

THE GEORGETOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



From the President

The Trails and Sails / Georgetown Days weekends were well attended and we at the Georgetown Historical Society seem to be keeping pace with our economy and operating in the black. It shows the power of teamwork and of diversifying our energies. Thank you for the heroic efforts of Terry Hart, Chris Comiskey, Steve Keene, Louise Richardson, Ralph Chouinard, Sylvia West, Barry Crawford, Ed DesJardins, Joe and Bev Knapp along with all the board, volunteers and GHS members who worked so hard to make Brocklebank Museum improvements and tours a success. Chris has done a fine job with her tours of both Union and Harmony Cemeteries. Several appreciative people went on both the cemetery tours and the Brocklebank/School No. 3 tour and expressed interest in our work.



It was great to see the “new” *rushlight* (left) additions to the collection, courtesy of the Spauldings. The Spaulding family attended the tour on Sunday during Trails and Sails / Georgetown Days weekend in order to see the rushlights restored to their former glory on the Tavern Room hearth. We have also re-hung our collection of firearms including the Baker-Adams Brown Bess flintlock musket, two Civil

War percussion muskets and we have refined the display of other items. A Georgetown Post 108 GAR hat has been donated to the Society and is also now on display.

Another fine piece of Civil war memorabilia on display, the *Private Samuel Clark carved wooden box* (below)— complete with a photo of its maker, is on display.



It was made by Clark when he was incarcerated at Libby Prison. Clark was later transferred to Andersonville, another notorious Confederate prison,

and weighed only ninety pounds when he was liberated. The box is displayed with his *discharge papers* (below) and certificate of appreciation from the State of New Hampshire.

Clark’s descendant who lived in Georgetown donated it to the Society



We can fine tune things with new events and exhibits with potential Civil War Sesqui-Centennial (150th anniversary) topics for next year and on through 2015.

In fact Georgetown veterans, dating as far back as Capt. Samuel Brocklebank in 1676, would make a great theme beginning this Labor Day. There seems to be lots of interest in the potential for Civil War 150th event(s) incorporat-

ing items of note from the GAR Post 108 and other artifacts in the collection. We might also begin a project to publish something on Georgetown’s veterans. Our books and publications, including the website, are a great way to get people interested - I now have an almost complete collection myself. Congratulations to everyone on a successful series of programs.

Looking forward to a Fall and Spring of new events.

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Rick Detwiller, GHS President

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Curators Corner By Steve Keene

GHS often becomes aware of artifacts that would be of great general interest to the membership and museum visitors, except that the owners are often reluctant to part with their special items. To solve this issue, GHS has what is called a “*Digital Archive Agreement*”, which allows people to keep their treasures, but still share them with interested history buffs by letting us photograph, scan, copy or transcribe them and use those digital captures, while the originals are returned home “where they belong.” Recent example of it’s use: GHS transcribed the Civil War era diaries of Susan and Henry Nelson, as shown in the Jan 2010 newsletter. Also, I will soon be presenting an agreement to the Historic Commission that will clarify the society’s right to photograph an album, located in school-house #3. It’s of former Georgetown teacher Ruth Brown’s collection of Perley graduation photos (with names!) from 1922 - 1939. Ms. Brown spent forty plus years teaching in Georgetown. Her administrator presented the collection to the Historical Commission. This agreement will place this valuable historical record in the data base and broaden its availability. We hope you will consider sharing your keepsakes of Georgetown or family history through the Digital Archive Agreement process. Photos of school classes with persons identified are eagerly sought. Originals will remain in your possession. You can contact us at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com if you are interested.

G.A.R. Post 108 officers hat By Steve Keene

GHS recently added to its collection, a G.A.R. Post 108 officers hat. Post 108 was Georgetown’s Everett Peabody Post of The Grand Army of the Republic. The hat’s donor, Eric Boothroyd, now of Maine, as a boy in Wenham first saw the hat at his uncle’s farm on Wethersfield St., Rowley, MA. Years later he became active in The Sons of Union Veterans. To our great fortune, he too wanted the hat back “where it belongs”, and it is now proudly on display at the museum.



