
GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Volume 19 Issue 2

Groton, Vermont

05046

Spring 2006

GROTON'S PIONEERS



President
Richard
Brooks
retired
from his
day job
this year.
Happy
retirement
Richard
from GHS

Part two: Aaron Hosmer

This is the second of a planned series on the earliest pioneers who came to Groton. The winter issue had articles about Jesse Heath written by Dale Brown

Aaron Hosmer was born July 26, 1729 in Concord, MA and died August 6, 1803 in Groton, VT according to Child's Gazetteer of Caledonia and Essex Counties, but the History of Ryegate, Vermont gives his death on the same date in Barnet while visiting there. He married Caroline Chamberlain, daughter of Thomas Chamberlain, in Newbury, VT, where he settled in 1763. Earlier he was a grantee of Haverhill, NH and later he was living in Ryegate when General James Whitelaw and David Allan came to inspect the land for the

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MEETING SCHEDULE

(second Tuesday)

March through November
10 AM at the Peter Paul House,
1203 Scott Hwy.

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'Scotch Company' on June 28, 1773 . He was living in a log cabin near the Connecticut river, about a mile and a half above the present village of Wells River and supported himself by hunting, trapping and fishing. In 1781 he was again living in Newbury and then in the southwestern part of Barnet and afterwards in Groton. Aaron Hosmer is listed in the 1790 census of Groton as head of a household with two males over 16 years of age and one under 16. He settled on lot number 13. Mr. Glover believed this was Aaron Hosmer, Jr. and his father never built a permanent home in Groton, but from the family records in the Groton Historical Society it would seem that this might well be the older Aaron Hosmer. He would have been 61 years of age at the time of the census and his son, Aaron, Jr. would have been 21 and his youngest son, Medad, who was born October 25, 1773, would have been only 16. There is no record of the date his wife died, which may have been before the census. Of course it might also be argued that Aaron Jr. born in 1769 in Ryegate was head of the household and his father and younger brother were living with him. Aaron Jr. was single until July 1793 when he married Dorothy Darling, daughter of John Darling, in Groton where he died February 18, 1831. Aaron Jr. and Dorothy had 11 children all born in Groton. His parents, Aaron Sr. and Caroline, had 5 children born in Newbury and Ryegate.

The senior Aaron was an adventurer as reported in the Ryegate History. He was living in Charlestown, NH in 1740 and was one of Captain Noble's Company when attacked by the Indians; in 1754 he was at Fort Dummer. He served 15 days in Captain Thomas Johnson's Company of Minutemen in 1775 and as a scout in Captain John G. Bayley's Company 8 months and 20 days 1777-79. His extensive hunting, trapping and fishing expeditions in Groton and the surrounding towns paralleled those of Indian Joe, and undoubtedly resulted in many pitched camps beside the lakes and streams in the area. Hosmer Lake in Peacham bears his name and Kettle Lake in Groton was so named, according to legend, because he lost his camp kettle while attempting to cross the lake on a log

Aaron and Caroline (Chamberlain) Hosmer had 5 children; Caroline, Rufus, James, Aaron Jr., and Medad.

Caroline married Aaron Wesson, son of Captain Ephraim Wesson and brother-in-law to Captain Edmund Morse. Aaron's brother, Peter Wesson, was another early pioneer in Groton who arrived shortly after the 1790 census and settled on lot number 5, but died soon after. Caroline and Aaron Wesson had 9 children; Abigail, Hannah, Phebe, Aaron, Peter,

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Moses, John, Peter C., and Ephraim.

Rufus married Sarah Page, daughter of Jacob and Sarah (Johnson) Page and the family moved west.

James married Betsey Carter and no other information about them was found in the Groton Historical Society family files.

Aaron Jr. married Dorothy Darling, daughter of John Darling and sibling of Robards Darling and Sally (Darling) Townsend, which accounts for four of the eight families listed in the 1790 census of Groton, VT. Aaron Jr. and Dorothy (Darling) Hosmer had 11 children all born in Groton; Rufus D., Abigail C., Phebe, Josiah D., Susanna A., Caroline, Judith, Phebe W., Charlotte W., Eliza and Hannah A.

Medad Hosmer took the freeman's oath in 1799 and married Susannah Carter from Peacham in 1802. No other information about the family was found in the Groton Historical Society family files.

Children of Aaron Jr.

Rufus D. died age 8 and Phebe died age 3.

Abigail C. married Medad Welch, son of Jonathan and Martha

“Patty” (Emery) Welch in 1815. They had 10 children; George, Aaron, Hosea, Martha, Medad, S. G. Clark, Darling, Benjamin Franklin, William Merrill, and Abigail.

Josiah D. married Lois Green and they had 5 children Robert, Aaron, Rufus D., Climena, and Haman.

