



Epsom Historical Association

NEWSLETTER

Catch up to the Past Sept. 2009 No. 4

September Meeting

History of the OLD MEETINGHOUSE

Sunday Afternoon 2 pm

Sept. 13, Epsom Public Library



The Epsom Historical Association will present its third program of the year at the Epsom

Public Library Sunday afternoon, September 13th at 2 p.m. The program will be a history of the old meetinghouse, originally built by the Free Will Baptist Society in 1861. As background, a brief history of the Society leading up to the building of the structure is included. The program will also focus on the related parsonage building which stood on the corner of Route 4 and Black Hall Road.

With the LChip work and stain glass window restoration complete, the program is timely as discussion for the possible future use of the building is being considered .

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

Special Presentation

REVOLUTION & THE STONE WALL ERA

History of Epsom Part 2

Friday Evening Oct. 16

7:00 PM Epsom Public Library

Following the French and Indian War, the town of Epsom still had not met the requirements of its 1727 charter. 'Revolution and the Stone Wall Era' picks up the history of the town with the establishment of the first church, the first schools, early roads and the settling of the outlying lots. Most of the stone walls in the state were made during the 1780-1830 time frame, which covers the most interesting period in the development of Epsom. The lecture also covers the period of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The early settlers struggled financially to get the town on a strong footing prior to the Revolution, and after the population exploded, laws of religious tolerance were changed, and many families and individuals entered the history books. The lecture is sponsored by the Epsom Public Library and is presented by the Epsom Historical Association, following the previous part one on the settling of the town.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH IN EPSOM

Sermon 1

Rev. John Woodbury Scribner

Next week this church completes 75 years of its ministry. As there seemed no desire to celebrate the event, several ministerial sermons will be delivered. The sermon today will relate to events preceding the formation of this church.

The town of Epsom was incorporated May 18, 1727 and this year is now 172 years old. It is supposed there were several families living in town before the incorporation.

Charles McCoy from Londonderry, William Blazo, a Frenchman, Andrew McClary from Ireland, Samuel Blake and one Whitaker were among the first settlers. What I am interested to know is were the first settlers a religious people?

My impression is that religion was not a characteristic of the early settlers as a whole. Andrew McClary, the distinguished military officer who fell at Bunker Hill is represented as very profane; Mrs. McCoy is represented as receiving better treatment from the Indians who captured her than from her husband. The McClary's are spoken of as very noted in a military and political sense, but not in a religious sense. It does state that one John McClary, brother of Andrew, was a stern Presbyterian, that Margaret, daughter of Andrew McClary, married Ebenezer Knowlton, a minister.

It is said that a house for public worship was to be built in 6 years from the year of incorporation, that is by 1733. But this meetinghouse does not appear to have been built until 1766, 33 years after the time it was

to have been completed. There was not settled minister until 1761. 100 acres of land was to be given by the town for a parsonage, 100 acres for the first gospel minister, and 100 acres for public schools.

When they secured a minister they feared they could not support him. The population was not yet 200. These were frightening days, there were Indian wars, and the mutterings of the Revolutionary war could be heard. The times were not favorable to religious impressions. State and church were united. The town built their meeting house and their parsonage at a later date. The town called their minister and supported the minister, the town gave land to the minister and land for a parsonage.

John Tuck, a graduate of Harvard College, was the first pastor for 13 years from 1761 to 1774. There does appear to have been a meetinghouse before there was a pastor for in 1761 the town stated that the meetinghouse shall stand on the same lot, there the old meetinghouse formerly stood, at or near the burying place. Money was also voted for a minister in 1742, 30 pounds for the support of a minister, that the gospel might be permitted in the town of Epsom.

In 1743 40 pounds old tenor

In 1750 50 pounds old tenor

In 1760 100 pounds old tenor

In 1761, when they secured a minister, the town voted to pay for ordination expenses. Salary of Mr. tuck 30 pounds sterling, 5 additional pounds after first year, 30 cords of wood hauled to his house monthly. Voted 600 pounds old tenor towards building a minister's house to be paid in labor.

Tuck accepted. His letter of acceptance would indicate a decent mind, a desire to do good, possibly his Seraphim reference, "They which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel and this we shall expect as long as he labors with

them” may indicate a certain disposition, especially when taken in connection with the close of his ministry, for it was voted in the 13th year of his ministry that a committee be appointed to talk with Mr. Tuck, our minister, respecting to some of his proceedings. The charge is supposed to be steeling. The following summer he was dismissed and it was voted that the meetinghouse be shut up until the town sees cause to open said house.

