

# Grantham Historical Society

www.granthamhistoricalsociety.org



Winter/Spring  
2012–2013

## NEWSLETTER



*Ken Story*

### THROUGH A CLEAR WINDOW

I don't remember when I met Bob Champagne. It was probably about ten years ago, for that's when I met his lovely wife Cathy, who was helping with the festivities during the dedication of the Reney Forest. I'd seen Cathy at a number of events in Grantham and was taken by her smile; yet I had no idea to whom she was married, and how much he had to do with her happiness and her peace.

I know I met Bob by 2006, when I finally became involved with the Grantham Historical Society. My friend, the late Allen Walker – serving as president at the time – approached me about coming aboard as vice-president. I know a compliment when I see one and was grateful to lend my meager talents to the society. In the process, I made a number of new friends, including such august Grantham residents as Mort Shea and Conrad Frey. Chief among them was a slender, grey-haired gentleman by the name of Bob.

As our friendship grew, I came to count upon Bob for many things. Bob disliked unnecessarily long meetings and made every effort to keep them short and sweet. Bob hated insensitivity and boorish behavior, and made every effort not only to avoid it but to shield those he loved from it. Bob could be frank when he thought it was necessary and on one or two occasions we disagreed strongly. Although I stood my ground, I appreciated his convictions and his willingness to say what he believed. And Bob loved to laugh. In fact, his sense of humor was unshakable. He enjoyed a good story and stroked my ego on countless occasions when I would recount something I considered funny. He told a great story as well and could

crack-up a room with one of his often self-deprecating tales. For as long as I can remember, Bob and I teased each other almost incessantly. I can still see that big smile, his head shaking from laughter.



*Bob Champagne.*

*GHS Collection*

But more than anything else, I counted upon Bob for his kindness. Bob was generous in the grandest and most expansive definition of that word. He reached out to virtually everyone, in ways big and small – from donating generously to causes in which he believed, to giving of his time to a broad assortment of volunteer work throughout the town, to inviting friends into his home for countless parties and dinners. As Cathy has noted, Bob hardly ever met a stranger, and when he did, they didn't remain strangers for long.

And yet, Bob was one of those people for whom kindness and generosity was so much more than good manners.

Bob's positivity was so innate, so natural to him that it became a lifestyle. It was how he got up in the morning, how he spent his day, how he relaxed at home – as much a part of his life as breathing.

Such people tend to live their lives quietly, without fanfare, and drawing as little attention to themselves as possible. Still, what they give to us, how they impact us, how they empower our lives with joy and light, becomes the most real, genuine thing we know, as important as the ground we walk on. With any luck we'll meet a few of these people in our lifetimes, but there will be just one or two who rise above the rest, whose depth of character elevates them to a greatness

most of us will never achieve – a true, abiding greatness, larger than fame, or wealth, or legend.

**Thanks to Karen Ryan of K.D. Appraisal Services LLC for her generous donation for this issue of the Newsletter.**

*Continued on page 2*

# GRANTHAM—FAR AFIELD

In November 2012, GHS member Marjerie Hastings of South Berwick, Maine, donated a handwritten letter from Helena Montana Territory to A.B. Currier. Excerpts are printed below. The writer and recipient, both residents of Grantham, have yet to be identified but the content of the letter was deemed worthy of sharing.

The Mullan Road mentioned in the letter was a 624 mile-long military road built in 1859-1860, connecting Fort Benton, Montana and Walla Walla, Washington and was the first wagon road to cross the Rocky Mountains, crossing the continental divide west of Helena.

Construction was headed by John Mullan, West Point graduate and a topographical engineer. During the first year that it was open, 20,000 people were estimated to have used part of the road. Mullan had campsites built at convenient stops along the road. Sections of the road are still found in Montana, Idaho and Washington, some having been placed on the US National Register of Historic Places. In his later years, Mullan wrote a travel guide for miners and travelers heading to the northwestern territories.

