

Waterford Echoes

VOLUME LXX, No. 1 (Issue 70)

Spring/Summer 2020

Waterford Historical Society

Bicentennial Celebration Waterford in 1820



At left, Imagine traveling into the District of Maine in the early days of the 19th Century coming in to Waterford by the old Scoggin (Indian) Trail on foot, by horseback or oxen sled. The trail ran along the West side of Bear Pond, pictured above about 100 years after the road was built in 1787. In 1820 there would be no cameras for twenty more years but today it looks very much as it did then.

Below, postcard view of cows in Keoka Lake. They would have come down the lane from the Atherton (Hill/Marr) Farm in the days before camps. Note the big rock which marks where Stan's Boathouse was later located

Proprietors in Massachusetts began planning in 1774 for settlement of this seven-mile-square township and in 1775 David McWain came from Bolton, Mass to claim the first farm. The wilderness had been surveyed badly and was difficult to settle, with 13 bodies of water and various mountains.

Most of the early settlers came from around Bolton, Harvard, Northborough, Rowley and Stow. Many had been soldiers in the Indian and Revolutionary Wars.

They came to cut trees, clear farmland and build huts. In 1783 came David Barker, Jonathan Robbins, Aseph Brown and four Hamlin brothers (a fifth brother settled twelve miles away on Paris Hill.) Their families came four years later.

Soon they were joined by Hors, Proctors, Hales, Rices, Chamberlains, Warrens, Athertons, and others whose descendants are still with us today. Often brothers came together. Our first history makes fascinating reading.

Farms were developed first on the ridges, saving the valleys for pastures and water power. The plantation became an incorporated town in 1795, after giving to Norway three tiers of land east of the Songo (Crooked) River. In 1805 Oxford County was formed out of parts of York and Cumberland Counties. Waterford had then about 500 inhabitants.

(Continued on page 7)

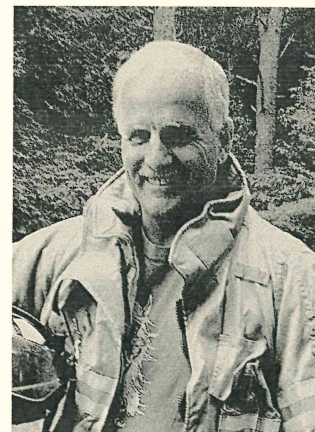


A Tribute to Two Williams

The Waterford Historical Society was shocked by the unexpected loss of our "Echoes" editor, Bill Haynes, who maintained our collection of obituaries and many photographs. As with all the other jobs he had in town, we have to find alternatives and that may take a while.

William Harry Haynes

William Harry, known to most as "Dood" (a nickname given him by his father for a song he sang as a toddler), died unexpectedly on March 8, 2020, the day after Town Meeting. Born in Bridgton on August 16, 1949, he was the son of William W. and Diane Burnham Haynes. He was the grandson of Harry N. and Carrie Hamlin Haynes. Bill graduated from Oxford Hills High School in 1967 and then earned a degree in journalism from University of Maine at Orono, where he joined the fraternity Sigma Chi. He played basketball most of his life, from the time he was a very tall (and scared) freshman at OH, recruited by the varsity coach, through college and adult leagues. He also coached youth basketball. Bill wrote for the Portland Press Herald and was writer/editor at the Advertiser Democrat. Later he started his own publication, The Mutiny Brook Times. He learned photography and for many years did publicity for the Fryeburg Fair. He contributed to BitterSweet magazine and the "Echoes." He was raised on the family farm and, like his father and grandfather before him, never wanted to let that go. Dood harvested hay and managed the woodlot, including his sawmill. For a time he and his former wife India Baker raised horses and built trail rides. He was a member of Bear Mt. Grange #62. A man of many talents, Dood worked for years with the Norway-Paris Kiwanis Club, the Waterford Library and the historical society. At the time of his death he was the Code Enforcement Officer, the Cemetery Superintendent and Assistant Chief of the Waterford Fire Dept. Bill is survived by his son Preston, his daughter Victoria and her husband Jonathan Hendin, three grandchildren, his stepmother Judith Haynes, some cousins and many, many friends. He was predeceased by his parents and his brother Frederick Haynes. He will be buried at Elm Vale Cemetery behind new fences which he had just seen installed.