At the close of Tuck’s pastorate the membership of the church was supposed to be almost 20, which would be less than 1/18 of the population (362). Tuck died soon after [he was] on his way to the Revolutionary war as chaplain. Ten years passed before another minister was secured. The whole period of the Revolutionary war was in these 10 years.

Soon after Tuck’s dismissal it was voted to raise 6 pounds for preaching, and Ephraim Locke was to procure a minister. They could hardly expect more than 2 months preaching from so small a sum of money.

In 1773 Benjamin Thurston was visited to become pastor. His salary was to be 60 pounds first year, after three years 70 pounds, one half to be paid in currency, the other half in wheat, rye, corn, beef, pork. He was allowed to keep a horse, two cows and 8 sheep, for which the town must see that he has 6 ½ tons of good English hay. With all these enhancements, he declined. But, in 1784, Ebenezer Hazeltine accepted a call. He was graduated from Dartmouth College six years before, and then took a divinity course. It was a lifelong pastorate, extending into the 30th year. He married in town, Margaret, the daughter of Andrew McClary and died in 1813. This statement is made concerning him “He was a man of great modesty and diffidence, unassuming in his carriage among his own people and others; a man of strict integrity, and uprightness in all his dealings; a man of a quiet spirit; a promoter of peace and love among all; a man

of hospitality and charity, so far as his ability permitted; kind and friendly to all mankind; and in consequence of his virtues, was respected by all his acquaintance.” Jesse Smith, who preached his funeral sermon, said of him, “He was found in the faith; The Bible was the man of his counsel; His discourses were correct, substantial, instructive and evangelical, he was himself a bright example of those moral and religious duties he inculcated upon others.” He died in his 59th year. The town voted to bear the funeral expense, and pay his widow the salary to the end of the year and the use of the parsonage.

Notwithstanding, the church did not grow very fast. The population of Epsom has increased from the time of Tuck’s dismissal to Hazeltine’s death from a little over 200 to over 1200. A thousand persons, but the membership increased from about 20 to about 50. Son only 1 to 24 was in the church. When Hazeltine began his Epsom ministry, the Free Will Baptist denomination was five years old. [Benjamin] Randall had been waking the dead unto life. More than 100 churches have been organized with several thousand members, but none was organized in Epsom for 10 years to come. The Congregationalists had had full sway here for over 50 years, or if we go back to the year of incorporation, to 86 years.

About a year after Hazeltine’s death, Jonathan Curtis was visited to become pastor of the church. The town refused to concur. A religious society was organized which concurred with the church. Mr. Curtis accepted the call and was ordained in Feb. 1815. Note the results of separation of church and state. The town sold the parsonage in 1817 and Curtis bought it for \$1005.00. Other denominations appearing in town demanded [use of] the meetinghouse built by the town one half of the time and obtained it.

Concerning Curtis, nothing said about his education, age or previous condition. But

there were six added to the church the first year, 11 the second year, 16 the third year, and the 4th a general [revival] took place, without enthusiasm or tumult, a great work of grace was carried on, through which 47 were added to the church. For several years after this revival there were additions to the church every year. Here then in four years 80 were added to the church, probably the number exceeding 100 made Curtis' 10 year pastorate. Apparently the results were greater in four years after the separation of church and state than in the 52 years preceding.

The Congregationalists had voted to build a meetinghouse during Curtis' pastorate, but did not until 1845, when it was built at Slab City. The old meeting house built by the town was sold and moved to Concord. Soon after this the interest on the money obtained on the parsonage farm, which all denominations had been securing accounts at the wish of the voters, was refused payment by the town. Since then the church has been supported by ___ offerings. Curtis closed his letters Jan. 1, 1825, six months after the Freewill Baptist church had been organized. The membership must have been about 100 and the population of the town about 1377, 1/12th of the population in the church. This would seem to be a great improvement over 1/24 of the population in the church at the end of Hazeltine's pastorate.

Summary – at the close of Tuck's pastorate, 1774, about 1/18th of the population in the church.

In 1813 at the close of the second pastorate, Haseltine's, about 1/24th of the people in the church, a decline.

At the close of Curtis's pastorate, the third, 1825, 1/12th of the population in the church.

Today at least 1/6 of the population in the church.

Epsom, June 25, 1899

John W. Scribner

John Woodbury Scribner, son of John and Betsey Dearborn (Page) Scribner, was born March 7, 1840, at Raymond, New Hampshire. His preparatory course was taken at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, and he entered college at the beginning of the Fall term, August 24, 1860.