—Pat Andrews

*Helena Montana Territory  
December 2, 1866*

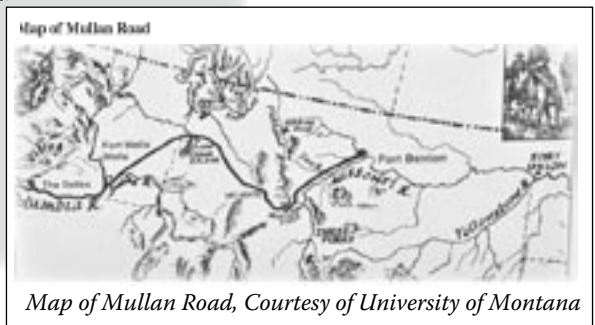
*Dear Brother,*

*I am situated 12 miles from Helena on Greenhorn Creek, 3 miles only from the summit of the Rocky Mountains, near what is called the northern pass, on the military road made by Mullen a few years hence from Fort Benton to Walla Walla, Oregon. This summit of the Rocky Mountains is the great dividing ridge between the Atlantic and Pacific states and territories. It is wonderful to stand on this ridge and see the head waters of the Columbia and Missouri rivers at the same time and almost under our feet.*

*I did not find this country as rich as I expected. I have made nothing as yet. I have got my winter's provisions and have 7 dollars left to buy tobacco [with] an article here about 30 dollars a year, you will say I am extravagant I fear and you will hit it very near. My health is good at present which makes it very pleasant, and sometimes I have a pheasant, for dinner as a present. When we have no better fare, we go out and kill a hare, when we want a dainty fixing, we kill a prairie chicken. If there is nothing in the house, we then step out and catch a grouse. Sometimes we're in a habit of going out to catch a rabbit, if of starving there is a fear then we shoot a black-tailed deer, and should we fill of hen and goose, then we'll snare a good fat moose, but of all the dainty fare, give me the rump of a grizzly bear. Then as other last and early hope, I'll try to catch an antelope. Then, if I, as you, lived near old Sutton, kill a mountain sheep and have some mutton. Now I've told you all about the game that's here except the trout, and they are so thick in the brooks they can be caught with little hooks.*

*I intend to stay here this winter and I will try & find a place to make my pile if I do not next season, and there is no prospect ahead, if I can raise money enough in the fall go down the Missouri to Iowa and settle there for the remainder of my life....*

*Your brother,  
A.B. Currier*



## BOB CHAMPAGNE *Continued from page 1*

In Arthur Miller's classic play *Death Of A Salesman*, Willie Loman's wife defends him in front of their sons when she believes they've spoken disrespectfully of him and his life. She notes his accomplishments,

however humble, and says "...attention must be paid...attention must be finally paid to such a person."

Bob had many admirers and his life was no tragedy, but the sentiment

remains appropriate. I loved Bob. He was a dear, trusted friend. His death took a long time to hit me, to seem real. I'll cry now. Attention must be paid.

—Ken Story

This story was written for the **Community Builder**, edited and published by Rev. Ned Witham who was the force behind the Community House built in the 1920s and comes from the Historical Society's archives. The author is Gladys E. Durling who later married Allen Walker (Senior). Dates of her teaching career could not be located but in 1931 she was one of three women who constituted the Grantham school board. This story was published in Volume 1, No.4 of the **Community Builder** in May 1926.

## THE FRIENDLY TOWN

The other morning, a bright sunny one, with whiffs of spring breezes running up and down our street, who should come ambling into our dooryard but the Editor of this little, big paper. Ten o'clock in the morning, mind you, and son and I in the midst of high painting operations. We were a sight. Nevertheless, we drew open the door and flourished our caller in with all the grace at our command.

"Good morning" said we.

And "good morning" replied he.

"Won't you sit down?" asked we.

"With pleasure" said he and as is the way with busy men came straight to the object of his call.

"I have come to ask if you will write a little something for our paper", he said, and looked us searchingly in the face.