Waterford Echoes

phone: 583-8335

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The Waterford Historical Society newsletter is published to benefit its membership. The Society, founded in 1965, is a non-profit Corporation created for the purpose of preserving and making available to persons interested, any and all historical and other material that shall be deemed valuable and worthy of preservation, in an effort to perpetuate for this and future generations, events, customs and traditions of local history, past, present and future, and to make possible the diffusion of such knowledge.

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MEMBERSHIP DUES

Classification: Individual/Couple

Life member: \$100/\$150 - Annual: \$10/\$15

Seniors (65 & over) — \$5/\$8

Membership renewals are due June 1. Membership dues help to fund our newsletter and its mailing cost.

Visit www.waterfordme.org/WatHistSoc or the Facebook page of the Waterford Library

Send checks to:

Waterford Historical Society
PO Box 201
Waterford ME 04088

We have the following publications for sale: "History of Waterford 1775-1875" and "History of Waterford 1875-1976" for \$10 each. "This is Waterford 1803-2003" for \$10 inventory reduction. Add \$8 to ship one book or \$12 to ship two or three books.

William Augustus Wheeler III



Known as "Whizzer," William Wheeler was born October 24, 1938 in Worcester, Mass., the son of William A. and Katherine Gaskell Wheeler. He died in Topsham, Maine on April 7, 2020. He married Margaret Fallon 53 years ago.

During their time in Waterford, Whizzer and Meg lived in Rydal Mount, the beautiful farmhouse built by his fourth great grandfather. A collector of impressive autographs and historical documents, he was a member of the American Antiquarian Society. While President of the Waterford Historical Society, Whizzer was instrumental in modernizing it and giving it a more permanent presence. He was also on the board of Birch Rock Camp and Maine Adaptive Sports.

His newspaper obit tells of his unusual term as a Waterford selectman, when "his characteristic zeal for management saw him recalled from office, then re-elected by write-in vote." He came by his management capacity by many years in interesting careers.

Whizzer worked for the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology and the Lafayette Research Institution. He taught high school science and then worked for various manufacturing companies, including Rath & Strong of Lexington, Mass. He became a partner at Price Waterhouse in their Manufacturing Consulting division, where he co-authored two books and traveled to six continents as part of his work.

Whizzer had been one of the last Americans to be stricken with polio before a vaccine was discovered, just one year before his graduation from Noble & Greenough School in 1956. He overcame his lifetime of physical challenges with the help of his keen ambition and his devoted wife Meg. He is survived by his wife, two children Seth (Beatrice) Wheeler and Sarah (Peter) Chingo, four grandchildren and two sisters.

Notes From The Secretary

This has been a challenging year so far. Because your trustees are all a little fragile and very cautious, we have not met for months though we have worked from home. Sadly, we have postponed our fun Bicentennial programs until next year. The museum has been opened only occasionally for individuals. I thank Nancy Eaton and Ralph MacKinnon for responding to individual needs, particularly as I have been injured and unable to drive. Hope to see you soon.

There is so much I want to put into this issue to make up for programs, that I will put off acknowledgements until next issue. My personal memories of Cousin Dood overwhelm me, especially as we always worked on this newsletter together. He was more like a brother than a cousin.

We were born the same year, lived in Orono as toddlers while our dads went to school on the G.I. Bill. We started kindergarten with Marjorie Kimball at Waterford Memorial School together and graduated together in the first class at the new Oxford Hills High School. I was a cheerleader while he played basketball. We studied our French together: he did the grammar and I did the translations...big mistake later on when we couldn't do it all alone! We grew up building Keo-ka Beach Campground. We both went to Orono in 1967 as freshmen. I transferred out the next year but while we were both on campus we commiserated often. Once I got to see him sing "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi" with his fraternity under the window of a girl in my dorm.

