

# THE SHIRETOWN CONSERVER

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society Newsletter

Volume V, Number 2

Summer 2001

## “Third Duke of Bridgewater” Visits Society

His Grace, the Third Duke of Bridgewater paid a visit to the May meeting of the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society where the eighteenth century English aristocrat graciously gave his impressions of the far reaching social, cultural, and economic impact of the English Industrial Revolution and reflected on topics ranging from the English aristocracy to the principles on which the American nation was founded.

The Duke, portrayed ably by Society member David Lockwood, played a crucial role in the industrial development of the English city of Manchester by designing and constructing a canal which allowed the city access to rural coal mines, facilitating the development of the industrial heartland of England. The Duke, despite a conventional upbringing, was considered an eccentric by his peers, in part because he abandoned the lavish finery most members of the noble class donned and insisted instead on dressing as a common man.

Dave Lockwood has been perfecting his portrayal of the Duke for some time and is available for visits to schools, clubs, and other interested organizations. To schedule a visit by the Duke to your organization, please contact Dave.

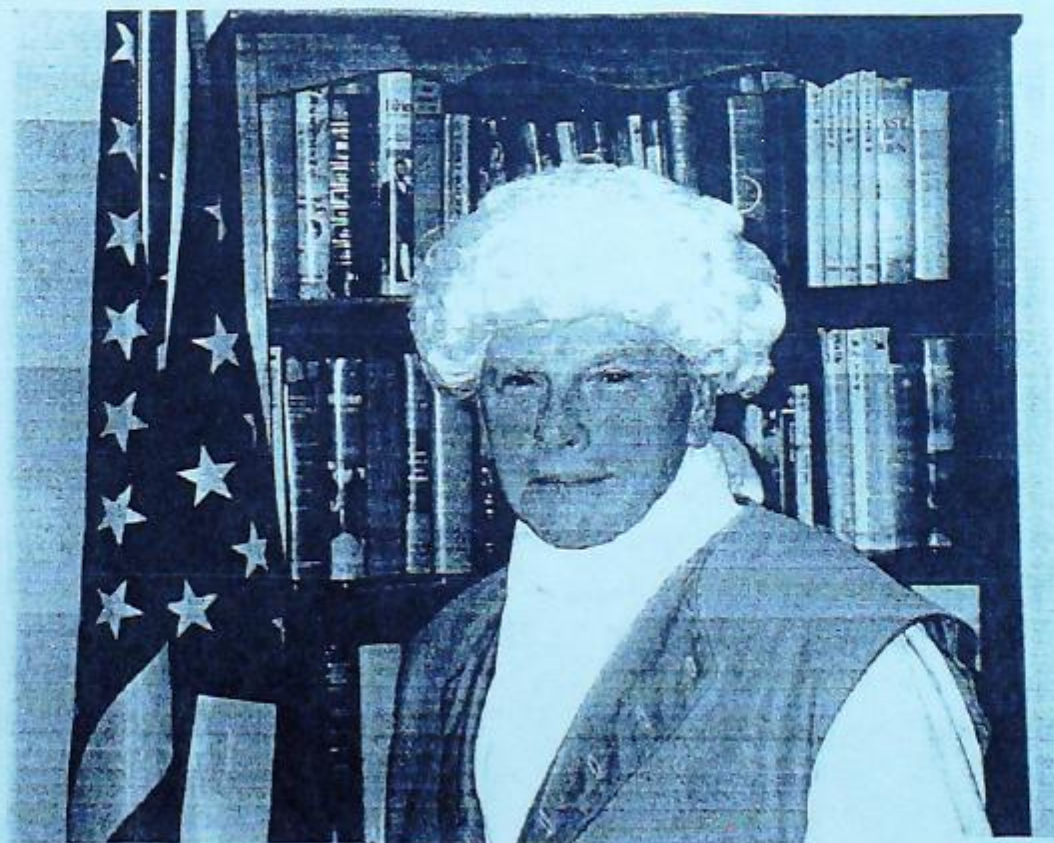


Photo by Jack Battick

## The Foxcroft Slate Quarry - Do You Know Where it Was?

by Madelyn C. Betts

When we think of slate quarries in Piscataquis County, we think of Monson and Brownville which were thriving in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Quarry work brought in the Swedes, Finns, and Welsh to the area. But Foxcroft enjoyed its moment of fame when there was indication that slate could be found here. Where?

It was on the Earl Farm located on the dead end road (Dundee) at the corner of the Foxcroft Center Road beyond the residence of the late Anthony Klimavicz and the nearby Old Haseltine Cemetery where many of the earliest settlers are buried.

A group of enterprising men in the area saw the possibility of a quarry and promptly formed a company. According to recorded deeds on October 23, 1872, Benjamin Earl in consideration of \$1,000 granted twelve undivided sixteenth parts of Lot A and Lot 1 in the 7<sup>th</sup> Range, being the farm previously owned by Eben C. Parker and conveyed by him to Otis W. Campbell in 1860. It was divided as follows:

Charles A. Everett	Dover	5/16th
Chauncey L. Cochran	Dover	1/16th
Marcell W. Hall	Dover	2/16th
William D. Blethen	Dover	1/16th
Joseph C. Treadwell	Guilford	1/16th
Eli A. Batchelder	Foxcroft	1/16th
Ariel R. Prescott	Foxcroft	1/16th

This property was conveyed with "all in common and undivided with all mines and minerals".