Susanna A. married David James in 1825. No other information about them was found in the Groton Historical Society family files.

Caroline married Daniel P. Stanley about 1823 and they had 8 children; Mary, Eliza, Moses B., Virtue, Thomas, Hanna, Louisa, and Ruth H.. Her husband, Daniel, died in 1844 and she married (2) William Humphrey, (3) Daniel Heath, son of Jesse Heath, and (4) David Jones.

Judith married Simon Ricker and they adopted Josiah D. Ricker.

Phebe W. married first Nathaniel Perkins, second David E. Vance and third Samuel Darling. Phebe W. did not have

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GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY WEB PAGE

Easy access from <http://www.grotonvt.com>

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any children.

Charlotte W. married John Morrison, son of Abraham and Martha (Townsend) Morrison, in 1834 and they had 4 children; Martha J., Abraham, Daniel C. and Louisa.

Eliza married Andrew McFarland, son of Andrew and Martha (Taplin) McFarland. They had three sons; Elias, William and Andrew.

Hannah A. married William Morrison, son of Charles and Sally (Rhodes) Morrison in 1834 and they had 11 children; Silas B., Charlotte, Samuel P., Lydia M., Abbie J., William H. (died age 2), William H. (died age 13), Nathaniel P., Joseph, Elizabeth A., and Andrew M.

The first settler?

It seems undeniable that Aaron

Hosmer Sr. was one of the first, if not the first, pioneer to hunt, fish, trap and camp in the wilds of what was to become Groton. But the nature of such pioneers has led historians to question if he ever “settled” here. It would appear that he was enumerated in the 1790 census, but was he the head of the household, or just living with his son, Aaron Jr. and younger son, Medad? In the 1800 census he was enumerated in the family as a 45+ male, and Aaron Jr. age 31 at the time, was married and probably head of the 9 member Aaron Hosmer family.

Whether Aaron Sr. was first or not, he was an early pioneer in Groton, where he was living when he died in 1803.

Look for another Groton pioneer in the next newsletter.

READING TEST

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APRIL FOOL

When Pope Gregory XIII changed the calendar in 1582 so the vernal equinox would occur on March 21st, it slowly replaced the Julian calendar in most of the western world. In Great Britain the Gregorian, or Christian, calendar was adopted in 1752, and the New Year was also changed to begin on January 1 instead of March 25. Playing tricks on people on the first day of April became a custom about this time perhaps related to the confusion of which year it was. Anyway the government continued the practice of playing tricks on us but changed the date to the ides of April. Happy April Fool's day.

Groton Historical Society Family Records available on CD

The family records collected by Waldo Glover and updated by members of GHS are now available on CD. The records are stored in Brother's Keeper 6 (BK6) genealogy program, which requires MS Windows 95 or higher, Pentium or higher processor, and 16 MB of RAM. A shareware version of BK6 is included on the CD. A gedcom file, without pictures, is also on the CD for those who want to import the records to a different genealogy program.

At the present time there are 37, 318 names in the file. Because the records are continuously being updated, CD's will be produced to fill orders.

CD's can be ordered from GHS, P. O. Box 89, Groton, VT 05046 at a cost of \$10 payable to Groton Historical Society.

INFORMATION on the CD

Instructions for using CD and background information about the family history records at GHS plus:

1. The GHS Family Records in both BK6 genealogy program and Gedcom formats.
2. Shareware version of BK6 genealogy program.
3. The 1790 to 1930 census records of Groton, VT
4. Burial records for the Groton, VT cemeteries.

Brother's Keeper

Brother's Keeper 6 (BK6) genealogy program requires the use of Windows 95 or higher with Pentium or higher processor and 16 MB of RAM. There are more than 1,000 pictures (57 MB) attached to the records, but these can be accessed from the CD if you wish to save space on your hard disk.

Getting RECORDS from CD

1. If you have Brother's Keeper 6 genealogy program, use the RESTORE function to copy the GROTONVT backup data files to your computer.
2. If you do not have Brother's Keeper 6 genealogy program, run BKSETUP6.EXE, in the Family Records folder on the CD, to install a shareware version of the program on your computer. On the main screen pick FILE, and then RESTORE data files to copy the GROTONVT backup data files. Please read the help menu for information about shareware and how to get a registered copy in order to use all its features.
3. If you have a different genealogy program, use the gedcom import function of your program to import the GROTONVT data files from the gedcom file in the Family Records folder on the CD.

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PHARAOH'S HORSES, a painting by Catherine (Hall) Smith Corruth, grandmother of Carolyn (Hooper) Haskell, was donated to the Groton Historical Society by Carolyn in memory of her Grandmother. It is on display at the Peter Paul House.



