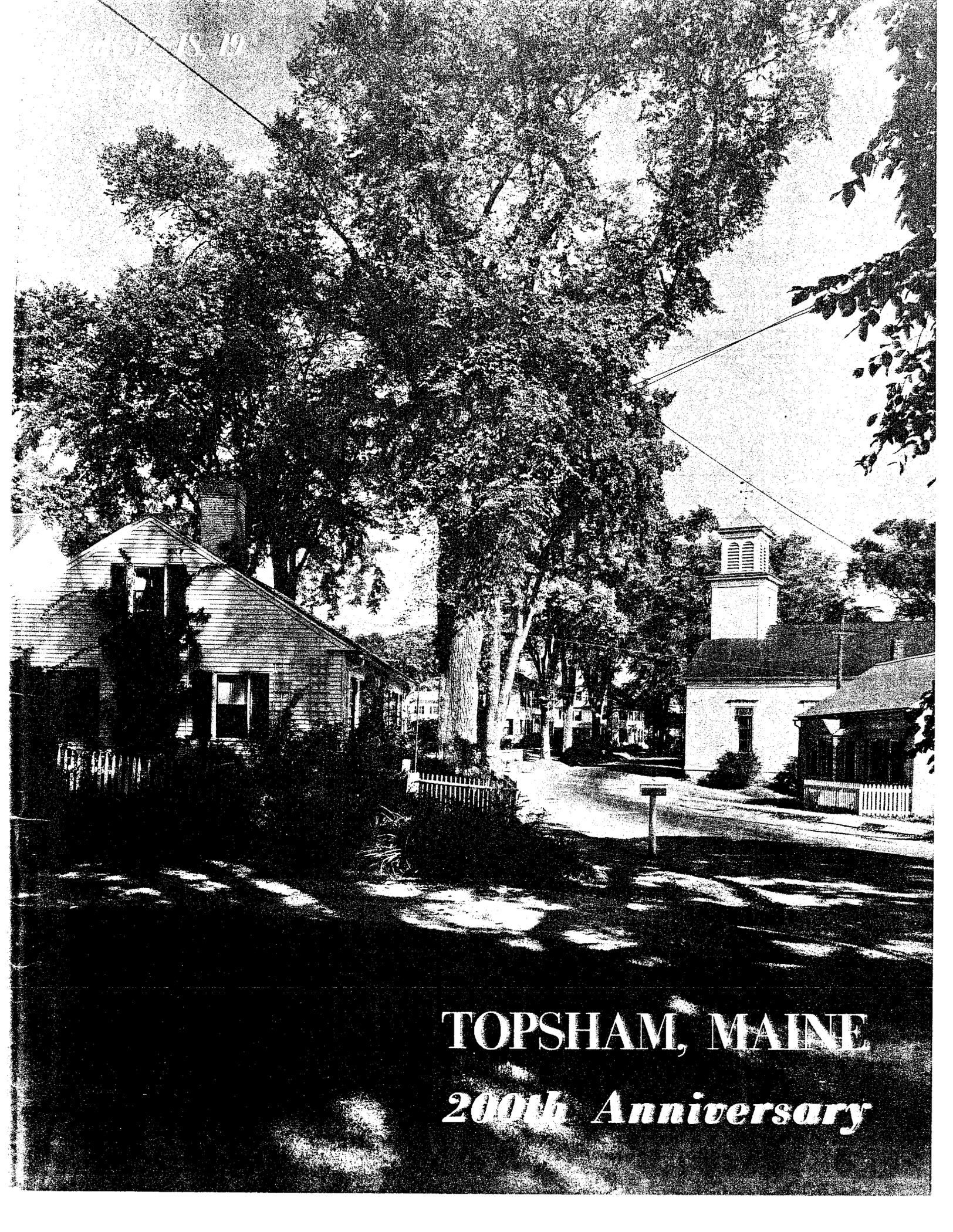


1819



TOPSHAM, MAINE
200th Anniversary

Dedication



We are extremely proud to dedicate our Bicentennial Booklet to Mr. Frank E. Carver who has served as Chief of Police in Topsham for thirty-six years.

He has been a man eminently adapted for his position, possessing sound judgment and excellent capacity for reasoning, a keen sense of humor and devoting the best effort possible to his work at all times.

He is a man of exceptional ability, giving generously of his time and talents and ever ready to help the needy and elderly.

His great understanding of the Youth has enabled him to help them in their many problems.

He is also actively identified with numerous civic and other charitable organizations. Mr. Carver is best known in Grange circles, for his untiring efforts in behalf of the order.

For many years he was leader of his own orchestra, talent shows and gave unselfishly of his time for numerous benefits.

His faithful service to the town and grange have won for him the admiration of all his associates and few citizens have ever been held in higher esteem by the townspeople.

FOREWORD

This publication is a part of Topsham's Bicentennial celebration.

The articles, pictures and information within this booklet were furnished by residents of Bath, Brunswick and Topsham, to whom we are most grateful.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to the Jaycee Wives whose efforts in selling Advertising for the booklet were remarkable. Without this revenue this publication would not have been attempted.

We hope you will enjoy its contents and it may bring back fond memories of "Those Good, Old Days!"

THE GENERAL COMMITTEE



"200 YEARS GONE BY"

Two hundred years have ended; Ah yes, what joy,
What pain lies in those fertile years entombed!
Its hours were rosaries of thoughts and deeds,
Each year brought some rare gold, some gold's alloy
Into earth's treasured Arcady. Life loomed
Fruitful to sight, or dry as autumn reeds.

To some she brought content; to others none;
To some, affluence; some, the urge to do;
Others she granted success, we cannot deny;
We cannot take what bygone days have won,
Nor quite erase the heart's-ease and the rue
Which have endeared those 200 years gone by.





JOHN H. REED
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AUGUSTA



GREETINGS:

It gives me great pleasure to extend the official greetings of the State of Maine to the citizens of Topsham on the occasion of the Town's Two Hundredth Anniversary. The community of Topsham has made great contributions to the Pine Tree State during its long and colorful history and it is most fitting that these developments be recognized during this Bi-Centennial year.

The Town of Topsham has enjoyed a prosperous past and I am confident it will record even greater progress in the future. The people of Topsham have my personal best wishes for a most successful and memorable Anniversary Celebration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John H. Reed". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

John H. Reed
Governor

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN
TOPSHAM
INCORPORATED 1764

MUNICIPAL OFFICERS
GEORGE W. CLIFFORD
EMILE J. CHONKO
MICHAEL S. TOTN, DR

ROAD COMMISSIONER H. E. HASKELL
TOWN CLERK HAZEL I. COLBY

COLLECTOR
JOSEPH H. BRANNIGAN
TREASURER
WINFIELD E. POWERS

May 27, 1964

Welcome:

As elected representatives of the citizens of Topsham, we consider it an honor to welcome you to our 200th Anniversary celebration. It is our sincere pleasure that you have joined us in this historic event.

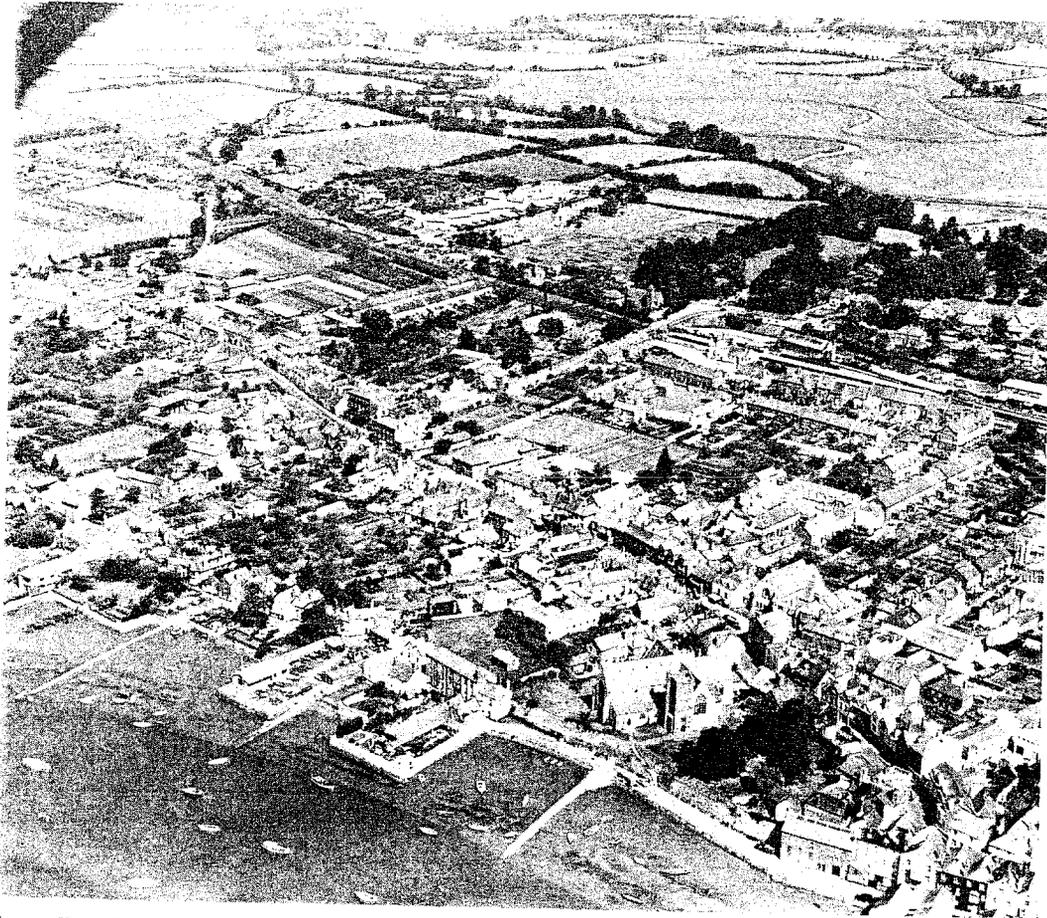
We find our thoughts on this occasion straying back in time 200 years but still unable to comprehend the feelings of three other men, John Fulton, John Merrill and John Reid, Topsham's first Board of Selectmen.

For 200 years the Town has been extremely fortunate in having a stable and prosperous economy, and we have the greatest confidence that Topsham's path the next two centuries will continue as one of growth and prosperity.

Topsham Board of Selectmen

George W. Clifford
George W. Clifford
Emile J. Chonko
Emile J. Chonko
Michael S. Totn, Dr.
Michael S. Totn, Dr.





To the people of Topsham, Maine, U.S.A.—

WE the Parish Council of Topsham, Devon, England, on behalf of our Parishioners, send you greetings and congratulations on this your 200th anniversary.

We ask you to accept this token of our good will from us in the hope that you will hang it in your Council Chamber or Public Meeting Place to remind you of your mother town in England.

You will, no doubt, be pleased to hear that we are

to be presented with a photostat copy of the Act of George III (1764) creating the township of Topsham, Maine, by a native of our town. This we will hang in our Council Chamber, and we hope thereby to ensure that there will always be a link between our two towns.

Many congratulations and our best wishes to you, Topshamites, from your brothers and sisters in England.
Signatures of the Parish Council:

Signatures of the Parish Council:

L. P. Leheffers
 A. Mitchell
 W. W. Humphreys
 H. W. Linscombe
 S. G. Tremlett
 H. W. Bate
 J. J. Handman
 J. J. J. J.

W. C. Lecker
 Chairman
 R. J. J. J.
 J. J. J. J.
 J. J. J. J.
 W. J. J. J.
 J. J. J. J.
 J. J. J. J.

Topsham Bicentennial



AUGUSTINE PONZIANI
Co-Chairman

MRS. WARREN L. ADAMS
Treasurer



ARTHUR D. DOLLOFF
Co-Chairman

MRS. CLEORA TARBON
Secretary



EMILE CHONKO
Co-Chairman

MRS. DORIS W. HENNESSEY
Chairman of Women's Activities

COMMITTEES

TEEN-AGE AUCTION

PENNY FURBISH, *Co-Chairman*
LEE CORO, *Co-Chairman*
STUART BURNETT, *Co-Chairman*
BRIAN SEAPLES, *Co-Chairman*
CLAIRE MCKAY
KATHY CULLEN
EDDIE BEACH
JAMES CULLEN
DORLEEN HEDEN
LINDA ST. PIERRE
SIMONE BOURQUE
JUDITH BOULDIN
MARY TOTMAN
FRANK WRIGHT III
WILLIAM BARRETT
LEE ARCHER
EDWARD HERBES
JANICE COTE
DENNIS NICHOLS
ELAINE ROLLINS
BRICE BOOKER, *Auctioneer*
MRS. DORIS W. HENNESSEY, *Advisor*
SARAH BROWN
EVELENE LAMARRE
BONNIE DAVIS
GIRARD BRETON
ROBERTA DICKINSON
DONALD JACQUES
BECKY BEAM
DOUGLAS ROLLINS
BYRON BOULDIN
RACHAEL GIRARD
PAULINE LEVISQUE
BRIAN MAYNARD

FIREWORKS

OSCAR STUART
HERBERT F. WHITE

BEARD CONTEST

MERRY MEETING SPORTSMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

SOUVENIR BOOKLET

MRS. ROBERT DUBLEY
MRS. CLARENCE HULLY

MR. & MRS. WINFIELD POWERS
MR. & MRS. ROY COLBY
MRS. MEARL K. JAMES
MRS. FLORENCE SELGARS
MRS. DONALD DORIAN
MR. & MRS. FREDERICK CALL
PRISCILLA TARBELL
JAYCEE WIVES
LEON P. SPINNEY
EDWIN ROGERS
WARREN L. ADAMS
JOSEPH KACHINSKI
FRANCIS MENDES
DAVID WHITE
JAMES STORER
EDWARD ZAZESKI
ROBERT FAHEY
E. RANDOLPH COMEL
CHARLES CROSBY, JR.
SAMUEL TALBOT

SOUVENIR BOOKLET ADVERTISING

MRS. LORRAINE CHONKO, *Chairman*
MRS. GINGER YOUNG
MRS. THELMA BRACKETT
MRS. KATHLEEN COLBY

SUPPER COMMITTEE

JULY 18

AIDERS OF UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH

MISS BICENTENNIAL

TOPSHAM JAYCEE WIVES

FIREMEN'S MUSTER

CARL RANDALL, *Chief*
Topsham Fire Dept.
CHESTER MURRAY
KENNETH ORR
CLARENCE COLBY
WILLIAM TARBELL
RICHARD FORTIS

ORGAN CONCERT & RECEPTION

MUSIC COMMITTEE OF UNITED
BAPTIST CHURCH
MRS. RICHARD PALMER, *Chairman*

SMORGASBORD SUPPER

LADIES OF TOPSHAM GRANGE
FIREMEN'S AUXILIARY
TOPSHAM GIRL SCOUTS

TALENT SHOW

MRS. ELSIE HOLT
MRS. ANNA DODGE
MRS. JOSEPHINE MATHURIN
MRS. EDNA OTIS

CHILDREN'S DAY

CHARLES CROSBY, JR.
DR. ALFRED O'BRIY
JOHN J. CHONKO
CHARLES ABBOTT
ROYCE YOUNG, JR.