"If I can help you any at all, I will be happy to," I replied and we fell to talking of the little things already published; as for instance, Gordon Currier's bright "Do You Know?" of a previous issue, and the interesting history of the town that the eighth grade are piecing together. (To be published in a future GHS newsletter.) And finally came to pondering upon the choice of a topic for my own contribution.



Allen Walker with mother Gladys and Grandmother  
GHS Archives

Editor Witham had the wit to suggest "Something to talk up Grantham." "Fine," I said, "we know our little town so well I believe we should put it before the others."

And so I will attempt to tell a small part, indeed, of what to me is the outstanding characteristic of the life of the town. I will spell it with a capital F and say that it is Friendliness. For the town is one of homes,

little snug unpretentious homes, and those who live in the homes are Neighbors, this with a capital N.

A few years back, a shivering school ma'am splashing up from Newport, sitting very straight in the rear of Josh Dunbar's Ford. The time was the first cold, muddy time of early April. The north road out of Newport was a barren puddle-strewn stretch, lined on either side by soggy meadows likewise barren. The rolling hills, heavily wooded, gave some promise of beauty later, but now were one with the general damp melancholy.



Ira Walker store

GHS Archives

The school ma'am's teeth chattered and her nose was blue and cold. The wind whined down from off Croydon Mountain and blew her coat collar flappingly about. She clutched at this with cold hands, and as her new spring bonnet tugged to get away, she reached anxiously for that. Altogether a very apprehensive time, and I didn't enjoy it a bit for this was my initial entry into Grantham. I was destined to try a hand at ruling the handful of children who made up the North Grantham School and leaving the train at Newport had embarked northward via the Grantham stage which chanced to be Josh's trusty flivver.

We stopped for breath at Croydon Flat, and again at Croydon proper or Coniston, as Winston Churchill\* has it. Finally we came to Grantham's straight maple-lined main street and rolled to a stop before Ira Walker's General Store, not to mention post office. Here I had some opportunity to gaze about me, with cold, bleary eyes, while Josh carried the bags of mail within.

The Sugar River winds thru the midst of the town, and then it was at its highest, and foamed and tossed grandly under the bridge, around a bend and importantly on its way. It is a leaping lively river and well earns its way in the world, for it has been turning mill wheels for these many years and I believe will still be gayly at it, when the

\*Winston Churchill—American author, not UK statesman

# THE EAST GRANTHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

The building of the Christian Baptist Church in East Grantham in 1840 was bracketed by the construction of the Methodist churches at Four Corners and Dunbar Hill in the 1820s and the construction of the North Grantham church in the 1850s. The first Baptist church in New Hampshire was established in 1750 in

Newton, NH on the Massachusetts border. In our area, Baptist churches were organized in Lebanon, Croydon, Newport and Plainfield between 1771 and 1790. By 1840, there were 9557 members in 103 New Hampshire Baptist churches. Therefore, the new Grantham Baptist church was organized at a time when state-wide membership was flourishing. Its site was near the current Cote-Reney lumber mill. An article in a 1939 Echoes magazine about Stockertown noted that the Baptist Church "was the only one for many miles around that boasted a bell and cushions in the hard pine straight back pews." No photographs are known of the building.

The archives of the Historical Society hold little information on the Grantham Christian Baptist Society, as it was known. No membership lists exist nor are names of pastors easily found. Nineteenth-century histories of Grantham note the following religious leaders: Rev. Mr. Palmer, Rev. J.W. Osborne, and Rev. Clark Symonds. Rev. Osborne sometimes preached at the North Grantham Methodist Church when no one else was available. When no pastor was

appointed to the Baptist Church, Rev. John Young of Sunapee served that congregation. No other information about any of these men is known.

Newton Clough, a Grantham

resident, farmed land on Barton Road. *Harvest Home*, the North Grantham church's newsletter, in 1883 noted that he was the minister



PHOTO BY RAE TOBER

"X" marks the spot—East Grantham church site

of the Baptist Church. According to the article on Stockertown in the Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee Echoes of December 1939, Mr. Clough "could say a prayer nine miles long and preach a sermon that would last from sunrise to sunset. For obvious reasons, he was never employed at the church in the valley – people were getting modern even in those days." It is not known whether he preached elsewhere after the Baptist Church closed in the 1870s.