Immediately after graduating, he went to Hartsville, Indiana, where he was elected President of Hartsville College, which position he occupied for nine years, gradually and thoroughly building up an institution which had run down under a previous administration. Though he never graduated in theology, he taught in a college belonging to the United Brethren in Christ, and united with that denomination in September, 1865, and in 1866, somewhat against his own will, he was licensed to preach. He read the prescribed books, and was ordained at Medora, Indiana, in August, 1869, receiving his title of Reverend at that time. In the Fall of 1873, he removed to Annville, Pennsylvania, where he received the appointment of Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy in Lebanon Valley College. He occupied this position for two years, and was also the college pastor from February, 1874, until February, 1875. His real work as a minister began October 1, 1875, when he accepted a call to become pastor of the Free-Will Baptist Church at Lake Village, New Hampshire. He remained there until September, 1879, when he accepted a call to New Hampton, New Hampshire, where he continued until April 1, 1882. On May 7, 1882, he received a call from the Free-Will Baptist Church at Centre Sandwich, New Hampshire, which he accepted, and continues his pastorate there up to the present time. *{note-from there he arrived to preach in Epsom}*. He was Secretary of the College Department in the National Teachers' Association, held in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1872. He has been a Trustee and Corporator of New Hampton Literary Institution, Trustee since June, 1878, and Corporator since June, 1880, and has been Secretary of both boards since 1880. He has been a member of the Executive Committee of Belknap County Sunday School Association, since its organization in October, 1877, and its Secretary and Treasurer for the past three years. He has published an address, entitled "Our Duty to Ourselves, Our Country and our God." He took his degree of Master of Arts in course. He is an Independent Republican in politics.

Source: "Memorialia of the Class of '64 in Dartmouth College" compiled by John C. Webster, Shepard & Johnston, Printers, 1884, Chicago

CEMETERY INSCRIPTIONS

No. 14

Robinson Cemetery, Located in New Rye, off Mountain Road, on right past Red School House.

Dowst

[Sarah Ann](#), daur of Isaac & Sally Dowst, died Oct. 5, 1840, ae 2 yr 1 mo. & 19 d's

[Lydia Ann](#), daur of Isaac & Sally Dowst, died Jan. 4, 1837 ae 13 mo's 4 d's

Potter

[Emogene M.](#), daur of David & Elcy A. Potter, DIED March 26, 1860, 1 y'r 10 d's

Robinson

[John Robinson](#) who died Dec. 12, 1839 ae 68 yrs 5 mos

[Betsey \(Dennett\)](#), In memory of, wife of John Robinson, who died May 17, 1800 aged 27 yrs.

[Susannah \(Tilton\)](#), In memory of, wife of John Robinson, who died Feb. 10, 1815 ae 40

[John](#), son of John & Susannah Robinson, died Sept. 26, 1810 ae 6 months

[William Robinson](#) 1802-1881

[Nancy \(Ladd\) Robinson](#), his wife, 1799-1888

Robinson

[Polly](#), In memory of, Daughter of John & Betsey Robinson, who died Sept. 8, 1819 in the 24th yr. of her age

[Mr. Thomas Robinson](#) died July 15, 1834 ae 26 yrs 8 mos 11 days

[Henry O.](#), son of Horace and Sarah J. Robinson, DIED April 11, 1860 age 2 y'rs 8 mos

[A.A.R.](#) (footstone only, base of stone still in place, but the gravestone itself has turned to dust)

There were many graves with the footstones, but no date on them, and no trace after all these years of the headstones.

There are also references to burials of some Hartford (Hiram) & family members - no visible signs 1999.

NEW DONATED ITEMS

Several items have been donated to the Epsom Historical Association over the last few months. The Henniker Historical Association sent us a daybook of John S. Cate which covers his business and day to day transactions circa 1840. Ed Nutter has forwarded an educational paper dated 1811. The Pittsfield Historical Association, care of Larry Berkson, forwarded a box of miscellaneous ledgers and materials. The Reeves' families donated two photo scrapbooks formerly belonging to Verna Wells Hunt. She was a teacher in Epsom and the photos include many class pictures from the 1920's to 1940's, all carefully labeled with dates and names. The albums also contain a few pictures from around town, and some of the Wells and Hunt family members. Several boxes of memorabilia were given to the Association from Judith Todd. Thanks for all the contributions!

WORK CONTINUES AT EPSOM HISTORICAL CENTER



The Epsom Library Trustee's have made some significant improvements to the old Epsom Library, now the Epsom Historical Center. During the summer the upstairs floor was refinished and most of the electrical work completed. This included a new and upgraded entrance box; removal of old wiring around the walls and the old fixtures; new track lighting installed upstairs; new ceiling fixtures downstairs, and hard wiring of smoke detectors. A new sign was added to the front of the building. Still to be done are the addition of several wall outlets and new light covers downstairs. This fall the Epsom Historical Association plans to continue the work with plugging holes in the walls and ceilings, courtesy of Bucky Stiles; paint the upstairs, courtesy of Armand Claris; and refinish and hang a set of doors.