*WWII D-Day Veteran,
Rollo Richardson
By Louise Richardson*

When I turned 18, my father, Rollo A. Richardson, shared how he came to know of my birth. He was a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army Artillery during WW II. After going through the Invasion of Normandy on Utah Beach, and then several more campaigns, my father wrote of receiving a letter from my Mother, Thelma L. Richardson, when he was in the thick of the Battle of the Bulge. I have summarized it as follows: He carried the letter for days on end, knowing that it contained news of the birth of his child, but he could not open it because of intense combat during the day and no lights allowed at night (not even a flashlight to read a letter). It was during a heavy blizzard that he and other US soldiers were buried deep under snow in their sleeping bags at night that my father dared press on his flashlight to open the letter and read of my birth, "a baby girl, named Louise Ann, who had dark hair just like his". He told me that his first thought was that he was thankful that "he left something on this earth" as he did not expect to live and return home. How lucky our family was because he did return, and I grew up with 'Dad'."

Rushlights

By Steve Keene

In 1966 when the society was only four years old the Haverhill Gazette published an article about a magnificent collection of wrought iron rushlights at the home (since 1931) of Everett A. and Mary Spaulding of 108 E. Main St. By the early 1970's the Spaulding heirs, Everett "Bud" Spaulding, his sister Betty, and brother Arthur, jointly, with the historical society, operated that house as a museum. The society's articles of association and the desires of the Spaulding family each had "found a museum" indelibly on their minds. In 1975 the Spauldings graciously sold the museum to the society, but, alas, the rush lamps left with the previous occupants.

That is until September 15, 2010 when my phone rang. "Bud" after confirming I was curator, asked if I remembered the rush lamps from the hearth. At that moment my heart went pity pat and when he said he wanted to see them returned to ... I think we both completed the thought, simultaneously, "where they belong." Here they are taking their bow.



Georgetown Soldiers Who Gave the Ultimate Sacrifice

Contributors: Louise Richardson, Rick Detwiller and Chris Comiskey

Corporal John Burden Weston - Civil War Veteran. There is an engraved description on a burial monument in Union Cemetery of his parents, Flint and Caroline Hardy Weston: *"John B. Weston, born July 4, 1837, enlisted Apr. 19 1861 in 3d Battalion Rifles MVM [Massachusetts Volunteer Militia]. Reenlisted in Co. B 1st Mass Cavalry. Killed in a cavalry charge on the Rapidan, Va, Nov. 27 1863. Aged 26. Buried at New Hope Church, Va."* Cpl. Weston, enlisting just after the firing on Fort Sumter, was young, energetic, and caught in his patriotic duty; here are some of his family letter excerpts:

~ *"My respects to all the folks I like sogering first-rate" (1861).*

~ *"We built up a good rousing fire and dried ourself and got some hot coffee and hardtack and had the privilege of laying inside a house a rarity I have not indulged in since we left Boston" (1862).*

~ *"When they begin to talk of draft there are some of the rich men or their sons that are suddenly taken with a violent burst of patriotism and if they can get a comish [commission] they will go to war if not they will flee their country or buy a substitute. Our heads are not so thick out here as not to see it (1863).*

~ *"I should like to have you send some pepper as you did before both black and red we can't get it here" (1863).*

~ *"... but I had not got my carbine from my shoulder when I was hit and my horse was riddled with pistol shots and began to stagger ..." (undated letter).*

~ *"... The Reg has seen hard times this summer [they] have been into a number of engagements since the Aldie [VA] fight I miss a great many of the boys that have been killed" (1863).*

~ And, on September 25, 1863, two months before he was killed -- to his Mother: *"... now dont think or worry about me anymore than you can help for I feel as safe in going back as I did coming home a person has got his life to live no matter where he is"*

(Continued on page 4)

Georgetown Soldiers Who Gave The Ultimate Sacrifice (continued)

Captain Samuel Brocklebank, King Philip's War.

Honored on a monument located in Sudbury, MA.

"This monument is erected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the town of Sudbury in grateful remembrance of the services and sufferings of the founders of the state: and especially in honor of Capt. S. Wadsworth of Milton, *Capt Brocklebank of Rowley*, Lieut. Sharp of Brookline, and twenty six others, men of their command, who fell near this spot on the 18th of April 1676 while defending the frontier settlements against allied Indian forces of Philip of Pokanoket. 1852"

Retrieved from <http://www.jcbwalsh.com/tag/monument/>

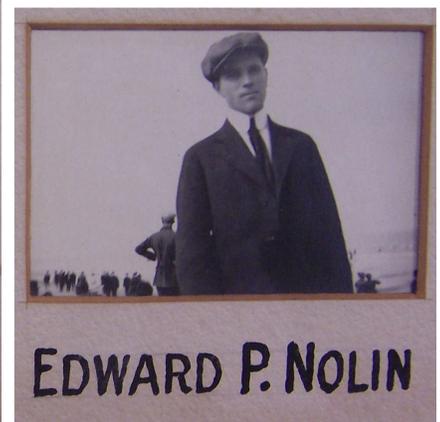
Photographed by James Walsh



Bryant A. Browne, Rene J. Gagnon, Harry L. Murch, Edward P. Nolin, Joseph H. Tidd - World War I.

