

THE HARTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2008

CARE OF THE POOR

I made brief mention of the Town Farm or Poor Farm in the last newsletter and decided to look at the matter more thoroughly.

“Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Weymouth formerly ran the Hartland Poor Farm when it was located in the northwest part of the town. After the buildings burned on this farm the Poor Farm was transferred elsewhere and Mr. and Mrs. Weymouth removed to Shelburne” Walter Eastman



Town Farm - Probably the one on Town Farm Hill Road

“The “Old Town Farm” was near Barron Hill, where the ancestors of the White Mountain “Hotel Kings” named Barron lived, and it was in the neighborhood of the farms of the pioneers – Solomon Brown and Timothy Grow.

The town house was voted to be built in 1790 as a “work house” erected or procured in said Town for the reception and correction (of) idle mismanaging persons in sd Town” and Samuel Williams, William Gallup, and Joseph Grow were elected a committee “to erect or provide said House.” A tax was voted “of one penny on the pound for the year 1790 to be paid into the Treasury by the 25th of December next in wheat at 12c per quart or other grain” Nancy Darling . After the house burned, the farm property was sold.

“About a mile west of Hartland Four Corners, on the hill road to Woodstock, is the “Town Farm”, which was purchased of Mr. Jacob Tewksbury in the early seventies of the last century (1870’s) by A.B. Burk, the town clerk, and Asa Weed, the selectman. Mr. Burk said, when he was making the purchase, “I want as good a farm as there is in town and I want it near the village”. The farm had previously been the home of Marston Cabot, the large landowner. It had on it a spring of delicious water known as “The Cabot Spring”. Nancy Darling

“Originally the Town Farm was just a Dairy Day Care, the Poor Farm being over in District 6. It eventually evolved that the two were combined here and large animals whose needs could not be met by their own wherewithal within the boundaries of the village were put to pasture at the Town Farm. Cows and cousins alike could be taken care of at the Farm if there was need. The Town Farm served several purposes: to give a home to the aged, the infirm, and those who were incapacitated physically and mentally. Tramps, having no other place to stay, could spend the night. Families down on their luck could sojourn there awhile until their fortunes changed. Living conditions at the Poor Farm were not always the best: according to several sources, freezing cold gripped the bedrooms while bedbugs dominated the mattresses. All residents were asked to help with the farm and household work to the extent of their capabilities.” In Sight of Ye Great River

The care of the poor was a very big responsibility of the town fathers. In the early town reports almost as many pages were devoted to the report from the Overseer of the Poor as to any other department. For example, in the 1855 Town Report the selectman’s report occupied five pages, almost all of which concerned roads and bridges. The Overseer of the Poor used three pages and the schools – none. (In some years the Superintendant would make a report, not always very

flattering, but town money was not used for the support of the schools.) The listings make interesting reading and not all people getting help lived at the farm.

Some examples of monies paid: "Wm Barret, for shoemaking for paupers, \$2.27, William French for keeping Charles Case and wife from the 6th of March 1854 to June 13th and funeral expenses for C. Case, \$37.09, Oliver Hayes for coffin for Collins Ferrin, \$6.50, Samuel Trask, for keeping Mrs. Lawton and child three weeks, \$11.00, two pounds of candles, .34"

The town bought very little for the farm. It seems that it was largely self-supporting. Expenses were for doctors, travel to get or move along people and to pay town people for their services.

We have a book that is a total inventory of the farm from 1887 to 1905. This inventory had to be taken every year.

If a child was in need, it was better to place him with relatives if at all possible, but rather than adoption it seemed that they were placed as apprentices with agreements made from both sides. "Now put and place Irving William Cushman a son of the late William E. Cushman, a poor boy of the town of Hartland aforesaid, aged 4 years, an apprentice to Edward W. Cushman of Noose Neck, Rhode Island, with him to dwell and live from this day of the date of these presents until said apprentice shall attain the age of twenty-one years ----- during all which term said apprentice and said master shall faithfully serve on all lawful business according to his power, wit and ability, and shall honestly and obediently in all things and behave himself towards his said master.-----and the said Edward Cushman for himself (shall educate) the said apprentice in the trade of business which the said (Mr. Cushman) is now engaged in. Shall instruct and allow to be instructed and taught and during all the time -----allow sufficient meat, drink, apparel, washing, mending, lodging and all other things necessary and fit for an apprentice" There is also a request that Hartland never be held responsible for any expenses." From the legal papers in our possession. I hope everything worked out well for Irving. C.Y.M.