Dood had a teasing sense of humor and, as my brother Alan said, "you knew if he made fun of you, he really liked you." He got that from our grandpa Harry, who we used to follow around the barn.

We both also spent time with our great aunt Flora who indoctrinated us to be writers and to love Waterford and with our aunt Mildred, who was a phenomenal nurturer. His mother took us often to the movies and my dad took us to Six Gun City, etc.

In later years his children sometimes came to play at my house. My son helped him hay; his son took my film class. My kids adored him. Dood and I talked on the phone often and helped each other cope with life and with parents who were very similar!

The thing about Dood was, he always felt a little disadvantaged-- he had to create his own luck, to study whatever he needed to know. Basketball when he came from a little school with no gym. Code enforcement? Photography? Ask for help. Ballroom dancing? Take a class. Amazing.

It's not as much fun in a world without Dood in it. -N.M.



Albert Hamlin I, b. 1816



Sarah Woodsum Hamlin, b. 1819

Nuances

by Nancy Chute Marcotte
Some Hamlin Genealogy

Five Hamlin brothers moved into the District of Maine from Harvard, Massachusetts. Their father Eleazer had been an officer and a biographer of George Washington and he was a member of the Order of Cincinnati. He was a proprietor of the

Waterford Plantation and had three wives and 17 children, all together. One son (Dr. Cyrus) settled on Paris Hill and fathered a future Vice President of the United States. Cyrus' twin brother Hannibal (namesake of the V.P.), along with Africa, America and Eleazer II, settled in South and West Waterford. There were also brothers Asia and Europe--who seem to have done plantation business back in Harvard.

AMERICA was my progenitor, so I have more information on him. The America Hamlin farm was on Hawk Mt. (Skunk Alley) and survived until accidentally burned down by some children in the 1960s. [See This Is Waterford.]

He married (1) Sally Parkhurst and (2) Betsy Brown and fathered ten children, among them Pamela, Luther, America II, Sally, Sophia, Silas, Fanny, William Henry and Rufus. Luther married Hannah Kimball and their son Calvin produced the Carl Hamlin line on Coolidge Hill. Sally married Jabez Brown and became the aunt of Charles Farrar Brown and Florence Rounds. Silas married Martha Atherton, thus weaving in many of the other families in town. [See our 1875 history.]



Young Clara Bell



Walter K. Hamlin

Clara Bell Hamlin



*Above, a young Albert H. Hamlin II.
Below from left to right, Happy, Albert,
Bud, Marion Moulton Hamlin,
Stan and Albert Junior*

America II married Huldah Keyes and fathered seven children. The eldest was Albert, who married Sarah Woodsum from Harrison (her family home was featured in Big House, Little House, Backhouse, Barn). Their pictures are the oldest ones we have of Hamlins.

MAJOR AFRICA (b. 1758) married Susannah Stone. Among their six children was Dr. Castelo Hamlin, who married Rebecca Haskins, cousin of Ralph Waldo Emerson; and Lydia, who married John Wilkins and gave birth to Susan Hamlin Wilkins, donor of the Wilkins Community House. Others also intermarried with Stones and Kilgores. MAJOR HANNIBAL, later High Sheriff of Oxford County, married Susan Faulkner and built his farm which is still there today on Mill Hill Road, much remodeled. Among his four children was another Hannibal and another Cyrus--this one who became the famous missionary to Turkey.