PARADE COMMITTEE

FOREST CROSMAN, *Chairman*
RICHARD ANDREWS
BURLIGH ORDWAY
RONALD RIENDEAU
HARLAND THOMPSON

MAINE OBSOLETE AUTOMOBILE LEAGUE

BURLIGH ORDWAY

ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

JULY 18

TOPSHAM JAYCEES

TOPSHAM BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

TOPSHAM HIGHWAY DEPT.
TOPSHAM GARDEN CLUB
MRS. ROBERT HAWTHORNE
MRS. JOSEPH MENDES
MRS. PEMBROKE EDGCOMB
MRS. FRANCIS MOSIER

SAFETY, FIRST AID & EMERGENCIES

TOPSHAM POLICE DEPT.
TOPSHAM HEALTH CENTER
MRS. CHARLES BAYON, RN
EVAUX FEDERAL HOME

Historical Review Of Topsham

INDIAN ACCOUNT

The aboriginal inhabitants of Maine were generally friendly with the early white settlers until about the time of the breaking out of King Philip's war. Soon after this they became extremely hostile, and until their final extermination by war and disease, continued to pillage and make war.

In September, 1675, hostilities commenced at Pejepscot, now Brunswick and Topsham. Peace was concluded three years later and lasted just ten years before the breaking out of King William's war. Fort Andros, in Brunswick, was taken by the savages in 1790 and the soldiers and settlers, of whom some lived in Topsham, were held captives. Col. Benj. Church was sent from Massachusetts to release the captives, whom they found at an Indian fort on the Androscoggin. The site of this fort, which they captured, is unknown. Tradition says there was an old Indian fort once located near the Topsham end of the long bridge on the island. In 1684 Richard Wharton had ratified his treaty with the Indians at "Pejepscot Fort" which it is believed was no other than this Indian fort, the first ever erected in this vicinity.

This war lasted eight years and was followed by four years of peace. The next, Queen Ann's war, did not disturb the settlers on the Pejepscot tract if, indeed, there were any. After this war closed in 1713, settlers again took courage, the Pejepscot Company was formed the following year and again homes were planted in the wilderness where those begun earlier had been deserted.

The fourth Indian war, known as Lovewell's war, commenced in this vicinity. On June 17, 1722, a party of sixty Indian warriors appeared on Merymeeting Bay and landed on the north side, probably near Pleasant or Fulton's Point. They captured nine families but released all except five men: Messrs. Hamilton, Hanson, Prescott, Love and Edgar, whom they detained as hostages for the safe return of four Indians in the hands of the English in Boston. In June or July the same year they burned the entire village of Brunswick. Thence they proceeded to Fish-house hill for purposes of revelry, but were soon put to flight by a chain shot from Fort George. They then went to Pleasant Point, where they were surprised by Col. John Harmon, then stationed at Arrowsic, who attacked them when sleeping soundly. His party killed 16 or 18 and took several prisoners, but a few of the savages escaped.

On July 30, 1845, a man and a boy were attacked by them. The Indians knocked them down and beat them with clubs; the man was killed and the boy scalped and left for dead. On May 10, 1747, a canoe containing Mr. and Mrs. Moffitt, Wm. Potter and Wm. Thorne was

fired upon when coming through the narrows below Cow Island and Moffitt and Potter were both killed. Thorne had his arm shot off. Mrs. Moffitt succeeded in paddling the canoe to the Brunswick shore, thus escaping their assailants.

Hostilities commenced in this vicinity May 9, of the same year. A party of Indians assembled on the highlands of Topsham, concerted their plans and agreed to meet there on their return. They then divided into two parties, one proceeding to Flying Point in Freeport and the other going to Maquoit, Middle Bay and New Meadows. The parties met in Topsham as agreed upon and proceeded to Quebec with the prisoners whom they had taken. The following year a party of seventeen Indians waylaid Capt. Lithgow and eight other men at Topsham. A sharp but short engagement ensued in which two of Lithgow's men were wounded and two Indians killed.

EARLY LAND GRANTS

The Pejepscot Company was formed in 1714 when eight men purchased of the Richard Wharton estate a large tract of land including Brunswick, much of Topsham, Harpswell, etc. From these proprietors was received the first legal land titles in the eastern part of Topsham, which was surveyed and laid out by them.

Previous to this, in about 1669, Thomas Gyles had settled near Pleasant Point. His brother James had also settled near him "Up Muddy River" and James, Thomas and Samuel York had a deed from the Indian Sagamores, dated July 20, 1670, to all of what is now Topsham Forside. Wharton's right was based on an Indian deed given him by Worumbec and five other Indian Sagamores, dated July 7, 1684.

The claims of individual settlers under other titles were disposed of by confirmatory grants from the Pejepscot proprietors, if such titles were found legal and valid.

The territory included within the town of Bowdoinham was claimed by both the Pejepscot proprietors and the proprietors of the Plymouth Company. Although a decision made in 1758 establishing a line drawn from the mouth of the Cathance River, running west-north-west to Lewiston Falls, (which line was altered eight years later to coincide with the southern line of Bowdoinham) has generally been considered the division between the two claims. The territory of Bowdoinham was first sold to William Bowdoin by the Pejepscot proprietors, or earlier by Richard Wharton himself. It was for Dr. Bowdoin that the town was named, the suffix "ham," being attached, meaning "home."

After the settlement in 1758, the Kennebec or Plymouth Company holding the title to a large tract north

of Merrymeeting Bay, sold the land in sections, one mile wide on the Kennebec river, extending five miles back. The first lot was sold to Benjamin Hallowell in 1760 and extended from Abagadasset Point, northerly one mile; lot number two to Samuel Goodwin; lot number three to Capt. Francis Whitmore and a Mr. Stone; lot number four to William Bowdoin; lot number five to Jeffries and Flagg. Those who had taken up claims thirty years earlier than this under the Pejepscot purchase were now compelled to either buy or rent their farms, or vacate their homes. The new proprietors, however, were not severe, some of the settlers remaining undisturbed.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

At the time of the formation of the Pejepscot Company all the settlements here had been abandoned. Between 1717 and 1722, thirty-three persons took up lots in Topsham; but it is doubtful if very many of these were actual settlers, as many forfeited their claims by non-fulfillment of the conditions required by the proprietors.

The original lots extended back two miles from the river and were said to be 25 rods wide, but were found to average 26 rods. These were separated by straight lines approximately perpendicular to the western bank of the Pejepscot river, No. 1 being Pleasant Point.

These lots were found so awkward in shape that they were afterwards changed to lots one mile long and fifty-two rods wide.

Two lots on the original survey were deeded to Adam Hunter in 1718. On this farm was located the old block-house, which was the home of Mr. Hunter and his numerous family, as well as the refuge house of the neighborhood when alarmed by the approach of the Indians. Col. James Hunter, son of Adam Hunter, was the first white child born in Topsham, April 15, 1735. He helped build Fort Halifax in 1754, and served as an officer in the Revolutionary War.

In 1731 quite a number of new settlers took up claims in Topsham, and between this date and 1738 some fourteen families located here. In 1746 there were only thirty-six settlers. This settlement was much exposed to the incursions of the Indians, having few strong garrisons this side of the river. Many of the families in town at this date were driven off or killed by the later Indian raids. In 1750 there were but eighteen families and it is said that descendants of not more than ten or twelve of these early families remained as permanent settlers.

According to a map of the Plymouth Company, there were, in 1732, twelve dwellings in Topsham. These were, beginning on the Cathance Point, Gowen Fulton, Mr. Reed on Pleasant Point; Samuel Beverage, came 1752; Charles Robinson, 1731; William Vincent, 1731; William Thoms, 1752; Jacob Eaton, 1737; Robert Lithgow, 1717; William Malcolm, 1738; William Thoms Jr., 1752; Lieut. Adam Hunter, 1718, in block house on the Lithgow Hunter farm; Capt. Thomas Wilson came in 1752, located within the limits of the village. His brothers, Hugh, Robert, Samuel and William, came a few years later, Hugh located at Cathance, William near Thomas, in the village. Many others had located within the town limits previous to 1732, but, if this map is correct, these were the only families remaining. The

dates we have given are those given the land deeds, or are the earliest found in connection with the families in town. Succeeding the above dates, up to 1757 we learn that the population of the township nearly doubled.

INCORPORATION

The town of Topsham first received its name, legally, in the year 1717.

This town was incorporated in 1764; a petition dated December 21, 1763, having been sent to the General Court, signed by Adam Hunter and twenty-eight others.

The first town meeting was held May 9, 1764, Gowen Fulton was chosen moderator; William Thorne, Clerk; Adam Hunter, Treasurer; John Fulton, John Reed and John Merrill, selectmen; and Hugh Wilson, constable.

The Court house was built on the Franklin family school lot in 1800, when Topsham became a half-shire town. It remained such until 1848. The court house was used for many years following 1802 as a town house. In 1840 the town purchased the Baptist vestry, which was used for a town house until 1863, when it was sold to the proprietor of the Franklin school and the Fair building used for town purposes.

The first saw mill was erected on the Cathance River in 1716. Not until 1750 were more mills built in this section of town. A few years later others were erected on the Androscoggin River. Merrill's map of Brunswick, shows one mill at the Topsham end of both the upper and middle dams, and one on the Granny-Hole stream. The next mill built on the middle dam was about 1770. The Rogers mill on the upper dam, near the foot bridge, was first built about this time. At the time of this great activity the manufacture of lumber gave Topsham the prominence of being the commercial center, and the most hustling community of this entire section west of Bath.

Joseph Hale
 February 2^d 1852
 To the Honorable Board of Selectmen
 of the Town of Topsham
 I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st inst. in relation to the above named mill. I have the honor to inform you that the same is now in the hands of the Honorable Board of Selectmen of the Town of Topsham.

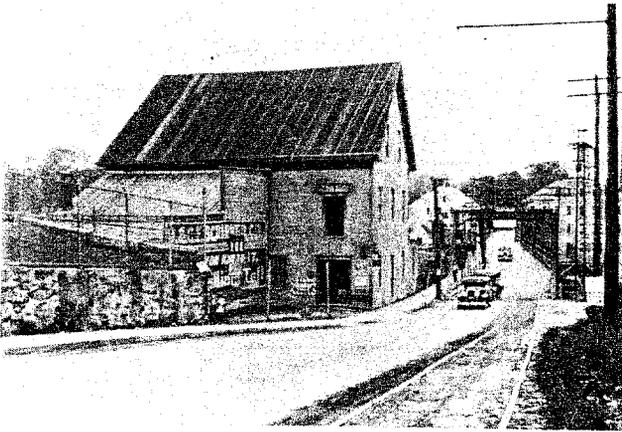
In 1802 Joseph Hale had a tulling mill in the basement of the grist mill located on the Granny-Hole stream. The Colby Bros. operated a sash, door and blind mill during 1849-1859. In 1856 Francis T. Purington built the Topsham Flour mill at an expense of \$10,000. The mill burned in 1895. In 1872 Howland Bros. established a shop for the manufacture of "Howland's Patent Car Derrick," which proved to be a popular item for the railroads.

Other industries have been a pottery, two tanneries, nail factory, pitchfork factory, watch factory, the manufacture of shingles by the use of "Kelsey's Patent Shingle Machine," tobacco manufacture, marble works, two feldspar mills and in recent years "Harpwell House" — Topsham's newest industry.

Other Topsham citizens were engaged in the following occupations: bakers, blacksmiths, butchers, cabinet makers, carriage makers, harness makers, hatters, joiners, shoemakers, and tailors and tin shop and stove manufacturers.

BRIDGES

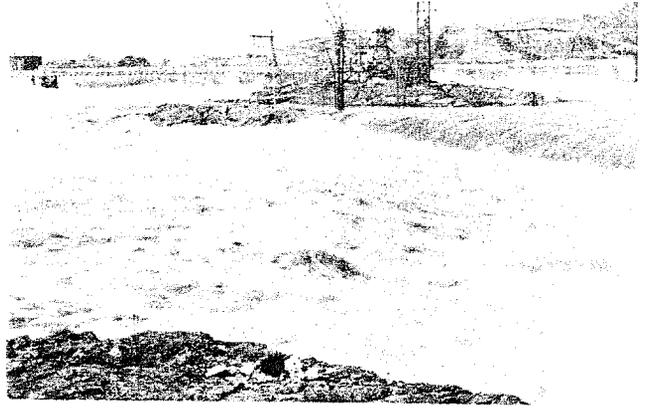
In the earliest days boats formed the only way to cross the Androscoggin from Topsham to Brunswick. The first toll bridge was constructed in 1796 by the "Proprietors of the Androscoggin Bridge." The main bridge was destroyed twice — by a freshet and by a fire in 1842. The first free bridge was opened in 1871. The old steel bridge was demolished in 1932 and replaced by the Frank J. Wood bridge.



The Steel Bridge demolished in 1932.

ANDROSCOGGIN RIVER

The Androscoggin River has always been of great importance to the town. In earlier days its water supplied the power for operating many mills. It rises in the Rangeley Lakes and follows a course of 167 miles to Merrymeeting Bay.



The Flood of 1936.

CHURCHES

The first frame meeting house was erected by the settlers in 1759, located on the site of the old cemetery, east of the village. This was finished by the proprietors according to the agreement, but not until about the time of the incorporation of the town.

The first church organization, as distinct from that of the parish, was organized in 1771. It was of the Presbyterian order, consisting of 27 members. The church was at no time very strong and ceased to exist about 1789. The Congregational Society was formed in 1788 and is considered the First Parish Church following that date. The second meeting house of the First Parish was built in 1821 on the site of the high school building. That same year the society was reorganized but gradually became Unitarian in doctrine.

In 1835, the "Orthodox Congregational Society" was formed and in 1836 the present Congregational meeting house was built.

The Baptist Religious Society of Topsham was incorporated in June 1794, which society constituted the Second Parish of the town. In 1819 the Baptist vestry which stood opposite the village cemetery was built by a zealous few. A small meeting house was built a few years later. The present Baptist Church was erected in 1835. In 1870 the building was greatly improved, the gallery over the porch being removed and some five or six feet added to the front. Repairs were again made in



PERMIT

family

Mr. William Pollen

and

to pass the **ANDROSCOGGIN BRIDGE,**

with Horse, Sleigh, Chaise, and on foot

till the 4th April, 1838 for

2 00

dollar and

50

cents, provided he pay quarterly in advance.

[Signature]

Directors.

[Signature]

To the Toll Gatherer.

1896 when the vestry was built. The church was re-dedicated February 11, 1897.