POLITICS

With the election of 2008 so recently behind us, I thought it would be interesting to visit an election of years ago. I was lucky in finding a description of the 1892 Cleveland and Harrison contest by J. Howard Flower. Of course, we all know that Cleveland was President from 1885 – 1889, Harrison from 1889 – 1893 and then Cleveland again from 1893 – 1897. (You did know that, didn't you?)

“ Hester and Helen Harding spent the evening of November election day in our sitting room playing fan-tan. During the game Hester said” I hope Cleveland will win, but I am afraid he won’t. The republicans have the money” (so we supposed, but time disclosed that the big capitalists had divided their contributions pretty equally between the two parties.) Dennis Flower and Hugh Miller had gone to hear the returns read at the Windsor town hall. After midnight the final word was calkt on the blackboard: “We are out of the woods at last. Cleveland is elected. Good night!” Henry W. Stocker, a democratic merchant of Windsor and contributor of comic verse to The Windsor Journal and The Boston Globe, had discreetly stayed at home, apprehensive of defeat. The two Hartland men got him out of bed and gave him the tidings of victory; and he danced around the dining room table in his shirtflaps. At three o’clock we heard Dennis stealing upstairs in the dusk to where half of the family slept three-in-a-bed in each of the two rooms on opposite sides of the landing. As he turned into ours he exclaimed, “Well boys, Cleveland’s elected!” Then we all lay awake till after daylight while he recounted the returns state by state as they had come in” J.Howard Flower, The Free Soul. I am actually surprised that the returns came in a quickly as they did. Not as many people or as many states but still, this is pretty good. C.Y.M.

I looked into some diaries of the time to get some other slants on the subject but no one had a lot to say. Sebastion Cabot Jenne “Fair and nice. Warm and pleasant 39 above. I was about home A.M. P.M. I went to town hall and voted for our President or electors for President Benjamin Harrison”

Lyndon Shedd, “Election of President. Fair and warm. Cleveland and Stevenson”

Byron Ruggles “ Tues. 8 Election of President carried 26 bushels of apples to cider mill for N.F. English and brot back a crock of cider for him. Voted for Harrison and Reid”

“Fri 11 Got N.Y. Press say Cleveland and Steve are elected”

“BRUD” GARDNER AND HIS DOGS

It seems that with the snow we have had lately, some of us might want to look into an alternative mode of transportation. Now here’s an idea. C.Y.M.

“Vernon “Brud” Gardner has been raising husky dogs in Hartland, Vermont, for 30 years. Husky is a slang term to include all of the sled dogs: Siberian Husky, Samoyede, Eskimo and Alaska Malamute. Malamutes are the breed raised by Brud.

The Siberian Husky has been used for centuries as a sled dog in northeastern Asia and especially in Siberia. They were recognized as a breed by the American Kennel Club in 1930.

Brud Gardner - "Chris" (Husky)



Eskimo dogs are natives of Greenland, of Labrador and the northeastern part of North America. For centuries they have been the draft animals of these arctic regions. Eskimos

especially resemble wolves in form, howl and color. The Samoyed is the popular domestic dog of Siberia. The name comes from a tribe of people living on the shores of the Arctic Ocean in Asiatic Russia. Their fur is generally pure white. Alaskan Malamutes are the famous sled dogs of Alaska and were recognized as a breed by the American Kennel Club in 1935. The name derives from the Malamute tribe of Alaska Indians who raise these dogs. ...Brud keeps only eight dogs at present (1963), selling pups when they are about eight weeks old. He prefers this particular breed of sled dog for their outstanding qualities of friendliness, intelligence and strength.

During WWII Brud trained huskies as sled dogs for the Army Ski Troops in Colorado, Montana and Nebraska. He has done a great deal of sled dog racing --- and has won trophies racing at Newport, Lyndonville, Jackson, N.H. and other places in N.E.

The nationally known television dog “, “Yukon King” of the show “Sgt. Preston of the Yukon” was raised by Brud. This was the second King. When the original show dog became 11 years old, the producers of the show commissioned the dog’s owner and trainer to search all over the country until he found the perfect second. Over 300 dogs were screened until finally a two year old dog of Brud’s was selected. “ From Rural Vermonter – Spring 1963

So, as you can see, Hartland was the place where a television star spent his formative years. C.Y.M.

THANK YOU ALL !!!!

Picture of Ottauquechee Woolen Mill, flyer and photo of wagon wrench invented by Oliver Brothers, and a wagon wrench. From David Royce

Postcard of Ottauquechee Mill from Rosemary Morancy

Calendar of years from 1776-2000 from Carol Mowry

Money donations gratefully received from Marjorie Shepard, Marcia Neal David Fairbanks Ford, Rosemary Morancy, Donald Whelpley, David MacKenzie, Anne Adams and miscellaneous others who visited and made donations while here.

Carol Mowry, Editor