## A BOY'S RECOLLECTIONS

Albert Flanders (1852 - ?) grew up in Grantham. His oral history, probably done in the 1930s or 1940s, documents his early years when he sometimes lived with other Grantham families while working for them. He recalled going to church in East Grantham on his first Sunday with the Richard Clough family. There were two sermons separated by Sunday School. "Mr. Clough was the janitor of the church which was not far from his home. He would go over and ring the first bell from the vestibule. Then come home and get ready

for church. When the proper time came, he would go over and ring the last bell from a room over the vestibule. There was a little crazy woman who was always at church. One Sunday when Mr. Clough attempted to ring the second bell he found he couldn't - someone had hold of the rope in the vestibule. He mistrusted who it was so he pulled up on the rope till she was pulled to the ceiling and had to let go and drop to the floor. She didn't try that trick again."

## FINANCES

A brief view of the financial affairs of the church is afforded by records in our Horton Farm collection. On January 1, 1865, Joseph Goss, a member of the family who owned the Horton Farm, signed his will, bequeathing \$500.00 to the "Christian Society and pew-holders, the interest to be expended in the repairs of the East Meetinghouse providing the Society give twenty dollars or cash for the same purpose; if not needed, to go to the above Society for preaching;

if this proposition is not fulfilled by the Society then this is to go back to my heirs." He also gave his wife, Susan, "one pew in the Grantham East meeting house No. 40 during her lifetime." As was done by the Methodist churches in town and churches elsewhere, pews were sold to families as a way to raise money.

By 1870, the church had not carried out the proposition for use of the funds as required. The money (\$500.00) reverted to the Goss heirs, Benjamin F., Lewis H. and Joseph H. Goss. (Signed agreement January 11, 1870.)



Original church door  
GHS Archives

# BAPTIST CHURCH *Continued from page 5*

In March 1870, Benjamin F. Goss received his share of the bequest (\$167.66) that had been willed to the First Christian Society by his father, Joseph Goss. The money was returned "in consequence of the society neglecting to fulfill the proposition contained in the will..."

## END OF THE CHURCH

The inability of the Baptist Society to raise matching funds for repairs and preaching between 1865 and 1870 probably foretold the demise of the church organization. By December 1883, the

*Harvest Home* newsletter of the North Grantham Church (Methodist) stated that "the Church Building of a Christian Society which formerly worshipped in it at East Grantham is now unused."

Almost ten years later, the Republic-Champion of Claremont, at the

request of Joseph H. Goss, printed an advertisement (costing \$1.50) requesting a meeting of the proprietors of the Christian meeting House in October 1892. The same month, 30 posters were printed, costing \$2.00, to advertise the sale of the meeting house. The *Argus* of May 22, 1896 noted that "D.L. Dion has bought the old meetinghouse at East Grantham, is taking



*Dion's Blacksmith Shop .*

*GHS Archives*

Springfield Road (now Route 114) and the Sugar River: "A blacksmith shop of some form stood here as early as the mid 1850s. It passed through several owners in the years thereafter,

among whom was Arthur Spiller, who built the wooden dam that stood just up the river from the bridge for the purpose of providing water power to the shop to run machinery. Joseph H. Goss owned the shop in 1890 when he sold it to Edwin LeDion (or Edwin L. Dion) for \$150.00." Although no documentation can be found, it seems likely that materials from the Baptist Church, purchased in 1896, went into an addition to the shop. Allen Walker, deceased president emeritus of the Grantham Historical Society, always understood that some of the doors of his house at 52 Route 114 came from the old Baptist church. These doors are possibly the only remains of that building now in existence in Grantham.