Also, on October 23, 1872, Benjamin Earl was paid \$500 for 4/16th of the same two lots by:

Alexander M. Robinson	Dexter	3/16th
James S. Wyley	Dover	1/16th

Benjamin and Hannah Earl sold to A.M. Robinson . . . "my homestead farm" which was 92 acres bounded on the east by the town line of Sebec and the south by the Blethen Place.

Three notices related to slate quarries in this area appeared in the Piscataquis Observer. The first notice on May 21, 1874, stated that the Earl Slate Quarry of Dover and Foxcroft organized under an Act of Incorporation granted in the Legislature in 1873. The gentlemen listed above were

(Continued on Page 5)

## Historical Society Asked to Play Role in Town's Comprehensive Plan

By Jack Battick

A Committee of citizens of Dover-Foxcroft is preparing a draft comprehensive plan which, some time late in this year, will be placed before the citizens of the town for discussion, amendment, and eventual adoption. A comprehensive plan is a summary of the desires of a town in regard to future growth and development, an outline from which civic bodies such as the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the Appeals Board, and town meeting can refine ordinances and make decisions based upon the expressed consent of the citizenry.

One section of a comprehensive plan is a synopsis of the history of the town. Emphasis in this section is usually on the most recent period (such as 60-70 years) and having relevance to the growth or decline of the population and economic activities within the community. But it must also indicate what aspects of the town's longer-term history are worthy of preservation.

To do this, the plan would normally direct that some body be created especially to advise the civic boards on preservation of sites, buildings, and lands of historical value; to accept, conserve, and preserve artifacts and documents relating to the history of the town; and in general to be the custodians of the collective memory of the community.

It is the hope of the comprehensive plan committee that the Historical Society might choose to fulfill this responsibility and would become a party, as needed, to both the development of the plan in the discussion stage and to its implementation, and will consent to act as a consulting body to the various town boards when matters touching on historic preservation arise in the future, as well as act as the depository of artifacts and documents relating to the town's history.

*Note:* John "Jack" Battick is Chairman of the Planning Board and its liaison to the Comprehensive Planning Committee.

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## Museum Readies for the 2001 Season

The Society held a workday on May 19 to begin preparing the Museum for its annual summer season. Volunteers washed windows, dusted displays, hauled boxes, and performed numerous other tasks to get the former *Observer* Building in tiptop shape. President Mary Annis would like to thank all of you who gave of your time (we all know Saturdays are busy days for everyone). Those working were: Gil Glover, Bob Ladd, Adie Ladd, Madelyn Betts, Dave Lockwood, Edie Hussey, Mary Annis, and John Battick.

## A Trail Of Parsonages

by Madelyn C. Betts

The first Congregational Church-owned parsonage was built by merchant William McComb (1822-1887) on the site of the former Maine Central Railroad Station located at the Summer Street crossing. When the railroads came through town, the house was moved to Edes Avenue and is the present apartment house owned by the late Raymond Goodwin. The Maine Central Railroad Station was built in 1888.

The second parsonage was the former Walter Foss residence, now the apartment building on West Main Street opposite the Mayo Hospital complex. After 10 years it was sold and a third building secured, being the white house now next to the town parking lot near the Congregational Church Chapel. This house was occupied by various ministers until 1944 when it was sold for \$1,800.

The church named a committee to search for a new parsonage. The present parsonage was built in 1883 by Isaac Meder, a prominent businessman who also built the Masonic Hall. A succession of nine ministers has occupied the residence to date.

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## Doughty Hill Band Performs For Society

Sid Stutzman and members of the Doughty Hill Band performed at the Society's June 6 meeting. The band members (pictured below) presented original songs on the history of Piscataquis County, accompanied by slides of photos and artwork depicting events. The Band, in addition to personal appearances, developed a "Sense of Place" curriculum for teachers interested in incorporating local cultural heritage projects into their classrooms. The Band lists among its goals "helping community members develop an awareness of the unique and interesting culture and heritage of their hometown Piscataquis County . . . ."



Doughty Hill Band Members, L to R:  
Sid Stutzman, Ron Hall, Sunny Stutzman)  
Photo By Jack Battick

**Foxcroft Slate Quarry (continued from page 2)**

among the officers and directors of the company. The paper noted that "the quarry, owned by the above company, was situated in Foxcroft, on the Earl Farm, so-called, at a distance of about 3 miles from the railroad depot at East Dover village. The slate, so far developed has been excellent quality and situated in an unusually favorable location".

In August 6, 1874, *the Piscataquis Observer* noted that the Piscataquis Central Slate Co. had been approved for incorporation on February 28 1874, with the following men involved: Augustus G. LeBroke, Edward Hughes, Josiah B. Mayo, Danville L. Savage, and Andrew J. Hammond.