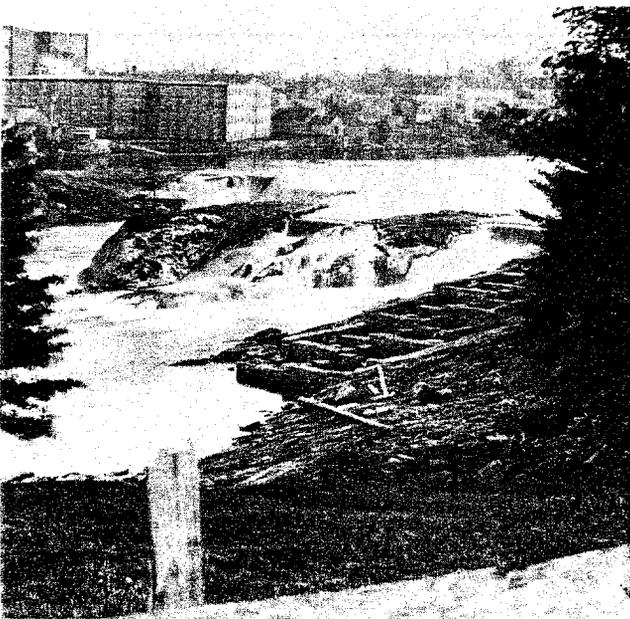
In 1821, the Free Will Baptist Society was organized in Topsham. The meeting house was completed in 1837 at a cost of around \$3,000. The belfrey being added by the Building Committee. In 1903 a bell was placed in the belfrey and extensive repairs were made on the church and parsonage.

A chapel was used by the Methodists and the Advents in the northern part of the town. Services were often held in the Mallett schoolhouse and a Sunday School was maintained for six months during the year.

The land was purchased for the St. Andrews Mission in the early 1920's from John Hines by Father John Sullivan of the Holy Family Church in Lisbon Falls. It was first called the Catholic Mission Church but later was named after the organizer Andrew Kandascian.

Built in 1923 by the Bishop for the people, the St. Andrews Mission first came under the Holy Family Church in Lisbon Falls, later St. Cyril & Methodius in Lisbon Falls, St. Ambrose in Richmond and from 1930 to the present by St. John the Baptist of Brunswick. In 1923 it had about 35 families; today it has 42.

The Rev. Leopold Brunelle, M.S., who serves the mission celebrated his Silver Jubilee in the Priesthood this year.



DISASTERS

Most of the disasters in this area have been floods. The earliest recorded ones were in the winter of 1723 and the winter of 1780. In 1781, there was one so severe that a saw mill with nine saws, two grist mills and three houses were destroyed. In 1811 the toll bridge was damaged by flood. Twenty one saw mills were destroyed by flood water in 1811. The Bay Bridge was destroyed in April 1862. The worst flood in recent years was in March 1936 when three Topsham men drowned and the Maine Central Railroad bridge collapsed. In 1953, severe damage was done by a flood and in 1954 a hurricane raved havoc in town.

The worst epidemic was the influenza epidemic of 1918 when almost every family in town had sickness or a death.

Although Topsham had not suffered any great fires the business district suffered fire losses in 1826 and 1850. From a sentimental and historical viewpoint the destruction of the Town Hall in January 1963 by fire was felt by many. The building had been erected in 1836 and had previously been a Congregational Church.

THE DEPRESSION

While the stocks fell on Wall Street in 1929, the economy of Topsham fell severely enough so that Supt. of Schools, Sherman Graves took a 10 per cent cut in salary and two teachers were released due to lack of funds.

Miss Helen Varney, an Art instructor, and Mrs. Belle Warren, who taught music, were just two of many Topsham citizens who found themselves out of work when the depression hit. The highest paid salary for a teacher during the economy lacking area was \$908 which went to Mildred Edwards.

The federal government brought some relief to the community by employing 50 people in six Public Works Administration projects. The activities included town hall repairs, school and fire house maintenance, sewer and road work, clerical work, a sewing project and browntail moth elimination.

During the hard winter of 1934, the unemployed were given various commodities under the direction of appointed Welfare Chairman Frank E. Carver. The items included vegetables from Daggett gardens, tobacco from U. S. Tobacco Co., salt pork from the U. S. Government, and Red Cross articles — numbering in the hundreds, which included clothing, yard goods, and flour.

THE MILITARY

From the French and Indian War to the "cold war," Topsham and its citizens have served the country in many capacities.



Forty five men are listed as being Revolutionary soldiers of Topsham, while 110 served in the Army and 35 in the Navy during the Civil War. Only seven participated in the Spanish-American conflict in the late 1890's.

WORLD WAR I

The first inkling of local military activity in World War I was the appearance of Co. E, 2nd Maine Regiment from Skowhegan to guard the railroad bridge. While 110 men served in the first World War, Topshamites at home did their part locally to help.

Citizens on the home front took part in such projects as saving sugar, raising money during War Bond rallies and collecting moss for surgical dressings.

WORLD WAR II

World War II was much closer to Topsham than the first world clash. The presence of the Brunswick Naval Air Station, blackouts, food and gas rationing and the fact nearly every Topsham family had someone in the armed services made the battle very real. A total of 277 local men and women took part in the European and Pacific Theatres.

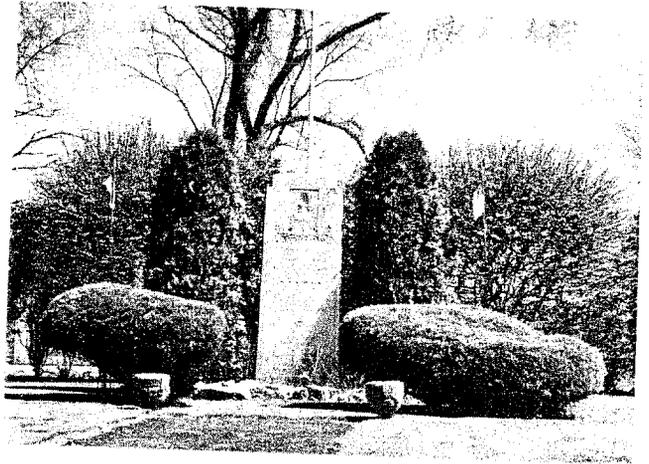
COLD WAR

With the opening of Topsham Air Force Station in 1957, the "cold war" took on a new meaning for this community as the station began air defense operations vital to the protection of our country. With its complicated electronic equipment and computers, TAFS brought a multitude of service people who are daily contributing to the economic and social welfare of our town. Some 174 of these families live "on station" in a modern housing development which is part of the 120 acre installation north of Topsham village.

As a tribute to the six Topsham men who laid down their lives in the second war, the World War II Monument and Memorial Park were dedicated on May 31, 1948.

The fallen servicemen honored were:

Arthur L. Bartlett
Donald E. Groves
Joseph A. Kachmar
Paul E. St. Onge
Jack T. White
Lawrence A. Yambor



"Let none forget
They gave their all
And faltered not
When came the call. . ."

Inscription from World War II Monument
dedicated on May 31, 1948.



The home of Capt. & Mrs. Elmer Hill on Elm Street was built for Doctor Porter in 1802. It was once owned by Gov. William King, for a few years and was also a girls' school. This is a Melcher house.



The Norton home on Melcher Place was built by the famous Sam Melcher in 1809 and was known as the Johnson Wilson house.



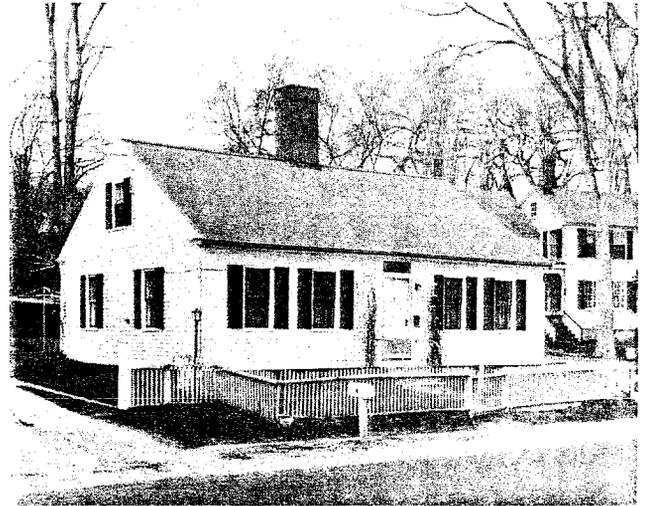
Residence of Brig. Gen. & Mrs. Alonzo B. Holmes on Elm Street. It was built in the late 1700's.



The Frost House on Elm Street was built in 1806. In the 1830's it was a tavern. Later it became the historic Franklin School, a boys' boarding school run by Warren Johnson.



The Johnson house on Elm Street was originally a small low storied building built in the late 1700's. In 1830's Norman Perkins added the large framed front.



The Mary Pelham Hill house now owned by Mr. & Mrs. Edward Jordan was originally built in the late 1700's for a family by the name of Jordan.

Schools

by Priscilla C. Tarbell

"Schools belong to the people and they are paid for by the people, and by and large they reflect the ideas and ideals of the people."

LEON P. SPINNEY — 1952

As we review the early history of the town we learn that public education was not a reality until the year 1766. At the annual meeting it was voted to raise sixty pounds to secure a minister and a schoolmaster. The first teacher hired was Samuel Graves. Two years later at the annual meeting, John Reid and John Fulton were chosen as a committee to obtain a minister and schoolmaster for that year. On July 23, it was voted "That Lot Number sixty-five adjoining to the aforesaid Lot granted to ye first settled Minister lying on the rear of the Lots conveyed to heirs of William Wilson as described and laid down in the plan, be and hereby is granted to the Town of Topsham, for a Lott for the benefit and advantage of a Publick School, for continue for said said use forever—said Lott contains one hundred acres."

At the annual town meeting in 1773, the Selectmen were instructed to divide the town into several school districts and to proportion the taxes according to the number of children in each district.

During the six year period (1786-1792) the employment of a teacher was left in the hands of the Selectmen.

In 1799, the Selectmen were instructed to divide the town into such school districts as they would deem advisable. For some strange reason they failed to do this, and the following year when the townspeople learned about

their neglect, chose a six member committee to do this work. It was voted to have six school districts and to build a schoolhouse in each district within thirteen months, and \$1,200 was appropriated for that purpose, upon the condition that each district should give the land needed for its structure. The following year the action was changed to make seven districts and it was voted that the school committee should be composed of one person from each district. In 1803 three of the school districts were consolidated.

It was not until 1851 that the Superintending School Committee began making an annual report. The first report listed nine school districts and they were designated as follows: Number 1, Jameson District; Number 3, Oak Hill District; Number 4, Middlesex District; Number 5, Mallett District; Number 6, Cathance District; Number 8, Jack District; Number 9, Bay Road District; Number 11, Alexander District and Number 12, Little River District. Numbers 2, 7 and 10 were united into the Village District. Districts 1, 8 and 12 were located up the river, 4, 6 and 9 were down the river and 3, 5 and 11 were back from the river. The total amount of school money received this year, from all sources, was nine hundred and ninety dollars and thirty-two cents.

Ten years later the number of Districts in the school system expanded to twelve and necessitated the election of Mr. Warren Johnson as Topsham's first Supervisor of schools.

Two new schoolhouses were erected in 1870 in town.

Without doubt two of the most important changes in the school system took place during the next few years. In 1875, grading of the classes began and in 1890 the Free Text Book system came into effect. 1891 was a very important year in the history of our schools because it was during this time that the High and Grammar schools were consolidated and the high school students began going to Brunswick. However, the high school re-opened in 1892. Two years later a regular course of study for four years was established for the high school with John A. Cone serving as Principal. Another year of schooling was also added to the Grammar School that year.

Another school was set up in 1898 near the free-bridge with forty-five attending regularly. The following year the Goodwin and Jack Schools were combined in the school at Pejepscot and a new building was built to accommodate them.

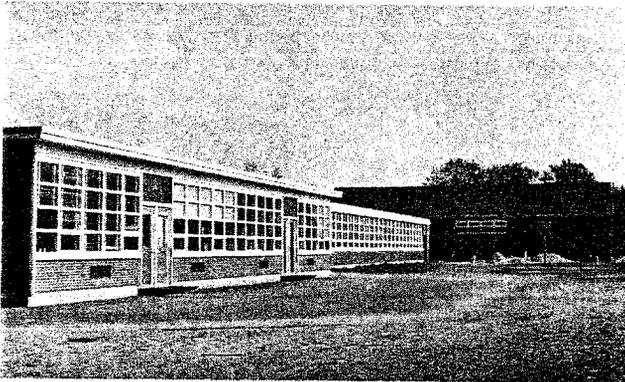
In 1909, John A. Cone became the Superintendent of schools and served in that capacity for fourteen years.



John A. Cone School. Picture taken May, 1961.

There were fourteen separate schools at that time. The same year Topsham and Brunswick united into a School District.

The next few years brought many changes in our school system. In 1911, the Alexander School was closed because of lack of pupils. Manual Training and Domestic Science were added to the studies in the common schools. In 1917, the Haley School was closed and two years later the Brick School was closed. That same year the Pejepscot School was bulging at its seams and an extra room had to be constructed. In 1920 high school students in Topsham were invited to Brunswick High School for their schooling. At that time it seemed like the most logical thing to do.



Walter M. Williams School

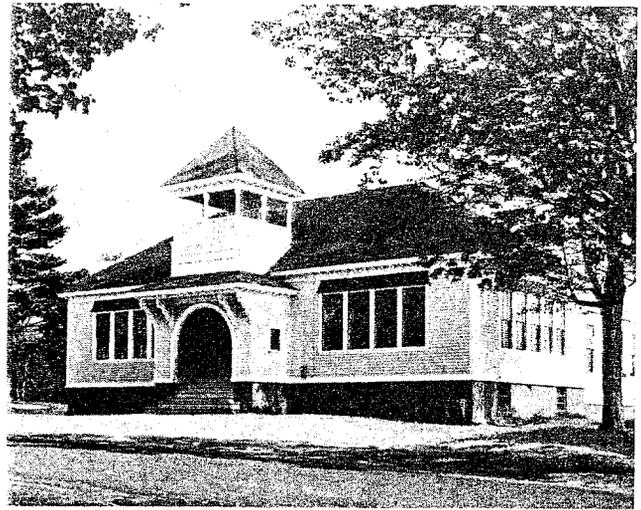
In 1934, Leon P. Spinney began his first year as Superintendent of Schools in the School District. He served in this capacity with honor and respect for nineteen years.

The name of the Topsham Village School was changed to the "John A. Cone School" in 1938.

In 1945 the Middlesex School was forced to close for lack of a teacher and the pupils were transported to the Cone School.

In 1952 the educational program for the School District had grown so large the District could no longer function advantageously and Topsham and Harpswell formed a new District inviting Bowdoinham to join in with them. In 1953, Gwyeth T. Smith was hired as Superintendent of Schools for this district.

The schools of Topsham began feeling the population increase in the town at this time and the town was forced to build another grammar school. The new Walter M. Williams School was formally dedicated on August 28, 1954. With the new building, everyone thought the problem of space had ended, but this feeling



Pejepscot School

was shortlived as an addition to the building was necessary to be constructed.