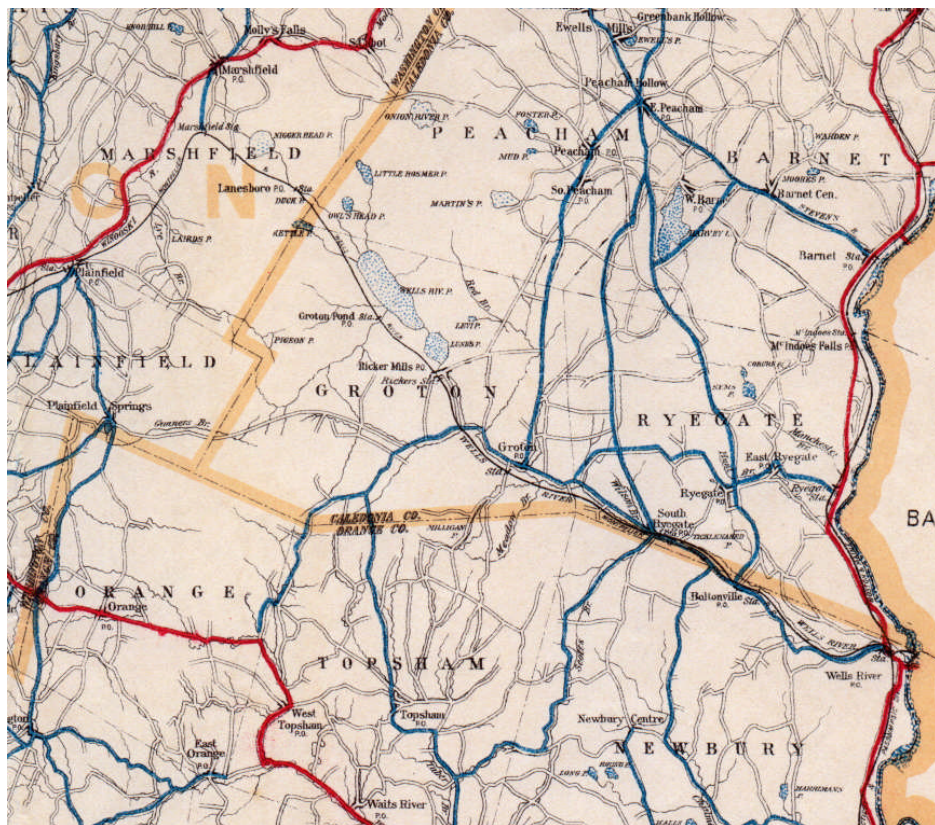
Catherine Hall b. 23 March 1882 married 1st Henry Finney Smith in 1898, 2nd Charles E. Corruth in 1908. Her daughter, Gladys M. Smith was Carolyn's Mother.



Monument erected to the memory of William Scott, the sleeping sentinel, pardoned by President Abraham Lincoln is located in West Groton near his home site about 4 miles west of Groton Village on U. S. 302, the William Scott Highway. The grave marker is in Yorktown, VA National Cemetery.

MUD SEASON IN 1912

Mud season was a difficult time to travel on the town roads and not much better on most of the 'improved' earth and gravel roads. It was a good time to stay home and boil sap.



This 1912 road map of Groton and surrounding areas shows the 'State Trunk lines or Cross State roads' in red, and 'Most important Town and County roads' in blue. "These two classes constituted 4,000 miles of earth and gravel State Roads that will be usually found good Automobile roads." The roads shown in black are Ordinary Town Roads: about 11,000 miles in the state according to the map legend. The map shows the State Roads, or Selected Highways, which were being improved by State aid and under State supervision in 1912. [Good Automobile roads didn't apply in mud season.]

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4. If you don't want to copy the pictures to your hard drive you can access them from the CD by changing the path on the main screen of BK 6. To change the path for the picture files pick File – Utilities - Global search and replace - Change only the picture file path names, from “C:\grotonvt\photo\” to the root directory of your CD drive, i.e. “D:\” or “E:\”

THE FAMILY RECORDS

At the 1941 Town Meeting the citizens of Groton recognized Vermont's Sesquicentennial and planned to celebrate the 150 years of statehood at a gathering on May 30th. Mr. Waldo Glover presented the keynote address entitled “Beginnings of Groton”.