On April 6, 1917, war was declared with Germany. Georgetown boys immediately began to enlist, and it was not long before they were representing the town in nearly every branch of the service. They were fighting with the infantry on the fields of France; they were on the great war ships in the navy; they were in the U. S. Marine Corps; they were in the base hospitals of the medical department; they were in the lumber camps of the forestry department; they were in the air service, and they were training in the camps in this county to be ready if needed. Ninety-seven boys from this town were enrolled, and of this number ten were commissioned officers. Five of these boys never came home, two died in hospitals and three were killed in action.

(From "Municipal History of Essex County," by Benjamin F. Arrington, published in 1922)



What's New at GHS?

▶▶ Annual Meeting Dec 1, 2010, 7pm—Georgetown Library

At the recent well-attended GHS annual business meeting, guests enjoyed a fascinating presentation by Reverend Bill Boylan, of Byfield Parish, who explained the historical influence Byfield Parish likely had on President Abraham Lincoln's decision to push forward with the Emancipation Proclamation.

Additionally, the 2011 *Board of Directors* were announced for the upcoming calendar year: Congratulations!
Officers: GHS President—*Chris Comiskey*, Vice President—*Terrance Hart*, Curator—*Steven Keene*, Secretary—*Sylvia West*, Treasurer—*Barry Crawford*.

Board of Directors: *Louise Richardson, Ralph Chouinard, Ed Des Jardins, Chuck Keilty, Rick Detwiler*

▶▶ Looking for Civil War items

In 2011, our country will be observing the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War. The Georgetown MA Historical Society is planning a special display at the Brocklebank Museum to honor those from our town who served, and to better understand the lives of those who remained here at home. We are looking for the public's help in collecting items pertaining to Georgetown during the Civil War. Of particular interest are:

Letters to and from Georgetown Civil War Soldiers

Diaries of Georgetown soldiers or residents during the War

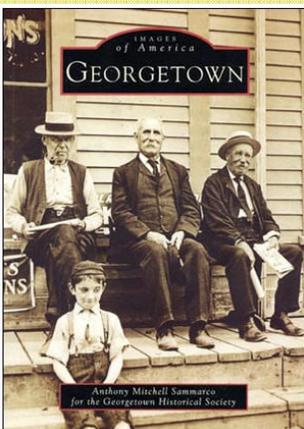
Photos of Georgetown Civil War soldiers

Civil War artifacts

If you have any items that you are willing to loan or donate, or if you would like to help in any way, please contact GHS at info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com. Any letters or diaries chosen for the display will be transcribed

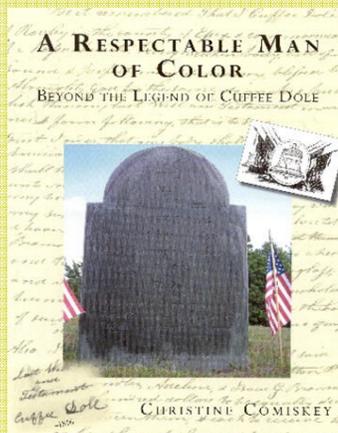
Do Some Christmas Shopping Online at www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com

Images of Georgetown



\$21.00 + SH

Cuffee Dole

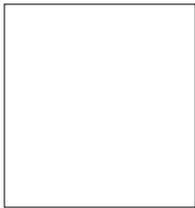


\$16.50 + SH

Postcards



\$3.50 + SH



The Georgetown Historical Society
P.O. Box 376
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Georgetown Historical Society

2011 Officers

President: Chris Comiskey

V. Pres: Terrance Hart

Curator: Stephen Keene

Secretary: Sylvia West

Treasurer: Barry Crawford

Board of Directors

Ralph Chouinard

Ed Des Jardins

Charles Keilty

Louise Richardson

Frederic Detwiller



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- VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.georgetownhistoricalsociety.com to see more information about GHS and upcoming events.
- EMAIL US info@georgetownhistoricalsociety.com with your interesting stories of Georgetown or questions about GHS.