Topsham's school system continues to expand and as we pause to celebrate our 200th anniversary the second addition to the Walter M. Williams is being constructed.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

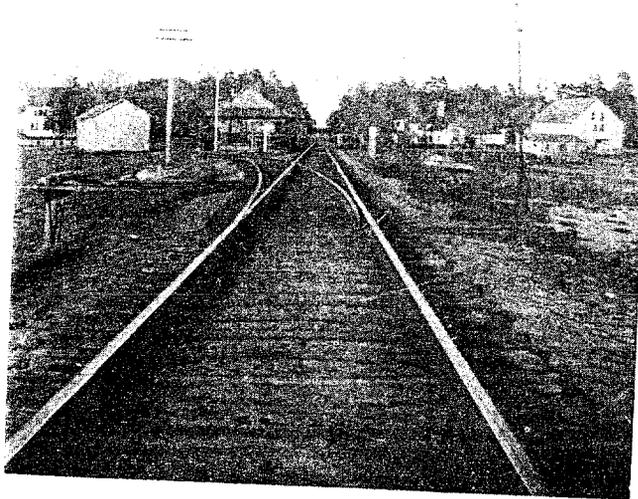
Topsham Academy was opened in 1851 by a few of the prominent citizens. They purchased the old Court House which they converted into a convenient school building. The school was operated about ten years. The last instructor was Joshua Laiton.

The Franklin Family School for boys was opened May 20, 1857, by Warren Johnson. The preceding year he had purchased the old residence of Major William Frost which he enlarged for this purpose. Under his management the school was very successful, and remained a celebrated and popular institution for many years. D. L. Smith was the last man to run a school there.

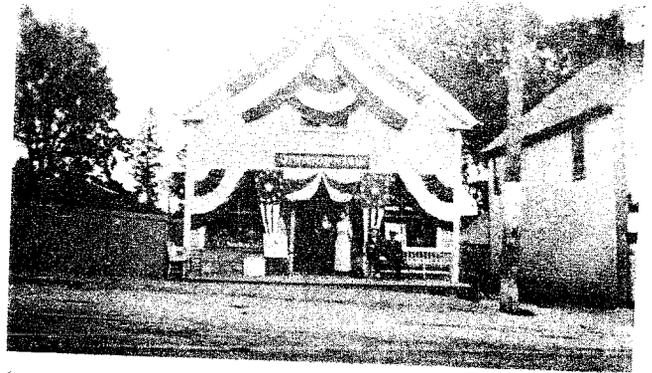
The old Purington homestead, located near the Franklin School, was for many years occupied as a young ladies boarding school. Mrs. Elizabeth Fields opened the school in 1831 with twelve boarders, and as many day pupils. Miss Tryphena Hinckley took the school in 1841, when Mrs. Fields retired, and operated it successfully for several years.

Another young ladies boarding school, had been run by Miss Mary Ann Green, and was kept in the old Green House, later the Haskell homestead, located on the corner of Main and Winter streets.

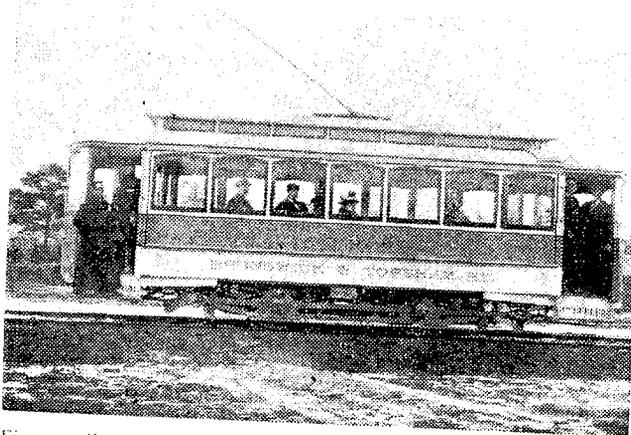
Do You Remember?



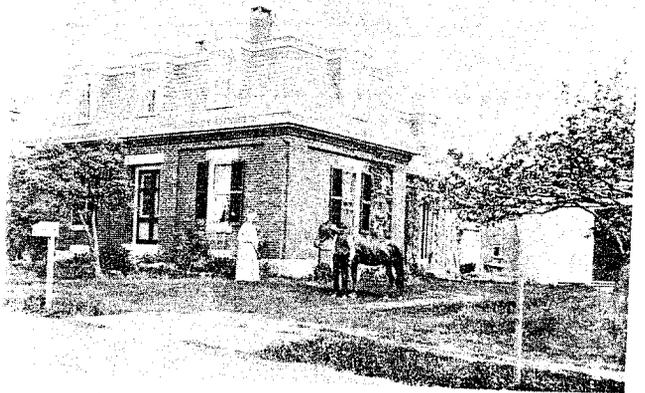
Topsham Depot — 1880



Grocery store operating in early 1900's. Picture taken during 150th Anniversary, 1914.



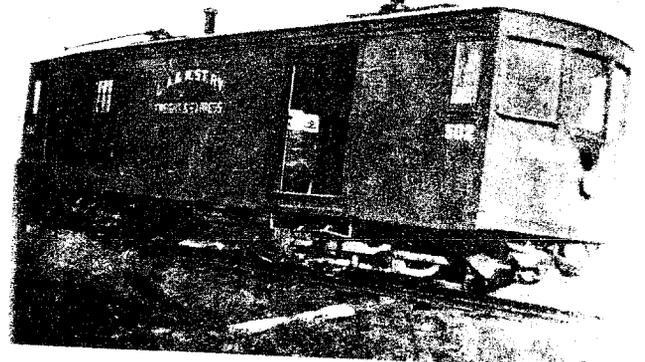
First trolley car to make trip across the Androscoquin from Brunswick to Topsham shown prior to departure in 1896. In those days, there was a motorman on the front end of the car and the conductor at the rear.



Aunt Belle Rackley's residence, Winter Street.



Elm Street, Topsham



Electric car that traveled from Lewiston through to Bath. Frank E. Sawyer was employed as messenger man on this car.

Fire Department

by Mary James

ENGINES

The first hand engine was purchased by private individuals, about 1810. In 1813 an effort was made to induce the Town to take charge of it, but the Town votes "not to accept the gift."

The next year, however, it was accepted with a provision that the Town should never be put to any expense for repairs or purchase. However, the Town voted in 1826 to take care of the engine.

The engine was named "Topsham" and like all hand engines in those days it was small and had to be filled with buckets. This engine came to a sensational end.

The principal of the old Franklin School for Boys induced the Town to present the engine to the school and this act so offended the town boys that a body of them went to the school building, took the engine and deliberately ran it over the side of the short bridge into the river. It was never again seen, as far as anyone knows.

At the annual meeting of the Town in 1850, following several years of agitation, it was voted to appropriate \$1250 to purchase a fire engine and other apparatus and a committee composed of Nahum Perkins, Sparrow Chase and Sanford A. Perkins purchased the "Androscoggin," at the Springfield Exposition in Springfield, Mass. This engine has a colorful history, is still making it and is the only engine ever bought by the town. It ranks No. 2 in size and is one of the best engines of its class ever made. She is a "Hummeman" tub weighs 3,000 pounds, has double brakes, 5 and seven-eighths inch cylinders, 16 inch stroke, 2 and one-half inch leading hose and 3 and one-half inch suction.

The Androscoggin, also known as "Old Andy" and "Lil Andy," has achieved a record at firemen's musters of which the citizens feel justly proud and brought to notice that Topsham has the champion prize winner of New England, and has defeated every hand engine in the State of Maine, whether big or little, some time during her career. The first prize, a silver trumpet, was awarded at Brunswick on July 5, 1855, for a play of 174 ft. 7 in. The best recorded play was 211 ft. 2½ in. at Portland, Maine, July 3, 1920. The Company considered that the Androscoggin's best play was made at Saco on June 19, 1871 when she defeated 16 hand engines and two steamers with a play of 191 ft. 5 in. In a

gale of wind. It was there that the Androscoggin received the name "Steer Team" as she was the smallest one present. The name was given by the Tigers of Lynn, Mass. the largest present. On that occasion the Tigers had 175 men and the Andy had just 38 men, torch boys and all, and had the pleasure of defeating by 25 ft.

The "Andy's" overall winnings with trophies and cash amount to over \$25,000.

EARLY FIRE COMPANIES

There are no records of any fire companies in Topsham prior to 1800. The earliest one known was the Lincoln Fire Club but the exact date of its organization is unknown. The regulations of the club were printed in 1829 but it may have been in existence for some years previously.

According to the regulations the club met four times a year on the first Tuesdays of January, April, July and October. If a member was absent the whole evening he was fined twenty-five cents and if one left the meeting without the consent of the club he was fined twenty-five cents also. The officers were a chairman, secretary and treasurer. After a member's admission to the club he was required to furnish himself with two good leather fire buckets, holding at least ten quarts each. The fire hooks and ladders were under the control of and owned by the club.

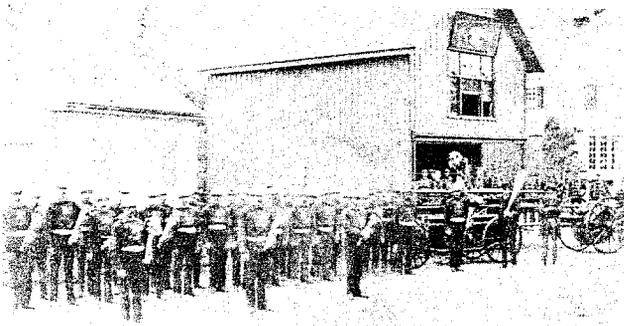
THE ANDROSCOGGIN ENGINE COMPANY

The Company having control of the Androscoggin hand engine was organized in 1850 shortly after the purchase of the engine. The first meeting was held on April 1, in the rooms over the store of George S. Holt.

There were eight officers and 70 members. Their uniforms consisted of a blue frock with red collar, red webbing belts, a glazed cap, and dark pants. On Dec. 2, 1850, a flag staff was raised in front of the engine house which was located at the foot of Winter Street. The Company was twice reorganized.

In 1857, at a special town meeting, it was voted "To authorize the selectmen to pay each man (not to exceed 60 in number) who shall faithfully perform his duty, twelve and a half cents per hour for his services while at fires, so long as there may be a well organized fire com-

pany in Topsham Village." The selectmen were also authorized to offer a reward of fifty dollars for the detection of incendiaries. In 1860 the town forbade the company to take the engine out of town, except for fires and upon July the Fourth. In 1869 the town voted to buy 200 feet of hose and to pay the members of the engine company twenty-five cents per hour when in active service.

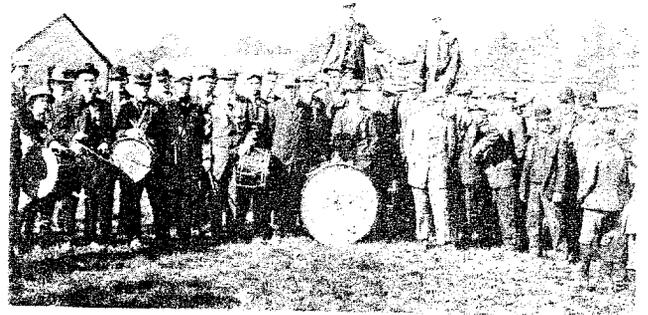


Old Engine Hall at foot of Winter St., original home of the hand engine, the Androscoggin, taken in 1880. The men are holding some of the many silver trumpets won as prizes.

An account book dated 1853 notes, "The committee make assessments on owners of burnable property in the village district to the amount of two hundred and fifty dollars in aid of the Fire Department of Topsham, would respectfully report that they have attended to that duty, they have made assessments on the property within the limits hereafter named commencing at the home of Mr. Jothan Eaton on the road leading to Lisbon; Mr. Rufus Rogers house on the River Road, at the Toll Bridge, Howard Small's house on the Meadow Road and the Joseph S. Drinkwater house on the Bowdoinham Road, and on the following kinds of property, viz: Dwelling houses, stables, mills, bridge, hotel stuff, shops, mechanic tools, manufacturers, lumber, and goods of all kinds, have taken into consideration in the valuation the location and extra risks. Amount of valuation assessed is \$166,232."



The Androscoggin in front of Quint's stable on Winter Street. Three men at right were street car conductors.



Muster held in Topsham - 1910.

BRIEF HISTORY OF FIRE COMPANY FROM 1900

The Engine House on Main Street was built about 1897 at a cost of approximately \$1,300 and the contractor was George Stinson. This was the second home of the Androscoggin hand engine. The department was called the Androscoggin Engine Company. The officers were the foreman and the First, Second and Third Directors.

Until 1919 the firemen got fifty cents per hour on duty but that year they received a raise to seventy-five cents per hour. Also, that year the town began paying Brunswick for aid in fighting fires and the two towns entered into a contract.

At a special meeting in April of 1920 the company voted to form a new association in order to join the New England State Fire Association and the name Androscoggin Veterans Firemen's Association of Topsham was chosen for this new company.

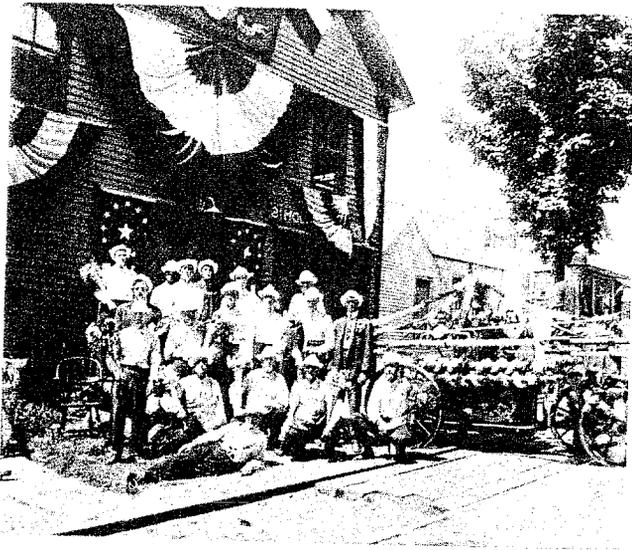
During the following years the membership dwindled. During and after the war townspeople became interested in getting a Civil Defense unit started. Harold Willis was elected Chief of the Fire Company which also functioned as the first CD unit and a small fire truck was obtained.

In 1946 membership increased and the Department had two companies and each consisted of a captain and eight men. The firemen were receiving \$1 per hour.

In 1947 the department acquired a ladder truck and small pumper. Townspeople felt there should be a better equipped local fire department.

In May of 1949 the Company held a special meeting on the improvement of the department. In August a siren was installed on the Engine House, a large pumper and tank truck was acquired with money raised by the firemen. In 1950 insurance for the firemen was obtained.

At the March 6, 1951 meeting a contract was signed by the selectmen, Walter Williams, George Sprague and Ray Hanson, for a new truck and accessories at the cost of \$2,187. This was the first piece of new fire fighting equipment purchased by the Town since 1850. The new



The Engine House on Main Street with Androsoggin and crew — 1914.

truck, delivered in June, was equipped with a 550 gal. tank, 10 Indian pumps, a 150-gal. per minute pump and 1,500 feet of one and one-half hose. In March of 1952 Harold Willis retired as Chief and Roscoe Hoskins was elected to that office which he served until 1955.