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In 1820

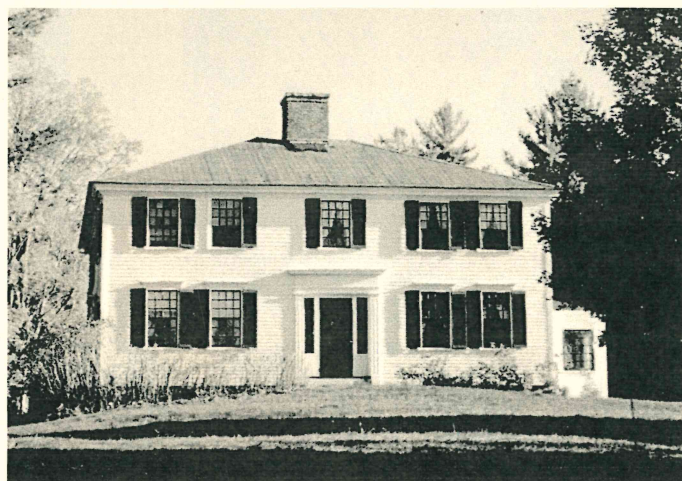
There were few houses and fewer roads in 1820, within 25 years of the incorporation. In the center of town along Keoka Lake (Thomas Pond) sits the only truly non-mountainous part: Waterford Flat. In 1820, this is what you could have seen: a small building where the Lake House is today, built in 1797 by Eli Longley, who also laid out the common. By 1820 Eli had sold out and gone west. Across the street was a smaller version of the store, built in 1802. Dr. Gage's house up on the hill was three years old and all of its outbuildings had not yet been built. The Levi Brown house (Artemus Ward) was 20 years old. There were not a lot of others. The town was bookended by the small Stone cape on one end and the Ambrose Knight house on the other end. The classic federal Knight house we think was originally a hip-roofed house very like the Warren house, built about 1810 and later remodeled.

If you then went up Plummer Hill you would have seen Dr. Cummings' small house which was later expanded into Douglass Seminary/Sycamore Terrace. Beyond that were the first meeting house and the unpainted parsonage (ca. 1802) and the Samuel Plummer house (1794) later Burns. In 17 years the meeting house would be torn down and the timbers moved to the Flat to build in 1843 what is today the Old Town House museum. There may have been some others but we don't have dates for them.

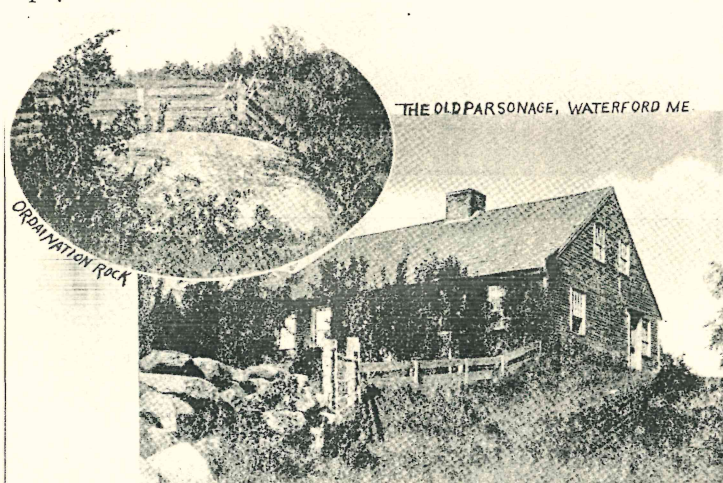
Two hundred years ago there was no Valley Road so Plummer (Kingman) Hill was the stage route to North Waterford and Sudbury Canada (Bethel) beyond. There was nothing much except trees in the northern part of town—no village until 1830. The Forest House (later Rice Hotel/Old Rowley Inn) was a stage-coach stop along the way. Along the Green Road, which extended the trail from West to North Waterford, was the Warren House, from 1788 one of the oldest houses in town. Scattered out along the hilltops were the original Rice and Jones farms and on Sawin Hill there are still some capes built 1800-1810. We don't have much info on other buildings but we do know that within the first twenty years of settlement, there was built in Waterford 107 dwelling houses (six two-storied, 86 one-storied, 15 log huts) and 80 framed barns [pg. 72, History of Waterford, Maine 1775-1875.] At statehood, South Waterford was beginning to be the most developed because of water power.