Ken Story, GHS president, led a walking tour of Grantham village in 2007. In preparation, he wrote a description of individual buildings, noting the history of



*1892 Map of Grantham*

*GHS Archives*

a building that stood north of the

—Pat Andrews



*Newton Clough homestead, Barton Road*

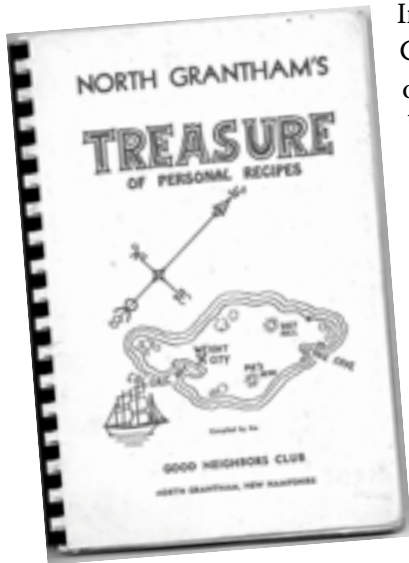
## NEWTON CLOUGH'S BARN & HOMESTEAD



Newton Clough's farm on Barton Road is seen on 1892 map of Grantham. By the early 1900s, his barn was moved from East Grantham to the Sherman Farm (near Bouldervale Farm) where it was used as a slaughter house for Henry Sherman's meat business. The GHS Archives has a colored pencil drawing of this barn by Dennis Howard, called *The Neighbor Barn* , done before 1975 when the barn burned.

# NEWS FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## A RECENT FIND FROM OUR COLLECTIONS



In a recent perusal of our file on the North Grantham School, we found a first edition of the North Grantham cookbook, created by the Good Neighbors Club of North Grantham, published in 1952 as a fundraiser. We already had a copy of a second printed edition and despaired of ever finding the original publication. It is called "North Grantham's Treasure of Personal Recipes". The cover and section dividers are clever drawings of "treasure maps". (See photo) There is no indication as to who the artist might have been. If anyone who might have been involved in the creation of the cookbook knows who the

artist was, please let us know so that person can be acknowledged in our Collections records.

## THANKS TO.....

~ all who have a hand in the production of this newsletter, dating back to 2006;

~ Ken Story and Christina McKahan who, in spite of working full-time, provide major volunteer effort for GHS;

~ Renee Gustafson who manages our recycling and publicity; and especially:

~ Mike and Mia Clavin, Rum Brook Market for so generously agreeing to sell our 2013 calendars last fall. Our great success was due to their participation;

~ and our members whose financial support allows GHS to carry on our numerous activities.

## FRIENDLY *Continued from page 3*

rest of us have departed its valleys forever.

I had not long to wait here, for it appeared another passenger was going northward so Josh kindly offered to do his best getting us thru the muddy road. Here was Friendliness come to greet me, for another perhaps would have said, "I don't know anything about that road and I'm not going to take a chance on it." Instead of which we ploughed on and on, climbing hills and running in oozy ruts, that sunk us up to the hubs. At the top of the hill, a gale met us and again I clutched feverishly at my hat and rolling an eye sidewise, per-



*N. Grantham School GHS Archives*

ceived an amazing sign upon a house beside of the road. "Boats to Let" it said and as we went careening on I wondered what use people found for boats here. Later I learned of Eastman Pond which hid itself in a balsam-fringed valley just over the hill.

We passed my faded white schoolhouse, sitting complacently by the road, not sunning, oh no! Catching occasional spatters of mud, rather! Dusk was settling itself around and in its grey light, with the wind still hotly pursuing, we drove up into the yard of a little pale green

house.

Here again was Friendliness. A bright-faced woman came out thru the lamplit door. With her came smells of wood fire and smells of appetizing food. I was hungry and cold and tired and I don't know when I have been any more glad to arrive at a



*North Grantham School, Disbanded 1907*

place.

From that time on, I found only Friendliness. While Newport sings its sunshine song, let us sing of our own, about the Friendly town.