This celebration inspired the town to appoint a history committee for securing the services of Mr. Glover as historian to prepare a town history. Although the proposal was discussed at each succeeding town meeting, little progress was made until after World War II. At the 1946 town meeting Mrs. Nellie Jeffrey reported that Mr. Glover had consented to write the town history and had already collected and classified a considerable amount of material. By the 1950 town meeting, Mrs. Jeffrey, secretary, and Mrs. Myrtie Hosmer, treasurer, of the Groton History Commission reported steady progress on the history by Mr. Glover, who was now devoting more time to the pro-

ject since his retirement in 1949. He continued working on the history of the town and collecting family records up to his death on February 28, 1976. Other members of the History Commission during its existence included Charles Lord, Burton Brown, Helene White, Martha Dimick, Carroll Ricker, Rita McAllister, Irma White, John French, Stephen Welch, Alice Goodine and George Ricker.

Although the Groton History was not completed, George Ricker planned to publish what had been written up to 1900 with some additional material up to the 1950's, but he also died before doing so, on September 3, 1976. In April 1977 the Groton Historical Society, which had evolved from the History Commission, appointed a book committee of James Conley, Ida Dennis, Lucien Emerson, Norma Hosmer, Raymond Page, Joan Palmer, Janet Puffer, Irma White, and chaired by Alice Goodine to bring the history up to date and publish it, which they did in 1978 as *Mr. Glover's Groton* [now out of print].

The family records assembled from the works of earlier historians, General Albert Harleigh Hill, Hosea N. Welch, and others, were brought up to date by Mr. Glover. Through family interviews, personal contacts, and extensive research he compiled nu-

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merous files on families of Groton. These files presented too big a problem for the book committee to include in the 1978 publication of *Mr. Glover's Groton*, and were thus left to be published later. Members of the Historical Society maintained the handwritten records as information became available to them. Especially noteworthy were the efforts of Mrs. Alice Goodine and Mrs. Norma Hosmer. Mrs. Gwendolyn Hagen was hired in the 1980's to sort and type copies of the handwritten family records for the Groton Historical Society.

The family records were entered into a genealogy computer program by J. Willard Benzie in the 1990's for ease in searching and retrieving records for interested family members. As family information became more accessible, errors and omissions became evident and many additions and corrections were submitted to the Society. The computer files also allowed cross references which uncovered differences in information about persons recorded in more than one family. When differences were found efforts were made to ascertain which was correct, or if unable to do so, the differences were noted in the computer file. Because the family information was provided by many different individuals and sources, there is much inconsistency in the amount and kind of material entered for each person. Pictures were also stored in the computer pro-

gram whenever available and linked to the individual family record.

Including ancestors and descendants of past and present Groton citizens will never be completed, but a valiant effort has been made to include families listed in the U. S. population censuses of 1790 to 1930 transcribed by J. Willard Benzie, the burial records from the Groton cemeteries compiled by Jim Dresser, and vital records from the town clerk's office with the able assistance of Town Clerks Ida Dennis, Jeanne Partington and Linda Nunn.

Although everyone in the above sources is not yet included in these records, making them available may generate more interest in the Groton Family Histories and the records can be revised with additions and corrections in the future.

Because all the names in the census records and burial records of Groton are not yet listed in the family records, the census and burial records are on the CD in the Family Records folder and they can also be accessed on the Groton Historical Society web page which can be accessed from the official Groton, Vermont web page located at <http://GrotonVT.com>.

Please send any additions, corrections, pictures, or suggestions to the Groton Historical Society at P. O. Box 89, Groton, VT 05046 or e-mail them to jwbenzie@uslink.net with the subject GHS family records.

Groton Historical Society Members

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Kent & Joan Haskell	P. O. Box 144	Groton, VT 05046
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Deane & Bing Page	P. O. Box 22	Groton, VT 05046
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Donna Wollschlager	25 Fairway View Drive	Bristol, CT 06010

Blue ribbon members have paid their 2006 dues and are in good standing as of April 11, 2006.

Members who have been delinquent for more than two years have been removed from the mailing list. If there are errors or omissions in this membership list, please notify the secretary at P. O. Box 89, Groton, VT 05046-0089. New members and those wishing to be reinstated should contact the secretary at the above address.

Members who want to contribute articles or other information to the newsletter, can e-mail them to the editor at jwbenzie@uslink.net or send them to J. W. Benzie, P. O. Box 694, Grand Rapids, MN 55744-0694. Stories, letters to the editor, news items, pictures, suggestions, etc. are all welcome.

Newsletters are planned quarterly, with winter, spring, summer and fall issues. Deadlines for submitting material for the newsletter are the first of January, April, July and October. Copies of the newsletters are posted on the Groton Historical Society web page by the web site editor, Jim Dresser. The web site can be accessed through the official Groton web site at <http://www.GrotonVT.com/>



Home of the Groton Historical Society built in 1840
Purchased in 1989 and renovated by the Society
for storing and displaying Historical records and artifacts

Groton Historical Society Newsletter
J. W. Benzie, Editor
P. O. Box 89
Groton, VT 05046-0089