The oldest home in "the City" is probably Hatches' cape next to the Jones Hall Spring; Grahams' cape is probably about the same age (pre-1800.) 1819 had been a prosperous time as mills like the carding mill, saw and grist mills and tanneries were built then. The back section of Graney's house had probably been built by then for Nathaniel Rounds, a blacksmith. There were no churches or stores but a few big white clapboard houses had been built, such as the Luther Houghton/Oscar Brown Hotel (later Hamlins, remodeled in 1914 to its present Victorian look.) Stanwood House was built on the hill ca. 1810 and probably also my grandparents' house across from the hotel (now burned down), which was obviously by the same builder. Around 1820 came Watsons' mill, and various Monroe houses nearer Bear Pond. The only other road into town was built toward Harrison (Mill Hill/Sodom Road today). Three Hamlin brothers settled along this road—missionary Cyrus Hamlin's house was ca. 1800) Sumner Stone built a tavern in 1798 (Waterford Woodworking today) and the Baker Farm was 1790s. In East Waterford there were a few farms: McWains (1795 house) and Pride Farm (1814) existed by 1820.

Prosperity came with statehood, especially until the 1840s. Since then camps have been built on the lakes; more roads have been constructed; buildings have come and gone. The trees were cut down but have grown up again. You can still picture the geography and the architecture of 1820.



*Above, Warren House, North Waterford
A tour planned for this summer
will be postponed to next year,
we hope.*



At left, The original parsonage on Plummer Hill.

The Journey To Statehood

According to the first Waterford history book, "the discussion of the question of separation of The District of Maine from Massachusetts commenced as early as 1785." [pg. 140] Not many delegates from the town showed up at various conventions in Portland. In the case of Waterford, settlers were busy building farms, as they had only begun ten years before the discussions began.

The Sun Journal explained that on January 6, 1786 the second convention on separation asserted that Boston merchants were benefitting unfairly at the District of Maine's expense because of trade regulations involving lumber. Court hearings were also a disadvantage because they were held in Boston and all the records were kept there.

Finally in 1792 a popular vote was held in the district with the result Yes 2074, No 2525. The people in Lincoln County (then all the area between the Androscoggin and Penobscot rivers) were the most inconvenienced and the most in favor of separation. York County settlers were the most opposed and even asked New Hampshire to take them if Massachusetts cut them free.

Our history book is very interesting about the procedure: "In 1797 the records of the Supreme Court were moved to the counties to which they appertained, and the clerks of the counties were authorized to authenticate copies. This removed one of the principal causes of opposition... and there was no further agitation of the question of separation until 1807, when the district voted Yes 3370, No 9404. Waterford voted Yes 1, No 80." [pg. 141]

Nothing much happened until 1815, The opposition was political as well as sentimental and practical. Massachusetts was strongly Federalist; the district was Democratic. The sentimental involved the fact that Massachusetts was the early home of more than half the men who voted. The practical oreconomic objection was that it undoubtedly meant more taxation.

The arguments in favor of separation seemed obvious. Societies, meetings and petitions were raised. The vote in 1815 was Yes 10,393; No 6501. Waterford voted Yes 38, No 85! The Massachusetts legislature set up a delegates' meeting for September 1816. They required a vote for establishing a separate state to be "five to four" in favor of separation. The actual vote at the Brunswick convention was Yes 11,927, No 10, 539. Eber Rice was the delegate from Waterford. Somehow the votes were manipulated and this was called "Brunswick Arithmetic." [pg. 143] The Massachusetts legislature didn't buy it. They called it "inexpedient" for the General Court to rule on the separation of the District of Maine. It took until 1819 for the towns to petition that the matter again be submitted to popular vote. It was voted in July and passed by a large majority (Waterford stillvoted No by 52-42.) A constitutional convention was held in Portland and Waterford accepted that result, 35-23. The first state officers were elected in April 1820 and the first legislature convened in Portland in May. [pg. 144]

In the years of discussion, Waterford was represented in turns by Eber Rice, Hannibal Hamlin (the sheriff, father of Cyrus) and Calvin Farrar. In the first ten years Josiah Shaw, Philip Johnson, Daniel Brown, Benjamin Webber, Eleazer Hamlin, Stephen Heald, Benjamin Wyman and Samuel Nevers were Representatives to Maine Legislature.