NEW FIRE DEPARTMENT

In 1956, after much hard work by members of the Fire Department, the new Fire Station was completed and in February more than 400 guests attended the open house put on by the members of the Volunteer Fire Department and its Ladies Auxiliary. The "red network" telephone system was installed and the new department answered its first call the following week. A new 750 gal. pumper was used. The station, pumper and alarm system cost the town a total of \$32,000.

Carl Randall, who was elected Chief in 1955, was assisted by 22 call firemen.

In 1962 the Town voted to purchase a new fire truck.

The firemen set to work immediately to enlarge the station, making an addition on the front of the building.

The present equipment includes the new 1961 four-wheel drive Ford truck with a 250 gal. pump; the GMC 1951 truck with a 200 gal. pump; a 750 gal. pumper; and a 3,000 gal. tank truck; in addition to a 500 gal. pump on a trailer. Engines 1, 2 and 3 are radio equipped.

The firemen include Chief Carl Randall, First Assistant Chief, Chester Murray, Second Assistant Chief, Kenneth Orr, Fire Wards, C. Harmon Rogers, Arnold King and Walter Powers, Company of Engine 1, Capt. Dominic D'Allesio, Lt. Bertrand Girard, C. Haron Rogers, Sheldon Furbish, Arnold King, Douglas Brann, David Dube, Elwood Campbell, Felix Pinette, Dexter Douglass, Donald Walden, Company of Engine 2, Capt. Robert Grondin, Lt. Joseph Larrabee, William Larrabee, Richard Foster, Jeffrey Lachance, T. Bombardier, Stanley Newbury, Roger Parks, John Toth, Arthur Staples, Tank truck, Guy Rhoades and Roland Allen, Company of Engine 3, Capt. Merton Snipe, Lt. Arthur Trusiani, Hugh Smith, Leroy Edgecomb, Raymond Riendeau, Thomas Cutler, Alex Labbe, Philip Mailly, Maurice Labbe and Francis Pierce. Walter Larrabee is serving as Secretary-Treasurer. Joseph Kachinski, photographer.

Topsham is justly proud of its Fire Department and conscientious volunteer firemen.



Reminiscent of a Duck Hunter

by David W. White

48 Elm Street, Topsham, Maine

Delving thru the recordings which my father kept of his duck hunts on Merrymeeting Bay dating back into the eighteen hundreds, I came across this notation, "Gunning with Buster. He shot his first Black Duck today. In open water north side of Big Brick Island." The date is Sept. 2nd, 1904.

Nineteen hundred and four is sixty years ago but I still well remember that day that started me on my way to becoming a Merrymeeting Bay duck shooter.

During those early days of my duck shooting the hunting was done mostly "In open water" with both hunters lying flat on their backs on the bottom of a

so-called Gunning Float or Scull-Boat. The rear gunner did the propelling by using an oar which was thrust through a hole in the stern of the boat called a scull hole.

The front gunner laid flat with his head propped up by a back rest. The boat was trimmed about the rails with tufts of grass as a camouflage for the whole contraption. As the hunters came within range the Chap in the bow did not shoulder his gun but put his left hand behind the butt, slowly raised his head until he could see the game and "Let her go."

The chap in the stern dropped his oak, sat up or jumped onto his feet and the show was on.

Now back to my first duck that day so long past. I palmed the gun all right, took good aim at a duck sitting on the water in front of the boat and pulled both triggers.

The gun I was using I still have. It is a double barreled Parker 12 gauge.

Back in those days father loaded most of his ammunition. I don't recall just how many drams of black powder went into each shell but it sure was a man sized dose. That damn gun caught me under the chin and peeled that, split my lip and ended up with a lusty bang on my nose. I was a mess, but I killed my first duck deader than a mackerel which at the time was all that mattered to father and me.

Folks often ask me if the ducks were plentiful in those days. Not as many as today but of course we had few hunters. The species remain about the same. One was much surer of bringing home something for the pot in those days, as the birds stayed longer in the bay, in as much as we have fifty hunters to drive them out now against one at the turn of the century.

The bag limit of those days was twenty birds to the float but the gunning was relatively about the same as today, good days, bad days.

As to the above let's consult again the records left by my father. Take our same year 1904:

Sept. 5th

Gunned with Fred Haskell
1 Black Duck

Sept. 7th

Gunned with Charles Edgcomb
1 Black Duck

Sept. 14th

Gunned alone
2 Blue winged Teal

Sept. 19th & 20th.

Gunned with David Scribner
2 Grey Duck

5 Teal

12 Black Duck

1 Partridge -- and so on. Good hunts, bad hunts.

I'm often asked who invented the scull-boat. In my book it was Maurice Luce. Maurice lived a piece below us on the Middlesex Road. He built most of the boats used by the hunters of the day. The boats used by most of us now are along the same lines as set up by Maurice. Today Wilbur Wilson of Maine Street, Brunswick, continues the tradition. Lucky is he who has a Wilson built boat under him in rough weather on the bay.

The decoy or wooden head I guess dates many many years back into Indian times. They fashioned theirs of mud and sticks. Strictly of course for shore hunting. The decoy went thru a trend of blocks, flying decoys, profiles, live decoys (long since outlawed) etc. up to the well shaped and nicely painted wooden decoy of today.

Writing of decoys brings to mind a day I was hunting with James Scribner. It was in the days of live decoys. Jim had borrowed a few birds from his father David, as we had no live decoys of our own.

It was raining and Jim ordinarily a good shot was having an off day. After a few sculls with no results I decided to take a more active hand in the business. So a bit later as two or three birds lit into the decoys out we go and as we got within range I never said a word to Jimmy but took good aim over the side of the boat and knocked over a pair. Swisssh! Off to the left of my dead ducks a couple took to the air and flew away. You guessed it. One of my dead ducks was David's best Mallard drake. I do not recall how we got out of that one.

As to the guns used in those early days. Within my own recollection most hunters swore by the old ninety-seven Winchester pump. Some of these models carried seven shells. The double barreled gun was popular in ten and eight gauge. Father spoke many times of a swivel gun that I recall was about two to four gauge and was not fired from the shoulder but tied down somehow to the bow of the boat. Such guns are in current use in England and Scotland today.

Well one could go on and on! Recollections are endless. The advent of the automatic shot gun, the days when it was legal to shoot in the spring, the stories from the real oldster when we had no duck laws, the day that came when we paid twenty-five cents for a license to duck shoot for life: the modes of transportation, when a trip to the bay meant harnessing up the old mare to the baggage wagon and loading into the axel with everything from hay and grain to kerosene lanterns and cans of Boston Baked Beans and pans of home baked biscuits and jugs of water and of course a jug or two painted red, each one with a mule inside to help you kick out the corn cob stopper.

Whitten Memorial Library

by Mrs. Donald Dorian



Like the lofty elms that shade its home on Pleasant Street, Topsham's Whitten Library has roots which reach far back into the town's past. In fact, the first library, "The Social Library of Topsham," whose charter subscribers included most of the well-known early residents of the village, was founded in 1803. Unhappily the surviving records of that early venture are incomplete, but books still in existence, containing its bookplate and with publishing dates as late as 1853, indicate that the original library either flourished for many more years than most such old-time libraries or was quickly followed by other earnest efforts to supply Topsham readers with books.

The tale of the modern Whitten Library, however, is a success story in the best American tradition. And it all began back in 1922 when two ladies, strolling down a Topsham street, discovered that their stockings had gathered a ruinous assortment of thistles and burdocks!

"What can we do about these things?" one of them demanded in disgust.

"Found a society to get rid of them," the other suggested promptly.

The result was the Village Improvement Association, dedicated not only to the job of making Topsham streets safe for silk stockings but to anything else that might need doing. Since creating a library for the town was obviously something that needed doing, the Association soon had that on its agenda, too.

But creating a library from scratch is no easy task. Funds, books, and a usable building all had to be acquired, so for eight years the Village Improvement

Association set aside what small sums it could spare from its limited treasury, and most important of all, talked LIBRARY enthusiastically. Then with town interest steadily growing, the time seemed ripe for energetic action. First came a "book social" to which the price of admission was the contribution of a book. That realized 356 volumes. A little later to raise money for more, the Association tackled a musical comedy. Its cast required an incredible 150, but everyone from the milkman to the bank president cheerfully took part, — and needless to say, it was an enormous success. Meanwhile as the word spread, other books began to come in, not just from interested Topsham residents but also from out-of-State friends who summered in the area.

Eventually, too, a building turned up. Topsham firemen obligingly moved all their gear to the first floor of the old Androscoggin Engine House on Main Street and made the second floor available for the library. Then boys in the school manual training classes turned to and made book shelves. Local carpenters offered their services to strengthen the floor and walls for the weight of books. Paint was offered at discount and local painters contributed their labor. Some of the women in the Village Improvement Association scrubbed and cleaned. Others catalogued the books. Finally chairs and tables were installed, and on Saturday afternoon, February 7, 1931, with 1,500 books on its shelves, the Topsham Public Library proudly opened its doors.

The library moved to its present quarters and became the Whitten Memorial Library in 1941 when Miss Sarah Whitten, one of its earliest and most enthusiastic supporters, bequeathed her family home to Topsham for use as a library building and as a repository of historical relics.

Today the original 1,500 books have grown to 10,848, and under the competent direction of Mrs. Frances Coro, the librarian, the collection steadily increases. To many browsers and visitors one particularly interesting feature of the collection is a carefully selected and growing number of books about Maine and its history.

But quite aside from its books, Topsham's Whitten Memorial Library is well worth a visit by anyone who enjoys a glimpse of the past. The old house, built in 1838, retains much of its original flavor and charm. The entrance hall still contains its graceful curving stairway and wallpaper dating back to 1852. Over the bookshelves hang old portraits of the Whitten family, residents of Topsham for nearly two centuries. Upstairs, in

the meeting room used by organizations such as the Garden Club, hangs a vivid reminder of the days when the town's mariners sailed the seven seas: a huge oil portrait of the "Ship Henry Failing" (done by W. H. York of Liverpool, England in 1884) whose master, Captain Jacob Merriman lived nearby on Topsham's Elm Street. Upstairs, too, is the "historical room" with its fascinating mementoes of the past. Among them are an ancient wooden cradle and Topsham's first baby carriage, a wicker contraption set high on big wooden

wheels and pulled by a heavy wooden tongue. Most attractive of all to many visitors, however, is the "historical room's" display of literary treasures from another day such as a school "rank card" of 1876, yellowed and dog-eared school books, the earliest dating to 1831, used by successive generations of children in the Whitten family, copies of old newspapers — The New York Sun of 1833 for instance and The Brunswicker of 1844 — and that rare treasure, "The Laws of the Social Library of Topsham."

Brief History of Topsham Post Office

by L. P. Spinney

*"This is the place; stand still, my steed;
Let me review the scene,
And summon from the shadowy past
The forms that once have been."*

Even though Topsham is celebrating its two hundredth anniversary this year as an incorporated township, the community is much older than the town. In the beginning it was part of a great tract of land known as the Pejepscot Purchase which comprised what is now the towns of Harpswell, Lisbon, Bowdoinham and Brunswick. This country was presided over by a group of seven men known as the Pejepscot Proprietors. It is from the records of these men that we have learned what we know about this place. It was these people who laid out the great Twelve Rod Road, the widest street in any town or city in Maine. They built better than they knew! The only place that bears the name Pejepscot today is the village some four miles west of where this is being written. The post office there is Pejepscot. Perhaps philatelists might do well to get a postmark from that office while they may. The time will come when it will be a collector's item. The town of Topsham was incorporated in 1717. It was named from Topsham, England because many of its founders came from that country.

MAIL AND EARLY DELIVERY

Before the day of post offices mail was brought by coasters which plied between Marmot Bay and the larger communities. Sometimes letters were sent by chance travelers and for a time even after the establish-

ment of a mail service, letters were sent by coasters as a matter of convenience. (The post office department had no monopoly on mail deliveries than as it has now).

The first mail route from Boston to the Kennebec was established before the Revolutionary War. Luke Lombard carried the mail on horseback once a fortnight having letters for this vicinity as he passed by. It was about 1880 when mail was delivered oftener than once a week. It is difficult to reconcile these conditions with what takes place today in this age of speed when a letter dropped into any mail box before five o'clock at night will be delivered in any town in Maine on the first delivery of the next morning.

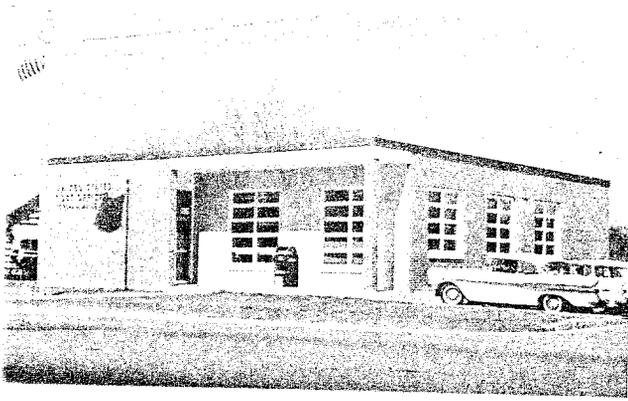
POST OFFICE QUARTERS

The post office was first housed in a building which stood on Main Street on the opposite side of the road from the "Bank" building. The postmaster was Charles R. Porter. He was a lawyer and kept the mail in his office. He had an assistant, Oliver, son of Major Nathaniel Walker, who was succeeded by his brother, Wildes P. Walker.

The post office has been housed in various buildings: once in the building where Neilson's Store is now; once in a house owned by Mrs. Mary Mendes on the corner of Main and Winter Streets, and in later years it occupied half of the lower floor of the building next to Neilson's Store; then the entire lower floor of this same building as the town grew more populous.

THE NEW BUILDING

Topsham has today as yet a post office building as here is anywhere. It has plenty of room, excellent



"FIRSTS"

"Firsts" have a place in any history.

The first foot service—house to house delivery—that Topsham ever had started Saturday, July 21, 1962. The first carriers were Alton D. Goro, Charles N. Payne, Jr. and Joseph R. A. Coulombe as mounted carrier. The first assistant to the postmaster, a position never known before in this office, was Roger J. Thibeault.

They also serve who only stand and wait. While Ralph Mallett was rural carrier he had as a substitute, Leon A. Pickard, who took the route any time that the regular carrier was on annual leave or on sick leave. The present substitute rural carrier is Clifford Card.

artificial and natural lighting; rest rooms for both men and women; electric water cooler, plenty of counter room, plenty of parking space for patrons — all the comforts of home! It is located on the Arnold Trail, an international highway, about a mile from the old location.

These spacious quarters were occupied by the Post Office Department for the first time on Monday, July 2, 1962. The dedication of the building was held Saturday afternoon, July 7. Attorney Arthur A. Dolloff was master of ceremonies; Dr. James Allen Storer, a member of the Town's Planning Board, was one of the speakers. Flag raising was in charge of the Boy and Girl Scouts. The flag was given by U. S. Senator Edmund S. Muskie. It has been flown over the United States Capitol and over the Post Office Building, Washington.

