroic ardour, was slain. – The late deceased was equally serviceable to his Country in the Cabinet. He was, upon the commencement of the war, appointed one of the Executive of the State, then known by the name of “The Committee of Safety,” and continued so to act during the most trying period of the revolution. Possessed of firmness and decision, properly tempered with prudence and discretion, and sustaining an unimpeachable character, which gave him the confidence of the people, he was of essential service to the State. – He was a dispassionate Whig of '75, and a consistent Federalist of '98. Having for many years retired from public life to domestic enjoyment, he is now removed to that world where the faithful and true shall have their reward.”

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Historical Association is getting set to finally begin to organize and archive its holdings. The work will require filing and organizing papers in the files; databasing and archiving properly documents and photos; organizing old town reports; and databasing historic items that have been donated. The association also is in desperate need of updating our computer system. Our current computer is old, slow, and does not have the capacity to even come close to housing our electronic archives. We will need to scan much that we have in our files, and any new items that come our way. The computer will also hold genealogical information and will become an important research tool down the road. A one hundred dollar contribution towards this project has been received to date. If you can help as a volunteer or perhaps contribute towards our \$500.00 goal to upgrade our computer system, either email us at [epsomhistory@aol.com](mailto:epsomhistory@aol.com) or call Harvey Harkness at 736-4571.

## NEW ONLINE

New at the Epsom Early Settlers Web Site  
[www.Epsomhistory.com/epsom/](http://www.Epsomhistory.com/epsom/)

- \* The History of the McClary Cemetery and the early settlement of Epsom Center - the complete text with pictures from last months program.
- \* A transcription of the Andrew J. Hall Civil War Diary, including an easy to read revision.
- \* 80 pages of articles and information from old New England newspapers ranging from 1750 to 1850.
- \* Listing of Selectpersons and town clerks from the Incorporation of the town to 2002.
- \* Photo of Hiram Holmes, his wife and others along with a prototype of one of his inventions.
- \* Town Pound and Tramp House in Epsom
- \* Judge Henry Sanborn Biography
- \* Over 25 portraits added to the gallery
- \* Epsom related burials at the Old North Cemetery in Concord



## COLLECTION ADDITIONS

The Epsom Historical Association has received two complimentary publications to add to its collection. The first "Chichester Articles" by Walter L. Sanborn. The book contains wonderful pictures and articles that appeared in the Suncook Valley Sun over the last several years.

The second is a book on genealogy of the Munroe family, compiled by Mary Munroe Pilsbury. It covers such Epsom surnames as Munroe, Brown and Babb, and contains some wonderful photo-copies of some of Epsom's early residents and buildings.

Our thanks are expressed to both for making these publications available to the Historical Association.