



THE HOURGLASS

NORTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Northborough Historical Society
www.NorthboroughHistoricalSociety.org

March 2015

The next meeting of the Northborough Historical Society will take place March 27, when Mark Bodanza will present:



"Johnny Appleseed and Frances Drake: Folklore & Obscurity in History," An

author, historian and trial lawyer, Mark Bodanza has released his fourth non-fiction book, *"Resolve and Rescue,"* moving away from his familiar topic of sports to delve into 1800s abolitionist and feminist Frances Drake. What about Johnny Appleseed? Come and find out the connection between Frances Drake and this legendary American.

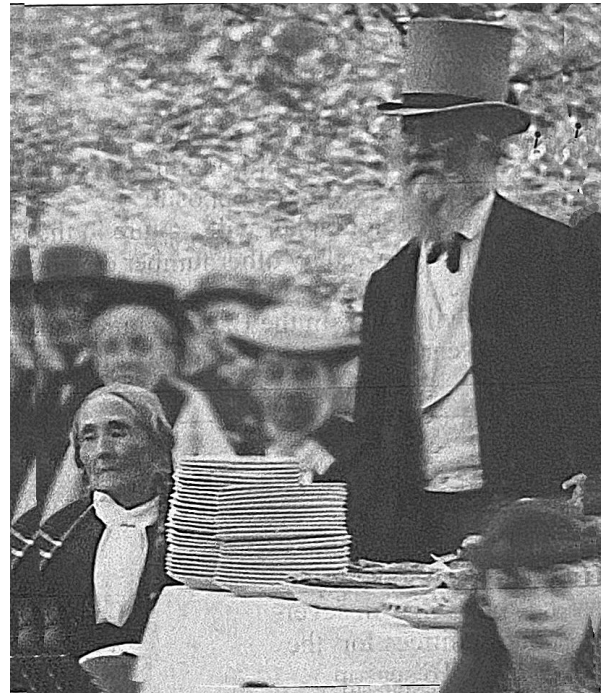
connection between Frances Drake and this legendary American.

Northborough will celebrate its **250th Anniversary** in 2016!



Be a part of the excitement and planning by joining the Historical Society's 250th Committee. Contact Paul Derosier at 508-393-8672 or stude38paul@yahoo.com.

Dues are Due: If you have not yet renewed your membership for the 2014-15 season, please stop by the welcome table at the next meeting, or mail a check to: *Membership Secretary, Northborough Historical Society, PO Box 661, Northborough, MA 01532.*



Frances Drake (sitting) and her husband (standing).

History Corner

by Bob Ellis, Historian

Some Haunts and Haunters of Mill Street

It is the mid-nineteenth century, and we are walking down Mill Street from Church Street. By the way, we possess an unusual ability to anticipate the future. On our left at the corner rises the house of John Rice, appropriately a lumber dealer on a street named for a sawmill. As we move along, we see no buildings where a laundry and a fire station will one day stand. At the intersection with Pierce Street is a house that was originally a barn (as a later architectural historian will suggest), but it has probably already been at least partly converted into a house by Mrs. Azubah Pierce. Her shop, very likely devoted to millinery, will long continue, partly under other owners.

The south side of Pierce Street is bare. The first St. Rose's will not be built until 1883. "Railroad Street," later to be known as Blake Street, will soon appear when trains start coming through, the Munroe Tavern is moved back from Main Street, and a new town hall replaces it.

Heading left on Mill Street, we see no #5, not yet constructed. The architectural expert will describe it as having a jerkinhead roof with a "bargeboard embellished with small circular cutouts and notches along the lower edge. In the front peak only, the bargeboard is supported on large scroll brackets, the sides of which bear sunburst carvings. . . . The east elevation, facing Mill Street, three bays wide with a right entrance retaining the original double panel-and-glass doors, is sheltered by a shed roof"

This house will usually be home to more than one family. One of its owners, Charles Johnson, who for many years will make shoe counters and leather board from leather shavings, will employ household help, at

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Membership

Annual Dues:

- Single — \$20
- Student/Senior — \$15
- Family — \$45
- Lifetime — \$250

Send dues to:

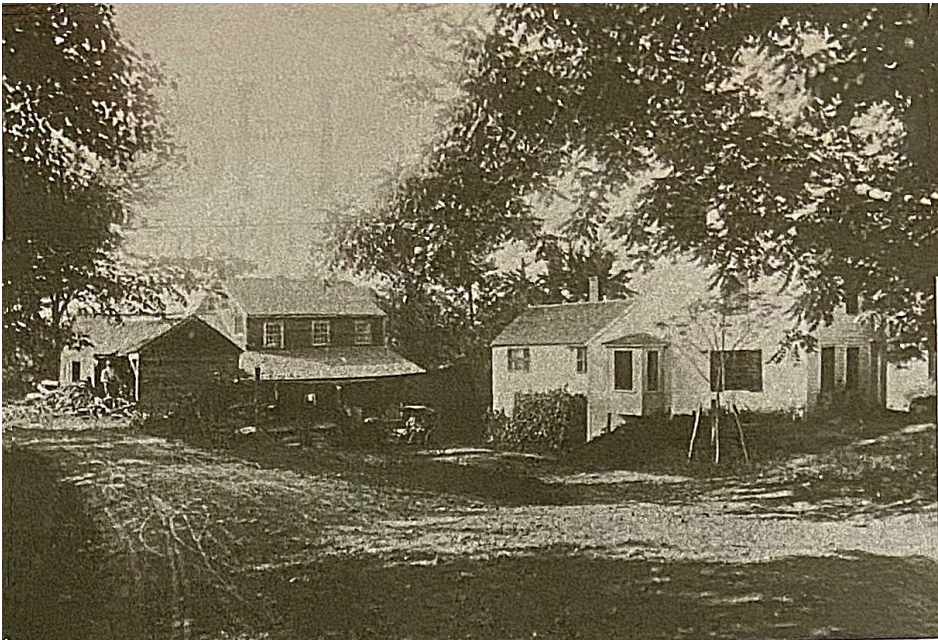
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one time a black housemaid from Virginia. Among his renters will be Jeremiah Cronin, an Irish motorman on the street railway, and his wife Nora.

Already standing is 7 Mill Street, "an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture" with wide corner boards and varied windows, half-height below the eaves and arranged in pairs along the front facade," as the architectural historian will describe them. Its owners, as we pass, are Ira and Lois Stearns, he being one of several comb makers who will live on this street in the next few decades.

At the edge of Cold Harbor Brook we come to the mill building (seen last month from the opposite side) that a photographer will capture in the 1890s. John Glazier, now in his sixties, still operates the sawmill. He will be followed by other lumber dealers, George Felt in the early twentieth century — probably the last one to use the facility. In 1898 an African American couple, Samuel Cobb, a railroad worker, and Sally Haskins will marry in the Baptist church and in 1916 will live in the mill building. In the town's 150th anniversary year their daughter Irene will be perched on a Campfire Girls float in the big parade, while on a businessman's float ten-year-old Tommy will ride inside "a monster shoe, five feet long and over two and one-half feet in length."



The mill from Mill Street, looking northwest

2015-16 Committee Openings

The Northborough Historical Society has openings on several committees for the 2015-2016 season.



Most of these positions are 3-year terms.

If you would like to volunteer to be nominated or know of someone to nominate for a committee, please contact Kevin Carroll at:

skybars@verizon.net.

Museum Trustees	2 positions
Program Committee	1 position
Property	1 position
Publicity	2 positions
Kitchen	2 positions
Legislative	1 position
Nominating	1 position

Next to the mill on the east side of the road is #12, now the Lemuel Maynard house, but soon the Garrity family will acquire it. Owen Garrity, co-operator of a shoe business, will also maintain a saloon "the greatest curse of the town," one proper citizen will insist. In 1868, owing several thousand dollars, Owen will file for bankruptcy in Worcester. Two years later this unfortunate man will die at age 36. His wife Winifred, destined to outlive him by more than fifty years, will run the tavern and in 1889 be fined \$30 in Westborough District Court for keeping a liquor license. Of the several Owen children, John will drive a float in that 1916 parade, on which the Northborough Historical Society will mount a log cabin representing an early settlers' home.

It will take some years for the houses between #12 and #2 to fill in. Yes, much of downtown Northborough remains to be built.



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