PERSONNEL

When the post office opened its new quarters, Mrs. Bertha Harrington who had worked in the old quarters, was one of the personnel. Roger Thibeault was another. Mrs. Harrington was in charge of the Money Order Unit at the air base as well as working in the office. She resigned in July 1963 after having served some thirty-seven years!

The rural carrier was Forest Crosman who was appointed after the death of Mr. Ralph A. Mallett. Mr. Mallett served as rural carrier for thirty-seven years. He was under pay from the Department up to the day that he died.

The first rural carrier that the town had was a man called "Pinky" (Bertram) Goud. Lester Willis may have been the second and Mr. Mallett the third.

POSTMASTERS

(with dates of appointment)

Charles R. Porter	1821
Nathaniel Green	1826
Nathaniel Walker	1831
John H. Thompson	1841
Nathaniel Walker	1844
William Ricker	1845
Charles E. White	1849
John Tebbets	1849
Octavius Merrill	1853
Louis M. Work	1853
Amos D. Wheeler	1856
Alexander Ridley	1856
Robert P. Whitney	1861
Isaac S. Curtis	1888
George E. Stinson	1889
James C. Purington	1893
Warren Goud	1897
Evelyn W. Dunning	1912
Lindley Hamilton	1916
Evelyn W. Dunning	1919
Frank D. Lehigh (acting)	1921
Parker S. Adams	1928
Lester E. Goud	1935
Bertha L. Harrington (acting)	1951
Leon P. Spinnex	1954
Hemis W. Green	1885

PROGRAM FOR TOPSHAM BICENTENNIAL

July 17, 18, 19

July 16

8:00 P.M. Miss Bicentennial Pageant Sponsored by Topsham Jaycee Wives
Topsham Grange Hall

July 17

OPENING CEREMONY — TOPSHAM FAIR GROUNDS

- 10:00 A.M. Welcome *Selectman, George M. Clifford*
Invocation *Rev. Gerald W. Beals*
Greetings — Brunswick, Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Lisbon Falls
Flag Raising Ceremony *Topsham Girl Scouts*
Gun Salute *Topsham Air Force Station*
Release of 200 balloons
- 10:30 A.M. GENERAL AUCTION *Topsham Teen-agers*
Brice Booker, Auctioneer
- 1:00 P.M. CHILDREN'S DAY ACTIVITIES *Topsham Jaycees*
Decorated bicycle parade, greased pig scramble, potato bag race, one legged race, bull
frog hop, relay race, wheelbarrow race, penny scramble and free tickets and circus
candy from carnival
- 5:00 P.M.-7:00 P.M.
SMORGASBORD SUPPER *Topsham Grange Ladies*
Topsham Firemen's Auxiliary
Event to be held at TOPSHAM GRANGE HALL.
- 7:30 P.M. Presentation of Awards
DECORATING CONTEST AND BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM
Topsham Garden Club
- 8:00 P.M. Greetings from STATE OF MAINE
Councilor Tarpy T. Schulten representing Governor John H. Reed
TALENT SHOW *Arranged by BPW Club, Brunswick*
- 9:30 P.M. FIREWORKS
Display presented by Sagadahoc Agricultural and Horticultural Society
Oscar W. Stuart, President

July 18

- 7:00 A.M. Formation of Parade on Winter and Bridge Streets
- 10:00 A.M. PARADE *Theme: Past, Present, Future*
Include bands, drum and bugle corps, organization and commercial floats, old and new fire fighting equipment, drill teams, etc.
Route: Summer Street to Main Street, up Main Street to Elm Street, down Elm Street to auto gate at Fair Grounds, to west grandstand, then proceed to race track and appearance in front of Main Grandstand for awards.
- 1:00 P.M. FIREMEN'S MUSTER *Directed and arranged by Topsham Fire Dept.*
Carl D. Randall, Chief
- 5:00 P.M.-7:00 P.M.
BAKED BEAN SUPPER *by AIDERS of United Baptist Church*
- 7:00 P.M. JUDGING OF BEARDS *by Merrymeeting Sportsmen's Assoc.*
SHAVING CONTEST
- 8:00 P.M. DANCE (Plans to be announced) *Arranged by Topsham JayCee's*
- 9:30 P.M. FIREWORKS
Display presented by Sagadahoc Agricultural and Horticultural Society

July 19

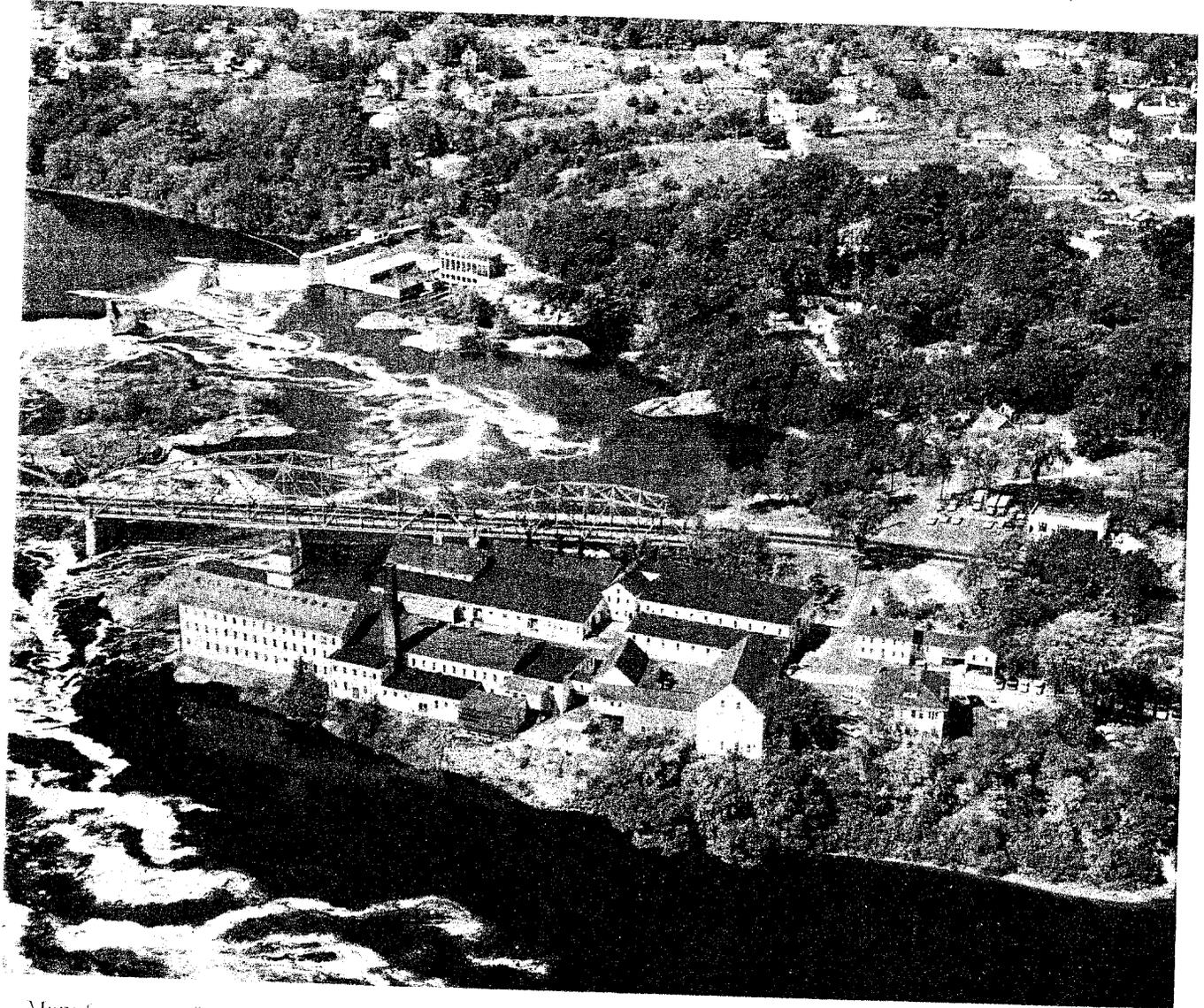
- 9:00 A.M. CATHOLIC DEVOTIONAL SERVICE *Topsham Fair Grounds*
To be held at west grandstand
- 10:30 A.M. PROTESTANT DEVOTIONAL SERVICE *Topsham Fair Grounds*
To be held at Main grandstand
Arranged by United Baptist Church — Rev. Gerald W. Beals
- 11:30 A.M.-1:00 P.M.
SUNDAY DINNER (Plans to be announced)
- 1:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M.
AUTOMOBILE SHOW AND ENTERTAINMENT
Arranged by Maine Obsolete Automobile League
- 3:00 P.M. ORGAN CONCERT AND RECEPTION *Organist, William M. Eves*
To be held at United Baptist Church, Elm Street
- 6:00 P.M. CAPSULE CEREMONY *Walter M. Williams School, Perkins Street*
- 8:00 P.M. BAND CONCERT *Elks Municipal Band, Bath, Maine*
- 9:30 P.M. CLOSING CEREMONIES
Benediction *Arranged by St. Andrew's Mission, Portland*

Pejepscot History

Pejepscot Paper, with two mills on the banks of the Androscoggin River at Topsham, is responsible for bringing over seven million dollars worth of business to the Sagadahoc County area annually.

1868, a paper mill was completely set up and production was started in the newly founded Topsham Paper Company.

The new mill used rags as a source of pulp. When run-



Manufacturers of paper for school construction and printing uses, Pejepscot Paper pays about \$80,000.00 yearly taxes to Topsham, or about 37% of the community's budget requirements.

The Bowdoin mill, located off Route 24 near the Topsham-Brunswick line and the Pejepscot mill, on the same side of the river five miles to the north both have long histories, dating back some 95 years when a now unknown person realized the potentialities of an efficient power source for a paper mill to be located at Topsham.

The unusual rock formations narrowed the river to allow a relatively short dam to hold back a tremendous amount of water for a source of power. By the end of

ning at full capacity, the output was about one and a half tons of paper per day. This paper was produced by the use of one paper machine which was capable of producing a sheet of paper 92 inches wide.

This mill kept producing paper steadily until 1873 when F. C. Whitehouse of Topsham bought and closed the mill pending complete reorganization.

With the assistance of George F. Drew, the company's regular engineer, Whitehouse redesigned the entire mill set-up. The former mill consisting of a single brick building accommodating only one machine, was enlarged to contain two machines.

The second new machine was bought and installed on the mill located on the south side of Main Street.

A second building was built on the opposite side of the street where two more paper machines were installed.

Another large building to serve as a store house, finishing room, cutting room and machine shop was also erected shortly after.

Upon completing the renovations, Whitehouse renamed the company Bowdoin Paper Manufacturing, opening a mill with four paper producing machines.

As a result of the expansion, the mill's capacity rose from the original one and a half tons a day to some 35-40 tons per day. The increase in production caused owners to seek sources of pulp other than the local supply of rags.

Whitehouse soon found purchasing pulp from other mills was not profitable, and in 1883 founded the Lisbon Falls Fibre Company at Lisbon Falls to serve his Bowdoin plant.

The new plant was located on the east bank of the

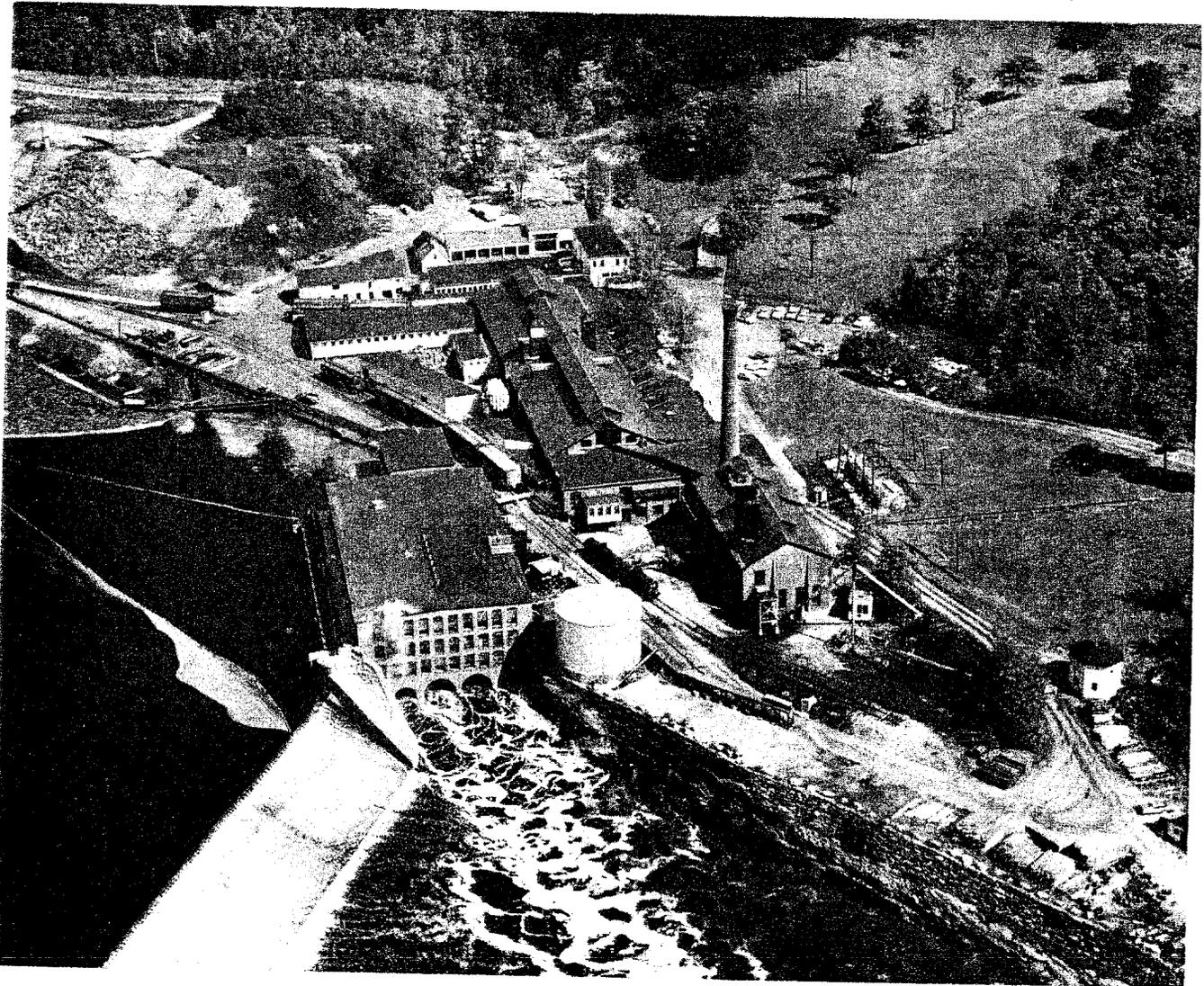
The success of Lisbon Falls Fibre Company prompted Whitehouse to install two paper machines in 1885. Prior to the installation, the mill, from local pulpwood supplies, produced 35-40 tons of sulphite stock.

In 1900 the two paper machines were rebuilt and were the fastest in the world at the time of their installation, producing some 45 tons of newsprint per day.