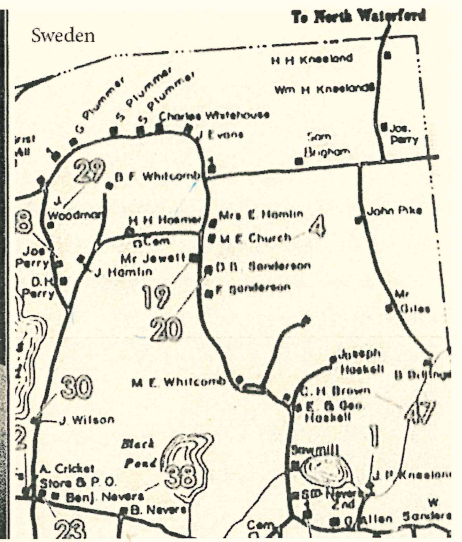
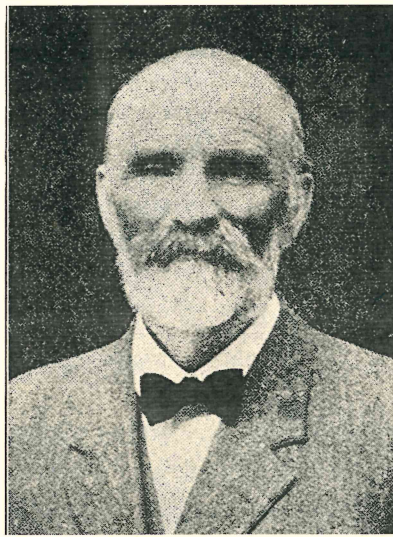
Next Issue: Inns & Taverns

In these pandemic times WHS has had to delay the newsletter & postpone programs but research and other business has continued.

FROM OUR FILES

Melville Morris Hamlin

The least well known of the Hamlin brothers in Maine was Eleazer, though he served in several town jobs. He settled in West Waterford, near the Sweden line and eventually moved to Sweden, Maine. Among the eight surviving children of Eleazer and Sally Bancroft Hamlin were sons Eleazer III (m. Mary Ann Hapgood), William (m. Louisa Billings),



John (m. three times), Addison (m. Betsy Kneeland), David (m. Harriet Robbins) and Francis. The eldest, Francis married (1) Rebecca Parker, (2) Mrs. Harding, (3) Elvira Bisbee; he and his third wife were the parents of Melville Morris Hamlin. These Hamlins were all cousins to Cyrus, the missionary and Hannibal, the Vice President.

We recently found a memorial booklet in tribute to Melville, who was born in Sweden August 7, 1845. He was less than ten when his father died, leaving also his younger brother Charles and sister Elvira. His mother was described as being a devout woman of "strong personality and unusual mental gifts." She managed to send him to Bridgton Academy, though he was not able to continue on to college. Melville evidently wore out several volumes of Shakespeare and went on to be a creative and beloved teacher. "He made his pupils think and discover for themselves, and his Christian character was ...[a] strong and persuasive influence." He was a member of the Union Association of Congregational Churches and Ministers.

He married Mary Jewett in 1876 and they later moved to North Waterford, where he was associated with that church. They had two daughters, Bertha (m. Charles Saunders) and Bessie, who died soon after her graduation from Gorham Normal School. Mrs. Hamlin died in 1906 and Mr. Hamlin died in 1918.

A hand-written note in the booklet says he "Lived in the house that freed the slaves, on hill a mile above the Plummer School House." (Alice Plummer) This is confusing because he did not live in that house until long after the Civil War and his sister wrote that their earliest home was on the Underground Railroad. "Father [Francis] would go away occasionally... He would come home with a slave. This slave generally stayed in retreat for a day or two and then father and he would vanish." This indicates their home in Sweden, which makes sense as we know there was an Underground Railroad stop in South Bridgton and we believe slaves were protected in a hidden room in the Warren (Green) house nearby on the road north. Until this we have had no written information. Melville Morris Hamlin was known as a man to love and trust, "as honest as Mel Hamlin." He could quote long passages of scripture, had a love of Nature and a sense of humor. How has he been forgotten?

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