



The Hourglass

CCXXVI NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY December 2013
www.Northboroughhistsoc.org NHS1906@verizon.net

Some Events Before 1880

S Cyrus Felton was a farmer and genealogist who made *A Record of Upwards of Six Hundred Events* in the Marlborough area. The title of this 1880 compilation is longer, containing “Consisting in Part of Accidents, Benefactors, Centenarians . . .” and, you guessed it, right on through the alphabet. Like many other alphabetizers, he had some trouble at the end. The last three captions are “Xplosions, Yore-Times, Zero-Days.” Here are some of the Northborough entries. My own comments are in brackets.

Feb. 22, 1879 Died at Northborough. Gill Valentine, Esq., aged 90 years. He was formerly a land surveyor, postmaster and deputy sheriff at Northborough. For fifteen years he was auditor for the city of Worcester. [He also made the first competent map of Northborough in 1830 and from 1836 to 1844 manufactured baby carriages on the south side of Main Street east of the Assabet.]

Mar. 7, 1706 The Boston and Worcester Turnpike Company Incorporated. It passed through Framingham, Southborough, Westborough, corner of Northborough and Shrewsbury. [In other words the path of the eventual Route 9.]

May 1, 1867 The Agricultural Branch Railroad [has passed away]. The name changed to Boston, Clinton & Fitchburg Railroad Co.

May 6, 1851 Accident at Northborough. Henry L. Southwick was badly injured by a premature explosion while blasting rocks. He died the same month, [leaving a wife and two children under the age of five. He was a comb-maker by trade.]

June 14, 1874 Fire in Northborough. The rubber mills of Charles H. Hall were destroyed. Loss [\$]3000, partly covered by insurance.

Aug. 18, 1707 Miss Mary Goodnow, aged 35 years, daughter of Samuel Goodnow, Sen., of Marlborough, was killed and scalped by Indians in Marlborough, near Stirrup Brook. Her body was found and interred about 40 rods south of the old post road and on the east side of Stirrup Brook.

Almost 100 years afterwards, in June, 1807, the territory east of Stirrup Brook . . . was set off from Marlborough and annexed to Northborough.

Sept. 26, 1769 Old-fashioned donation party. Before this date the women of Northborough spun at their houses and carried to Rev. Mr. Whitney’s house one day 172 skeins of 2233 knots, and a few other articles, for their pastor. The number of women was 45.

Oct. 17, 1798 Sudden death. Dr. Stephen Ball, Sen. of Northborough, while standing in his room, fell, instantly dead of apoplexy. Aged 63 years.

Nov. 28, 1860 Dedication at Northborough. The new Baptist meeting house was dedicated. Sermon by the pastor, Rev. Silas Ripley. [This building is of course our headquarters.]

Dec. 18, 1865 Golden wedding. Mr. and Mrs. John Glazier’s golden wedding; it was said the first public celebration of the kind in Northborough. He had been in that town 25 years, and known as an honest miller. Among the presents two black walnut chairs, a gold mounted cane, and for Mrs. Glazier a solid gold thimble and some money. [He was “honest,” apparently not one of the millers who rested his elbow on the scales when weighing his customers’ flour.]

Dec. 21, 1871 Dr. Stephen Ball of Boston died, where he had practiced medicine for years. He formerly practiced in Northborough, his native town, where his father and grandfather, of the same full name, practiced medicine many years. [See Oct. 17, above.]

Dec. 28 1865 Fire in Northborough. A brick school house in the east district, near Stephen Howe’s place, was burnt in the evening. The books and maps were all saved. The fire was first discovered in the wood house. [Another account of this fire, on Maple Street almost opposite the end of Ridge Road, suggests that the building had been erected before Stephen Howe’s career as a brick maker began in the 1830s. He originally lived and made bricks on Main Street a little east of the present driveway to Algonquin Regional. By 1865 he had re-

tired, moved to what is today 101 Maple Street, which is a brick house, the bricks probably from his brickyard. By then his son had taken over the business. It seems doubtful that the building described by Felton was made of bricks.

Bob Ellis, Historian

Curator's News

Although the museum is closed for the winter, we still have visitors. A class from Algonquin Regional High School, with their aides, toured the museum last Tuesday. They were particularly interested in the war displays and the exhibit of musical instruments. They also enjoyed the process of researching in the archive using diaries, letters, tax and vital records, paintings and photos of houses.

I am still transcribing a few of the journals in our collection. I have completed Hezekiah Crosby's, a market farmer who lived on South Street in the mid to late 1800s and two from his youngest daughter. Although most entries are about the weather and the continuous flow of visitors and day-to-day farming activities, one gets a pleasant feeling of how slow and enjoyable life must have been. There was caring and helping out one's neighbors in times of sickness and borrowing and lending of equipment, laborers, farm animals and wagons and sleighs. For entertainment there was an occasional lecture, dance, town meeting, auction and weekly church attendances.

Ellen Racine, Curator

Friends: In addition to your membership dues, please consider making a year end donation/contribution to the Historical Society. Any support would be greatly appreciated to help offset our growing expenses. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Kent's Current Events

Railroad Accident

Nov. 16, 1914.

When the midnight train from Boston last night reached Talbot it ran into a train of coal cars seriously damaging the engine. No one was injured, but all on the train were greatly inconvenienced by the delay. The train was due in Northborough at one o'clock, but it did not arrive until five o'clock. There is a spur track at Talbot Station for the accommodation of the Hospital coal which arrives at that point in large quantities. This spur track is a little higher than the main track. The cars standing on this track in some way got started and they rolled down to the switch. When the passenger train came along it smashed into these empty cars. It was by great good luck that the engineer and fireman were not seriously injured. It was raining hard at the time.

Membership Northborough Historical Society

Red square on your label indicates that it is time to renew your membership.

Membership Dues:

Regular \$15.00; Student and Seniors (65 and over) \$10.00; Family \$35.00; and Life \$250.00.

Dues should be sent to

Judy Bissett

300 Ball St.

Northborough, MA 01532

Checks should be made out to the
Northborough Historical Society



Northborough Historical Society
300 Ball Street
Northborough, MA 01532
Change service requested