Between the Topsham mill and Lisbon Falls plant, Whitehouse found a suitable location for another pulp and paper mill. The proposed plant was located four miles south of Lisbon Falls and five miles North of Topsham, also on the Androscoggin's eastern banks.

In 1896, a pulp mill of 70 tons of ground wood per day was completed. Following initial operation of the pulp mill, a paper mill was erected in 1898.

The name Pejepsco Paper, which the entire company operation still holds, was given to the plant in 1896. The title Pejepsco comes from the name of a tribe of



Androscoggin River nine miles to the north of the Topsham mill. A dam across the river provided enough power to produce the 1,500 horsepower required from water power. Some 700 additional horsepower was obtained by using coal fired boilers and steam engines.

Indians who occupied the lower Androscoggin Valley. They were a sub tribe of the Anasagunticooks who occupied the entire valley of the Androscoggin River.

Two paper machines installed at Pejepsco gave it a capacity of 65 tons per day. Pulp mill capacity at that

time stood at 70 tons of pulp per day. In 1898, facilities at Pejepscot provided work for 180 men during peak employment periods.

The Pejepscot power supply was both water and steam. A dam was constructed to supply sufficient water for 8,500 horsepower. This was to accompany 700 horsepower to be furnished by coal fired boilers and steam engines.

By 1902, the three plants were employing a total of 430 men, and producing some 150 tons of paper daily. The monthly payroll totaled about \$20,000.00. Each man averaged \$11.60 in weekly wages.

In 1910, the daily output of paper was equivalent to 3 million sheets of the size of the average newspaper. With a daily circulation of 1,500 one day's product of these mills would have been sufficient to supply a newspaper for nearly six years.

At this time, the Bowdoin mill was engaged chiefly in the manufacture of specialties in paper while the others were confined to the production of newspaper stock, the greater portion of which was sold in Boston and New York.

The trade, however, was very extensive, reaching out over the whole country and to foreign countries. Large quantities of paper were sent from these mills to Australia.

At Lisbon Falls and Pejepscot, a spur track of the Maine Central Railroad was run to the mills, so that the paper was loaded directly upon the cars. From the mill in Topsham, however, it was necessary to haul the product to the freight station in Brunswick. It was necessary for five double teams to be constantly engaged in this work.

In 1906, an outside source of wood was obtained. The Bay Shore Lumber Company was formed by Whitehouse. The new logging firm consisted of 100,000 acres of owned and Crown land in New Brunswick. Crown land is land owned by the government on which Whitehouse had to pay a small royalty.

The Crown land was completely surrounded by Whitehouse owned land, giving Bay Shore Lumber exclusive rights to operate the British land.

This whole section of land ran along the coast for 20 miles and extended back into the country for some 20 miles.

Whitehouse bought a fleet of barges and hauled the lumber from Salmon River to Bath. From Bath, railroad cars hauled the pulpwood to the two mills operated.

In 1910, the Cowles family, consisting of three brothers, David, Justus and Charles, went into partnership with Mr. F. C. Whitehouse, and they added a pulp mill located on Cabot Company property just north of the Bowdoin Mill. This gave the mill a sufficient supply of groundwood pulp for all three mills, Bowdoin, Pejepscot and Lisbon Falls.

The Cowles family combined all of the enterprises into Pejepscot Paper in 1915. The company consisted of the former Pejepscot Paper Company, the Bowdoin Manufacturing Company, Lisbon Falls Fibre, Bay Shore Lumber and Sagadahoc Towing Co. The latter had been formed to haul the pulp from the Canadian properties to the mills.

Justus Cowles remained head of the company until 1920 when it was purchased by the International Development Company. Mr. Edgar Rickard, a close associate of Herbert Hoover, was president.

The depression forced closing of the Lisbon Falls division in 1928. A new board mill under the name of the Alborite Company was built and was later sold to the United States Gypsum Company.

Tragedy, in the form of the 1936 flood, struck the Bowdoin division. The unusually high torrent of water completely demolished the pulp mill and caused considerable damage to the paper mill and office buildings.

Operations picked up after the flood, until, in 1940 Rickard was succeeded as president by Mr. Arthur Schroeder, who took the reins of Pejepscot Paper.

Hearst Publishing Company purchased the plant in 1947 and allowed the company to continue for four years with its original Pejepscot Paper name.

In October of 1951, the official name of the company was made Pejepscot Paper Division of Hearst Publishing Company, the title it holds today.

Today, Pejepscot Paper pays out well over \$2,000,000.00 in payrolls, as well as purchasing about \$300,000.00 worth of wood locally.

Taxes for four towns, Topsham, Brunswick, Lisbon and Durham, range about \$90,000.00 annually, the bulk of which is concentrated in Brunswick and Topsham.

Six million gallons of water per day are used in the manufacturing process. Electricity use ranges about 65,000,000 kilowatt hours. Some 36,000,000 kilowatt hours are generated on the premises.

During the 53 years of Pejepscot's being unionized, not one strike has been levied against the company.

Wages among the mill employees range from \$1.99 to \$2.93 per hour. The average worker receives about \$2.22 per hour.

Pejepscot Paper was the first industrial plant in New England to burn pulverized coal.

Among the paper developed are cloud, rainbow and fireproof.

Papers produced are used for school construction, newsprint and magazine publications. Among some of the magazines printed on Pejepscot paper are: "Good Housekeeping," "Fortune," "Playboy," "Argosy," "Show," "Swank," "Boy's Life," "Gardening," "Redbook," "McCall's" and "Town and Country."

At the present time, Pejepscot is manufacturing specialty papers entirely, making all of its paper at the Pejepscot Mill and utilizing the old Bowdoin Mill for converting some rolls to sheets on a certain portion of the production.

The present officials of Pejepscot are: E. R. Comee, Vice President and General Manager; C. W. Ham, Chief Accountant; U. B. Rideout, Manager of Woodlands; H. E. Pratt, Manager of Manufacturing; R. P. Lampert, Assistant Manager of Manufacturing; E. S. Carlin, Jr., Groundwood Superintendent; G. C. Sadler, Technical Director; C. E. Butcher, Chief Engineer; E. A. Parsons, Traffic Manager; H. A. Walker, Jr., Quality Control Superintendent; E. T. Barrows, Bowdoin Converting Plant Superintendent.

SKY-HY PARK

Sky-Hy, Inc. was formed in 1962 to provide general recreational facilities.

The area is located six miles from the Brunswick-Topsham bridge off route 201, on the Meadow Road. Since American Telephone and Telegraph Co. operates its microwave station on the adjacent premises, its tower serves as a beacon located near the center of the park pointing the way to Sky-Hy.

The first facility provided was a *ski area*, which opened during the 1962-1963 winter season. The ski area includes ten ski trails, a T-bar ski lift, a ski lodge with a panoramic view of the surrounding country side, a ski school and a ski shop including sales, rentals and repairs.



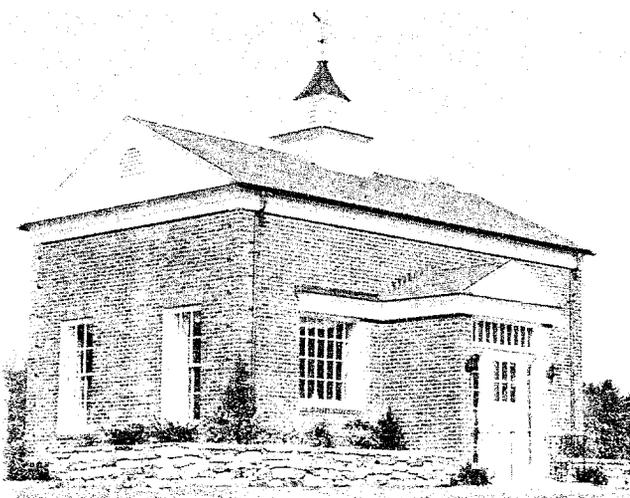
In the summer of 1963 a second facility opened providing a picnic area, which included tables and fireplaces.

Expansion is now planned for more trails and snow making machinery for the ski area, and also for better entertainment facilities the year around. The lodge is now available for suppers, reunions and parties of all kinds.

Future plans call for development of boating, fishing, swimming and camping at Bradley Pond on the edge of the pond.

TOPSHAM'S FIRST BANK

The Topsham branch of the First National Bank of Portland was built in 1963 and formally dedicated on



December 9, thus becoming Topsham's first bank to be in operation after several years of banking inactivity in town. It is staffed by two Topsham residents, with David W. Burnett serving as President and Mrs. Donald Orr serving as teller.

ORGANIZATIONS

by Mrs. Doris W. Hennessey

Among the organizations in our community the oldest is *Topsham Grange No. 57*, which was founded September 19, 1874. The large, attractive two-story building which houses the Grange, is located on Pleasant St. It not only serves as the weekly meeting place of the Grange on Saturday evenings, and for the Juvenile



Grange on Friday evenings for alternate meetings and dances for the young people, but has also served as a Town Hall for elections and meetings since the loss of the Town Hall by fire. It is located on the site of the first hall which was dedicated in 1884, the present hall being dedicated in 1929. The Ladies Aid which meets biweekly on Thursdays actively supports the upkeep of the building. For a number of years Topsham Grange was the second largest in the state with a membership of about 650. Many suppers are served at the grange, both public and for other organizations, also for private groups. Henry Cheetham, Sr. heads the current slate of officers. Among the senior active officers of the grange are Mrs. Eleanor Ripley, a member for 55 years, who is serving her 26th year as Lecturer; and Mrs. Margetta Wilson, a 42-year member, who has served as various officers including that of Master, and is now serving her 36th year as Secretary. A family organization, weekly programs are geared to be of interest to all ages.

Topsham Garden Club is observing its 30th anniversary this year, having been organized in 1934. It was founded by the Topsham Village Improvement Association, and has continued that program of beautification for the town. Its purpose is also to interest the members in wild life conservation; bird life; and gardening in general. Meetings are held on the second Fridays of each month, and membership is open to surrounding towns as well as Topsham.

Another women's organization is the *Topsham Women's Extension* which meets on the third Thursday of each month, generally at the Whitten Memorial Library. The organization is under Twin County Extension with program material from the University of Maine. In addition to instructive programs on cooking, sewing, home and farm life, there are many valuable workshops which are open to the public, and a con-

outing program on preparedness for disaster. Members are welcome from the Topsham Brunswick area. *Topsham-Brunswick Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution* was organized Nov. 3, 1921. The late Miss Mary Pelham Hill of Topsham, was chapter founder. It supports a program of American History and patriotic instruction. Annual awards for Good Citizenship are made in the schools.

Merrymeeting Sportsmen Association, Inc. is the largest active organization in the community for men, and was organized in 1931 by John L. Jack, who served as president for many years. Harold Willis is the current president. The association owns a hall on the Fore-side Road and has a membership of 80 from Topsham and the surrounding communities. Supper meetings are held on the second Thursdays of each month and programs feature speakers and films on sports. The association was incorporated in 1954, for the purpose of constructing buildings, shooting ranges, a fish pond, etc.; to use the hall for social gatherings or rent for social purposes; to interest and instruct youth in sports, the use of fire arms, conservation of game and wild life, and encourage youth in the preservation of the natural resources of the state. Through the volunteer services of Harry C. Crooker, a pond was dammed up at the rear of the property, fed by brooks which are stocked annually. Anyone is welcome to fish there. There is no age limit for membership.

The most active organizations in the community for young men and women are the *Topsham JayCees* and the *JayCee Wives*. The Junior Chamber of Commerce was chartered in 1959, and incorporated in 1964, with a charter membership of 25. Meeting nights are on the second and fourth Monday nights of the month. Among their outstanding projects in the community are two public picnic areas; a community recreation area; welcome to Topsham signs; annual Christmas shopping tours for underprivileged children; annual community Halloween party; preschool census surveys; economic development and community development surveys. Youth and Sports activities are maintained; a youth council and blood bank established; public skating rinks; and the extension of Chapters in six surrounding communities.

The Wives were chartered in 1959 with 11 members. Meetings are on the second and fourth Thursdays at the JC rooms in the old Engine Hall on Main Street. Among its outstanding projects are Salk and Sabin polio vaccine clinics; Thanksgiving baskets to the needy; aid to fire victims; donations to Regional Hospital; distribution of TV guides throughout the community; \$500 donation to the recreational development area; annual donation to the Jaycee's scholarship fund, and air to all Jaycee programs.

Topsham Firemen's Auxiliary was organized to support the Volunteer Fire Department. Membership is open to all interested women. Monthly meetings are on the second Monday evenings. Funds are earned to help with the smaller needs of the station and to help with the purchase of gear for the firemen; to furnish lunches for the men fighting lengthy fires; and for a flower remembrance fund. Fire victims are aided through cash and clothing collections.

The Town of Topsham is most fortunate in having a large number of girls interested in *Girl Scouts*. The Girl Scout program emphasizes the highest in thought, word and deed. One only has to look around to see the

enthusiasm displayed by the girls in the Brownies -- Second and Third graders; Juniors -- Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth graders; Cadettes -- Seventh, Eighth and Ninth graders; and Seniors -- Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth graders. Always a highlight are the service projects that the girls enjoy doing.

Scouting is at an all time high in 1961 -- one Brownie troop, two Junior troops, and one Cadette troop with a total of 100 girls participating.

This year has a double meaning to those residing in Pejepscot. Not only is it Topsham's 200th anniversary, but its the 20th year of scouting for the boys in Pejepscot. *Boy Scout Troop, No. 40* of Pejepscot was organized in November 1911. The present Scout Master is John Chonko. Another troop is sponsored by the United Baptist Church and the third is located at the Topsham Air Force Station. Since there are three Cub Scout Packs in addition to the three troops Topsham boys have an ideal opportunity to be trained to become better citizens and boys of good character. This is the goal and hope of the scouting program.

TOPSHAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Through the efforts of Selectman Emile Chonko and a Jaycee committee initial action in the form of public meetings with interested citizens of Topsham and the State Department of Economic Development were held in the early months of 1962. The result of these meetings was public support for an article in the 1962 Town Warrant to form a town committee for economic development of Topsham.

During its initial two years of organization your committee has analysed the Recreational, Industrial, Commercial, and Residential climate of the community. During this study it was decided to concentrate initially on the development of improved recreational facilities in the town. Through a cooperative effort with several civic organizations, considerable progress was made during the year in establishing a community recreation area adjacent to the Williams School. This activity has now been turned over to the Jaycees for continued expansion and completion.

With the assistance of several interested citizens and organizations, a presentation for use as a tool in attracting new industrial and commercial establishments to Topsham has been prepared. The printing was completed in March 1964.

As its current activity the Economic Development Committee is preparing a flyer type brochure to be used in conjunction with the presentation. This flyer will be used as an aid in acquainting industry and the many summer visitors to this area of the favorable aspects of Topsham. Additional information of the proposed industrial and commercial locations is also being developed.

We believe that the results of this program will provide a sound foundation upon which Topsham can successfully compete with other areas in attracting industrial establishments.