EPSOM ASSOCIATION TEST SIGNERS

From the "Miscellaneous Revolutionary Documents of New Hampshire, Vol. 30 State Papers Series edited by Albert Stillman Batchellor, 1910."

ASSOCIATION TEST

Colony of New Hampshire

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| John McClary | John McGaffey | Elipt Sanborn |
| Ebenezer Bracket | Aaron Burbank | Reuben Sanborn |
| Samuel Blake | Simon Cass | William Nason |
| James marden | John Cate | Ephraim Locke |
| Thomas Babb | Benson Ham | John McClary Jur |
| Andrew McGaffey | Neal McGaffey | Jeremiah Prescott |
| Samuel Daves | Francis Lock | Jonathan knowles |
| George Sanders | Levi Cass | Jeremiah Page |
| Benjamin Johnston | samuel Rand | William Drought |
| Jethro Blake | Israel Folsom | samuel ames juen |
| Thomas Holt Junr | William Rand | mark moses |
| John Casey | George Wallis | George Uren |
| Joseph Sharborn | Simon Knowles | Benjn Gooddwin |
| Josiah Knowles | moses Locke | Abraham Walles |
| Richerd treep | Ephraim Pettingell | Nathaniel Payn ? |
| Ebenezer Wallias | Henry mcCrelles | moses Osgood |
| Waymuth Wallas | Obidiah Williams | Simeon Chapman |
| Nathan Marden | John mcreles | Joseph Seavy |
| David Knowlton | Joseph Towle | hennery Seavy |
| Nathniel willes | Isaac Lebbee | John Haneis |
| William McCreles | James Nelson | Samuel Ames |
| William Holt | Silvanus moses | Samuel meses |
| Epheraim Beray | Beneet Lebbee | |

Refused to sign - John Cass and William Odiorne

Tentative 2009 Program Schedule

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:

1899 Sermon by John Woodbury Scribner, the first of three on the history of the Free Will Baptist Church on its 75th anniversary.

Rev. John W. Scribner - a brief biography

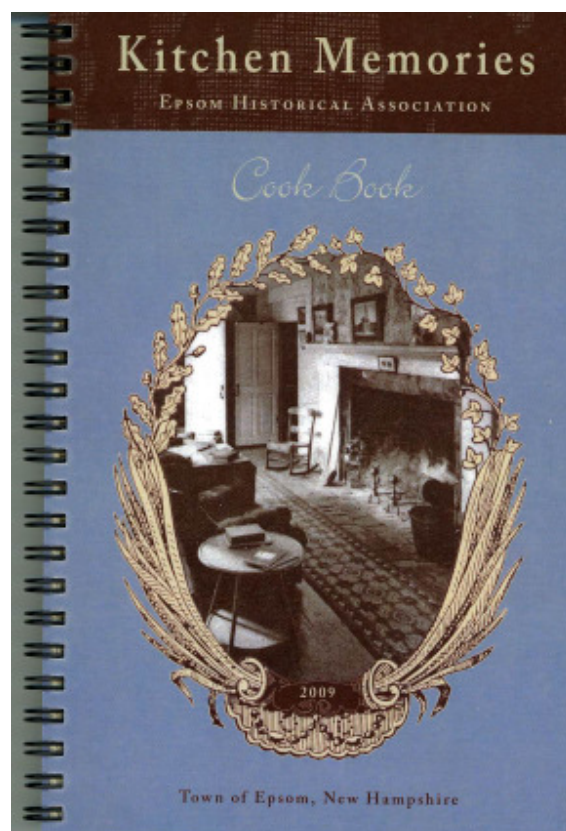
Robinson Cemetery Inscriptions

Newly Donated Items to the Historical Association

Work Update on the Epsom Historical Center

Epsom Association Test Signers, 1776, giving an idea of the families living in Epsom at the start of the Revolutionary War - *for Epsom History Part 2 lecture.*

KITCHEN MEMORIES \$14.95



The Epsom Historical Association debuted its new cookbook "Kitchen Memories" on Sunday July 12th, complete with samples of selected recipes, at the Epsom Public Library. One hundred of the cookbooks were sold during the day, and the remainder were sold within days of the event. The 170 page cookbook features submitted and other recipes along with related historical photos from the Association's digital archives, with some old remedies from various sources. Complete with a helpful index, the book is divided into seven categories: Appetizers & Dips; Breakfast, Brunch and Breads; Cookies and Bars; Desserts; Main Dishes and Caseroles; Salads, Sides, Soups and Stews; and finally, This & That. The book has had a second printing and is available for purchase at Historical Association meetings and through the Epsom Public Library.