—Gladys D. Walker

# NEWS FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Annual Meeting – Thursday, May 23, 2013** at Town Hall (lower level)

**6:00 PM Potluck supper**

**6:45 PM Dessert and coffee with brief business meeting**

**7:00 PM Program – A Walk Back in Time: The Secrets of Cellar**

**Holes, Speaker: Adair Mulligan:** Northern New England is full of reminders of past lives; stone walls, old foundations, A century old lilac struggling to survive as the forest reclaims the once sunny dooryard. What forces shaped settlement, and later abandonment, of these places? Adair Mulligan explores the rich story to be discovered in what remains behind. She is an author of several books and contributor to a number of others on New Hampshire and the Connecticut River Valley. She is the executive director of the Hanover Conservancy and for 20 years was the Conservation Director of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions. *From NH Humanities Council Calendar, March 2013*



J. Hiram Cellar hole 5-23-09

RENEE GUSTAFSON

**Thursday, October 10, 2013**

Charles W. Wibel of Wolfeboro, NH will present a program entitled “DON’T THROW OUT THE PAPER!”, an informative look at what ephemera should be kept and what can be discarded.

## WE ARE LOOKING FOR...

- We are in need of 100% cotton sheets to cover the large items in our collections that will not fit in archival boxes. If you have any that you would like to donate, please drop off on a Friday afternoon or call and we will pick up.
- Information on Tompson & Rutters, publishers, based in Grantham in the 1980s
- Very early photos of Grantham when photography was first available

## OTHER NEWS....

Dwight Wilder and Pat Andrews attended a workshop in November, 2012, put on by the New Hampshire Historical Society on the management of collections for small museums and historical societies. At the end of the day, we gave GHS a B+. This is a reflection of past and present volunteers who have worked many hours on both the Town Archives and the Historical Society collections as well as the building to create a safe environment for our town records and Historical artifacts.

We are looking for a volunteer who would be willing to manage the home page on our website ([www.grantham-historicalsociety.org](http://www.grantham-historicalsociety.org)). It needs to be kept current with information about programs and projects, interesting photos and bits of Grantham history. Please contact a member of the Board if you have a few free hours.

Theodore Roosevelt (AKA Dwight Wilder) will be visiting Eastman in August 2013.

## 2013 CALENDARS

We have a few 2013 calendars with Grantham historical scenes still available. You may pick one up on Friday afternoons between 1 and 4 PM or contact us and we will get one to you.

## It is *better* to give.

Your membership fees and end-of-year donations will help the Grantham Historical Society develop programs, exhibits and educational materials for anyone interested in the history of Grantham. All donations are tax-deductible and include receipt of our newsletter.

Please mail to:  
Grantham Historical Society  
P.O. Box 540  
Grantham, NH 03753

*Thank you for your support.*

## Membership and Annual Dues Form

Grantham Historical Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK ONE:**

New member  Annual renewal

**Annual dues: (check one)**

Individual (\$15.)

Family (\$25.)

Patron/business/institution (\$50.)

**Extra contribution** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total check amount** \_\_\_\_\_

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013

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*The Grantham Historical Society and Town Archives are open on Friday afternoons from 1:00-4:00 PM or by appointment.*

*The building is located at 34 Dunbar Hill Road.*

Email: [granthamhistory@gmail.com](mailto:granthamhistory@gmail.com)

Website: [www.granthamhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.granthamhistoricalsociety.org)



Lily Pond, Grantham, N.H.

## NEW GHS NOTECARDS

Renee Gustafson has created another set of 6 notecards with photos of the ponds of Grantham (Lily, Eastman, Leavitt, Miller, Butternut and Anderson) are available from GHS. The set with historical photos are also still available. Renee is working on a map describing hikes to each of the ponds which should be available shortly.

## 2013 CALENDAR

**Thursday, May 23, 2013**

GHS ANNUAL MEETING  
Program "A Walk Back in Time"  
Town Hall (lower level)  
Potluck supper at 6:00 PM  
Meeting & program at 7:00 PM

**Thursday, October 10, 2013**

Charles Wibel: "Don't Throw  
Out the Paper!"