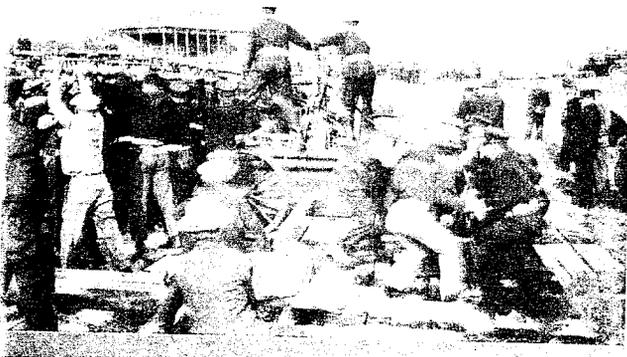
The interest of all who have joined with this committee in working toward a progressive economic future in Topsham is greatly appreciated. The 1964 committee is composed of Charles E. Crosby, Jr., Kenneth N. Murch, Norman R. Houde, Margaret Auburn, Edward F. Babbridge, Robert P. Lampert and Carl H. Whittier.

Sagadahoc Agricultural and Horticultural Society

For over a hundred years there is no one feature presented that has been a success within the town, that has contributed more to its celebrity than the annual fairs of this society. It was organized in Bath under a charter dated April 14, 1854 with Charles Davenport chosen as its first president. No fair was the first year. In 1855 a new board of officers was elected with Francis T. Purinton, of this town serving as President. In the fall of 1855 the first fair was held in the old town house in Topsham. Previous to this the society had a hard struggle for existence, but the exhibition was a marked success.

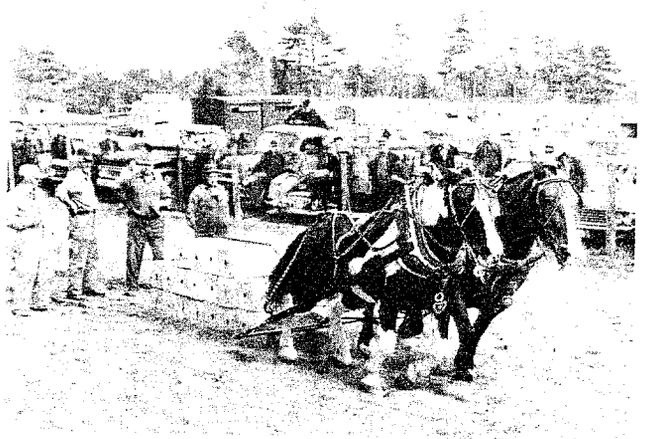


Annual exhibitions have been held each fall with the exception of a time during World War II when it was found impossible to stage an exhibition. The condition of the society has steadily improved until now it ranks among the very best of the agricultural societies in Maine. Its exhibition grounds contain over nineteen acres. The society has

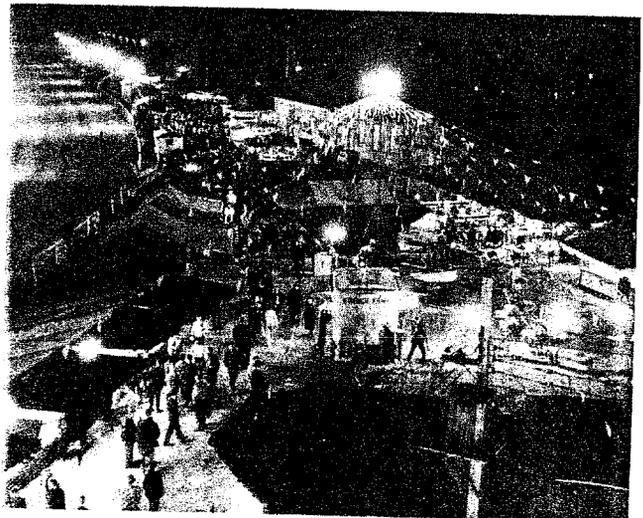


never failed to meet its financial obligations, or to pay its stipulated premiums.

When the town officials announced plans and appointed a committee to handle the Bicentennial Celebration this society volunteered the service of its officers and its grounds to be used in any manner so decided upon. The officers are now serving on committees; President, Oscar Stuart will handle the fireworks display planned for July 17 and 18.



Mr. Carl Randall, who is a member of the Executive Board of the association, will assist with arrangements for the carnival and head the Firemen's Muster planned for July 18. Mr. Gerard Lamarre, a member of the Executive Board, will assist with arrangements for activities planned for the celebration.





SELECTMAN, RAY G. HANSON
14 years
1950 to 1964



TREASURER, WINFIELD E. POWERS
14 years
1950 to 1964



TOWN CLERK, HAZEL I. COLBY
11 years
1953 to 1964



SELECTMAN, HAROLD S. WARD
18 years
1st 1940 to 1950
2nd 1952 to 1960

They Have Given Over
200
Years Of Leadership
To The
Town Of Topsham



ROAD COMMISSIONER, HARRY E. HASKELL
17 years
1st 1945 to 1955
2nd 1957 to 1964

FRANK E. CARVER
Constable and Chief of Police
(36 years) - 1929 to 1964



JOSEPH C. BRANNIGAN
Tax Collector - 23 years

EDWIN L. ROGERS
Committee of Twelve
(15 years)

EMILY K. GREG
Office Secretary, Appointed
(12 years)

DORIS W. HENNESSY
Committee of Twelve
(15 years)

MODERATOR, WILLIAM B. ZIERL
10 years
1951 to 1960

MODERATOR, ELLIS AEDRICH
11 years
1929 to 1937

MODERATOR, HARRY RALLEY
12 years
1938 to 1950

The Future of Topsham

by James Storey

To foresee with any clarity the future of a community is impossible and only the relative newcomer is brash enough to hazard any guesses about what lies in the future for any town in Maine, and especially for Topsham. However, it is entirely fitting that, in the course of celebrating 200 years of active life, some thought be given to what lies ahead. It might even be viewed as something of a dereliction of responsibility if, in the midst of memorials and recollections, there was no concern for even the immediate future and the steps that might be taken to make it more promising. In this sense it is folly to be simply fatalists who leave the future entirely to itself.

There would appear to be a few features of the coming years which are already rather evident. One of these is the fact that the provision of necessary services by the Town will become more and more of a financial burden. This is not a problem that Topsham will bear alone: all towns, especially small towns in Maine, are faced with the same dilemma. These towns without a large and growing tax base will be hard pressed to afford the schools, recreation programs and other services that larger towns can make available. To fail to provide comparable programs, however, means that the smaller towns will not be attractive places for residents, especially those with children. One aspect of this dilemma is that Topsham because of its small size cannot often establish services at an economical scale. Neither can many of its neighbors. It would seem, therefore, that in the future unavoidable pressures and economic considerations will force a greater degree of cooperation among neighboring towns, enabling them to share in and to benefit from a wide variety of joint programs and services.

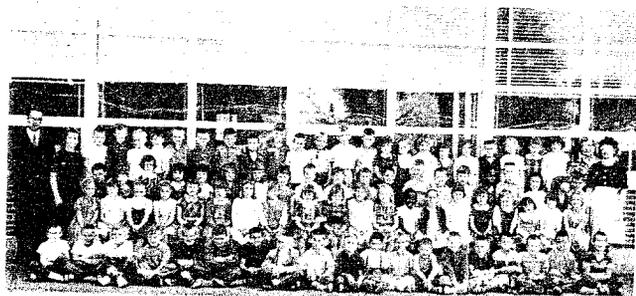
To foresee such a trend as this does not mean that the individuality of Topsham need become any less. One would not suggest, at least not on the occasion of a bicentennial, that the possibilities of a merger with neighboring communities be considered. Rather, if the

individuality of Topsham means anything at all, it must be able to be expressed in progressive steps that will insure its continuation as a vital and viable community.

One other element of change for Topsham is reasonably certain, though any precision as to exact timing would be impossible. This concerns the role in the region of military activity. The decision to locate bases in this area has been the largest recent force for change that our communities have experienced. It would be naive to assume that the dimensions of these programs will not sometime be altered. The direction of this change would seem to be towards reducing activity. To plan in advance for this is indeed difficult, though such pre-planning and thought need not be in any sense one of despair. The recent lesson of the successful readjustment efforts of Presque Isle when the adjoining base closed should be brought to mind. Actually, such changes can often become the catalyst and opportunity for more lasting and basic benefits to the community.

The gracious houses and pleasant streets of Topsham do much to impart an air of security and permanence to the community. And this heritage will continue to be very important in the future, but it is also true that the future of any community must rely to a large degree upon the efforts that its present citizens make on behalf of their society. To this extent Topsham can take a measure of satisfaction and confidence from the individual and collective programs in which its citizens are engaged. These efforts encompass a number of activities and organizations such as the School Committee, the Sewer District, the Planning Board, the Finance Committee, the Recreation Committee, and certainly the Selectmen. One can also see the fruits of community effort in the steady improvement of our Library, the Fire Department and the Police Force. Only insofar as such efforts as these are successful will Topsham citizens be able to enjoy and take heart both from the past and the present and to have some confidence in the future.

Topsham Schools



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Topsham Cemeteries

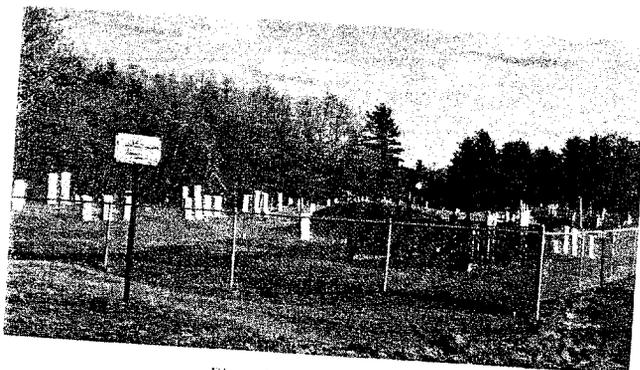
by Edwin L. Rogers

The oldest burying-ground of which there are any traces was in the vicinity of James Mustard's residence on the road to Merrymeeting Bay. There are three or four stones remaining. The earliest date given on these stones is 1752, and the latest was 1771.

I'm to this silent Grave retired,
Though once esteemed and desired;
All human ills had once a place,
And weighed justly in this breast.
All mortal griefs are now past o'er,
A broken heart can bleed no more.

The burying-ground located on the Middlesex Road at the intersection of the Cathance Road where the old First Parish Meeting-House stood is the oldest in the town of which there is any record. The town is justly proud of this

The third cemetery in town from the point of age, is the one about a mile west of the village where the first Baptist or "old yellow" meeting-house used to stand, located on the Old Lewiston Road, and now known as the Haley cemetery. The remains of John Merrill, Esquire, Captain Peletiah Haley, and other old settlers living in that portion of the town were buried there.



First Parish Cemetery

cemetery as it dates back to 1769. The land was purchased from James Hunter for three pounds. The same year the town appropriated L5 6s. 8d. "for fencing the graveyard, nine rods square, with white oak or cedar posts and good boards, with a good gate, with a lock and key, the fence to be five feet high." In recent years this cemetery has been completely renovated, every broken stone mended and reset. One of the most interesting inscriptions to be found there reads as follows:

Hic Jacent Sepulta
the remains of
PHILIP G. HOYT PHYSICIAN
who died June 24th 1790
AETATIS 36.



Roger's Cemetery

The Rogers cemetery located on the Cathance Road is the newest cemetery, incorporated in 1909, but records date back to 1855. This cemetery has been recognized by one of the leading cemetery publications in the United States in their summer edition, portraying the seven rock gardens and the lovely flowers that remain in blossom throughout the summer months.

In Memoriam

Mr. Harry W. Bailey	1873 - 1939	Catherine Lucas	
John Chonko		Ina Wilson Luce	1877 - 1956
Charles (Chub) & Anna S. Colby		M. Albion Luce	1899 - 1954
Clarence W. Colby		Maurice A. Luce	1871 - 1949
Frank A. & Wealthy Stearns Colby		Mr. Edwin W. Mallett	1861 - 1946
Mr. & Mrs. John A. Cone		Mr. Ralph A. Mallett	1892 - 1957
Mr. & Mrs. Millard E. Curtis		Mr. Percy E. Marriner	1877 - 1952
Mrs. Myrtie D. Cutler	1878 - 1945	Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Maynard	
Mr. Thomas C. Cutler	1877 - 1958	Pvt. Co. B 155th ME. Regiment	
Edith W. Davenport		William Mountford, Jr.	1842 - 1922
Arthur Carrol Edgecomb	1879 - 1959	Mr. Philip Victor Murray	1940 - 1963
Miss Betsey C. Edgecomb	1878 - 1955	Burleigh R. Ordway	
Mr. Charles P. Edgecomb	1849 - 1934	Agnes Colby Burton Perry	
Lizzie S. (His Wife)	1859 - 1932	Betty Ann Ponziani	1930 - 1947
George Irving Edgecomb	1915 - 1959	Mr. & Mrs. David Ponziani	
Mr. & Mrs. Harry C. Edgecomb		Louis Ponziani	1924 - 1937
Jessie Rackley Edgecomb	1886 - 1924	Rev. Marshall G. Powers	1865 - 1941
Pembroke Edgecomb	1885 - 1956	Sarah H. (His Wife)	1868 - 1944
Mr. Thomas Winthrop Estabrook		Carrie Campbell Rackley	1864 - 1914
Mrs. Marion M. Eves	1879 - 1957	Fred A. Rackley	1858 - 1926
Mr. Philmer Eves	1857 - 1942	Mrs. Winnefred S. Rackley	
Clifton L. Evrard		Mrs. Mabel Robinson	1876 - 1964
Henry M. Fox, Jr.		Ernest J. Small	
Henry M. Fox, Sr.		Mrs. Marcia Ward Staples	
Mr. & Mrs. Alison P. Furbish		Ardella Runrill Strout	1881 - 1961
Mr. & Mrs. Arvill Gerow		Claude Strout	1879 - 1949
Mr. Lester E. Goud	1881 - 1956	John W. Tarbox	
Mrs. Myrtle E. Grady		Lottie and John Tarbox	
Bertha Staples Graves	1886 - 1949	Mr. & Mrs. Andrew S. Tomko	
John M. Graves	1881 - 1962	Joseph O. Tondreau	1895 - 1956
William W. Graves	1881 - 1961	Converse P. & Mabel Wilson Trufant	
Clarence E. Griffing		Mr. & Mrs. Frederick H. Ward	
George C. Griffing (Grampa)		Mrs. Harold S. Ward	
Clarence M. Haley		Mr. & Mrs. Thomas J. Welner	
Clara Hall (His Wife)	1853 - 1937	Charles Wheeler	
Mr. Merrill T. Harrington	1917 - 1953	Everett Linwood Williams	1917 - 1961
C. Elroy Hennessey		Grace Hutchins Williams	1886 - 1951
Ada C. Jack	Dec. 20, 1886 - May 7, 1963	Walter M. Williams	
Arthur Jack		Maynard Wilson, Jr.	
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur B. Johnson		Mr. Samuel Wilson	
Mrs. Joanna P. Johnson		Mr. & Mrs. William J. Wilson	
Emtie E. Laifely		John & Clara Woodward	
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