Whether the Earl Quarry sold out to the Piscataquis Central Slate Co., is not known, but certainly the businessmen of Dover and Foxcroft felt this was a good investment. It has been rumored that the slate roof of the former Dr. Paul Taylor home on West Main Street and the United Methodist Church on East Main Street came from one or both of these local quarries.

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**Can You Help Us Identify Members of the Class of 1922?**

The Society has recently received several portraits of members of Foxcroft Academy's Class of 1922. As is the case with so many old photos no names are attached to the pictures leaving us with the frustrating task of trying to match names with the faces in the graduation photos. If you have any connection with the Class of 1922 either yourself or through a family member or friend and might be able to help us, please contact Madelyn Betts or come by the Museum this summer. We'd really like to put names on these portraits to identify them for posterity.

And, a reminder to all our members: if you have family photos that you haven't identified in writing please take the time to clearly print names, dates, or place names on the backs of your photos so your heirs will be able to identify their ancestors. So many of us are saddened to find lovely old photos or tintypes lovingly preserved, yet with nothing to tell us who or what relation they may be and the knowledge is often lost forever.

## Assembly of God Church Building

By Madelyn C. Betts

The Free Will Baptist denomination was in Foxcroft in 1830, later joining with the villagers in Dover. They formed a church in 1845, meeting in a home on North Street, and later in the Court House. In 1849 this group commenced to erect a building on East Main Street which was completed and dedicated December 5, 1850. Elder Moses Ames was the first pastor called in January 1851.

The Methodists of Dover united with the Free Will Baptists in the building of the church structure, sharing one-half of the expense and owning one-half of the pews. In 1858 the Methodists sold their interest back to the Baptists for \$600 and held meetings at the Court House until their church was built in 1860.

The East Main Street building was repaired in 1874 at the expense of \$350 and in 1889 was extensively remodeled at a cost of \$5,000.

In 1935 the Assembly of God purchased the building and property from the Free Will Baptists who had previously united with the Calvinist Baptist to be the United Baptist Church. The building was then called the Union House and served as the place for recreational activities for the young people of the Baptist Church. In later years it was known as The Parish House where the young people of the town used it for social activities.

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## Recent Acquisitions

The Society's recent donations included:

Several history books	Foxcroft Academy
FA commemorative plates, fan, bottle	Joyce Cross
Doctor's Book	Anonymous
Assorted items from estate of Marion Doore	Gweneth Smith
WWI area soldiers' photo	Cliff Wiley
Skirt and Waist holder	Memory of Florence Elliot Adkins

If you have items reflecting the town's social, economic, spiritual, cultural, or general interest please consider donating them to the Historical Society so they may be preserved and shared with others. Donations can be made to any officer or director.

## Society Bits

**Officers for 2001-2** were elected at the May meeting. The following individuals will serve as officers for the upcoming year:

President	Mary Annis
Vice-President	Helen Kelly
Secretary	Madelyn Betts
Treasurer	Jim Annis
Directors	Gilman Glover
	Jim Brown
	Lou Stevens
	Bob Ladd
	Joe Champion

### Upcoming Programs:

September 5 Lou Stevens	<b>Tour of Pine Grove Cemetery</b> (Dover South Mills) 6 p.m. Wear sensible walking shoes and be sure to bring a jacket or sweater. If you need directions please call any of the officers.
October 3 Bertha Fitzgerald	<b>The Poetry of Fred Washburn</b> 7 p.m. Thayer Parkway

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### A Message From Mary

The *Observer* Building is spic and span after two well-attended workdays. We're all set for our summer visitors. The museum will be open starting in July on Sunday afternoons from 1-4 p.m. We'll stay open through September. We need people to host on these afternoons. No special knowledge is needed - just a friendly smile and a watchful eye. If you can help please contact Mary Annis at 564-0820. Hope to see you there.

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### A Tip of the Hat To . . .

the following individuals for helping with this issue of the *Conserver*: Madelyn Betts, Helen Kelly, Mary Annis, and Jack Battick. Nancy Klimavicz Battick is the *Conserver's* new editor and would welcome your suggestions and comments. If you have photos or material you'd like to see in the *Conserver* you can reach Nancy at 564-3576 or e-mail [battick@midmaine.com](mailto:battick@midmaine.com).

**The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc.**  
**10 Orchard Road**  
**Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426-3706**

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**ATTENTION:** 2001 dues (\$3 per person) are now payable. Red numbers on your mailing label indicate your dues are in arrears and are payable with the annual dues for April 2001-2002. Those in arrears for 3 years are dropped from membership and no longer receive a copy of the *Shiretown Conserver* which is mailed quarterly to membership households in good standing. Donations in any amount are federally tax deductible.

Annual dues are \$3/per person/per year payable April 1, 2001 to April 1, 2002.

Current Dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the **Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society.**

MEMBER'S NAME/S \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Form and Check to: **Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc.**  
**c/o Madelyn Betts, Secretary**  
**11 Harrison Avenue**  
**Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426**