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# GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter

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### **DEANE AND BING PAGE MEMORIES**

**Deborah Jurist**



Peter Paul House  
Home of Groton Historical Society

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Deane and Bing Page were treasured members of the Groton Historical Society. They were ALWAYS available to answer questions and shared wonderful stories about Groton. They will be SO missed. Deane passed away on 4 Dec 2020 and Bing 20 Mar 2021.

Deane shared the following short bio with us back in 2018.

### **2022 OFFICERS**

President .....Deborah Jurist  
Vice President .....Brent Smith  
Secretary .....Phyllis Burke  
Treasurer .....Susan Pelkey Smith  
Web Site Editor .....Mike Gaiss  
Newsletter Editor J. Willard Benzie

Deane and Bing Page were founding members of the Groton Historical Society. For five years Deane spent afternoons working on the Peter Paul House. Together they scraped layers and layers of paint off the walls, tore up the floors, installed wiring and plumbing, papered walls, painted woodwork, fixed windows, and reupholstered furniture.

Deane was born in 1930 and lived above E. D. Ricker & Son IGA store (building now demolished) until he was 8 years old. He watched as, what is now, the Groton Garage was being built by Ulric Legare. He played marbles, and scrub ball (like

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baseball) and read the "Dick and Jane" reader in first grade.

His first car was a 1936 Plymouth. He played basketball in Groton High School. Among the teams they played were Wells River, Cabot, Marshfield, and Newbury.

When he was growing up the laundry was done with a wringer washing machine using water heated on the wood cook stove. They hung the clothes to dry in the garage. When he was 8 he got his arm caught in the wringer washing machine. The scar is there to this day.

Deane graduated from Groton High School in 1948 and worked at White's Market for 3 years. There were 3 grocery stores in Groton at that time. They sold meat, fishing tackle, woolen clothes, saws, axes, and ax handles. There was also a livery stable.

He was drafted into the Marine Corps in 1952. He trained in Paris Island, South Carolina, went to Radio School in San Diego, and Camp Pendleton, California. He arrived in Korea 5 days before the conflict ended. He spent 5 months at Camp Fiji, Japan and was discharged in 1954.

Bing was born at home in West Topsham, VT in 1935. She became a Groton resident at the age of 12 when her Aunt Bessie and Uncle Wesley (Schwarz) purchased a home in Groton (the one Bing and Deane now live in today!). She was going to Groton High School when she met Deane, he was working at White's store at the time. When she graduated she moved to a 1 room apartment in Barre and started working at Howard Johnson's. Bing and Deane were married in Sept. of 1954 and lived in Barre for a short time. They moved to Boston pretty quickly. Everything they owned fit in the trunk of their car.

Bing worked at Howard Johnsons while Deane went to Electrical School. One day a fellow came into the Howard Johnson's and introduced himself as "Howard Johnson Jr." and said he would like to speak to the manager! When Bing told the manager, the manager did not believe her!

Their son Kent was born the day before Deane's final exam. He drove up to Groton for the birth, got in the car and drove back down to Boston for the test. In 1955 they moved back to Groton, and lived in the same apartment Deane lived in as a little boy, but it was then over McLam's IGA store.

In 1957 he worked for the telephone company removing the old crank style telephones and replacing them with brand-new rotary dial phones. In 1958 they bought the house that Bing had grown up in and have lived there ever since.

In 1959 Deane became Postmaster in Groton and was Postmaster until 1989. One of their favorite times of the year was Christmas when the kids in town wrote letters to Santa. Bing answered the letters every year. Then they saved them and as the kids grew up they gave the letters back to them.

Bing had numerous jobs during this time. She worked at BMU in the kitchen and then in special education. She was a night shift nurses' aid at Cottage Hospital. She was the fire call relay person for the Groton Volunteer Fire Dept. The phone would ring steady at the house, everyone had to be quiet, Bing would answer it and take down all the information. Then she would call the volunteer firemen out to the fire.

Throughout the 80's and 90's Bing organized food donations for the people of Groton. If you had surgery, given birth, or were under the weather in some way, every night for one week a hot meal would arrive at your door to feed you and your family. She organized and cooked for all these needy folks as well as for memorial services and funerals.

Deane was one of the men who started the Groton Chicken Pie Supper in 1955. After doing it with other townsmen for 2 years, they involved the women. To quote Deane, "We really needed them!" Bing was the Chicken Pie Supper chairperson for years and years and years.

Bing was Vermont's Mother of the Year in 1982 and President of this organization 1983-1984.



## Bristol Bill and His Counterfeit Gang

by  
Andrew John “Johnny” White (1898-1965)

*Continued from Spring 2022 Newsletter*

*Bristol Bill's growing up years in England, getting involved with the police, and fleeing to America where he continued his robberies in Bristol, Rhode Island and Boston, MA was in the Spring Newsletter. ed.*

A few days later, Bill checked out of the Fremont House hotel in Boston and took the train back to Providence. He sold the stolen jewelry for about \$5,000 cash and went to New York City, where he associated with thieves and counterfeiters. Here he met a beautiful and fascinating young woman, Margaret O'Connell or O'Connor. Living like a prince, betting high on the races, winning and dining at Delmonico's and everywhere accompanied by the charming Margaret, life must have been pleasant for Bristol Bill, who was still unknown to the New York police and comparatively safe as he was always discreet in his behavior.

Margaret O'Connor, a young woman of Scottish descent, had a good education, and great musical ability. She had achieved remarkable success with an operetta because of her unusual voice. Why her decent to the level of gangsters and criminals is not known, but it appears she was already an accomplished crook when she met Bristol Bill. She had successfully passed counterfeit money or tampered bills. Her accomplice stayed outside while she entered the store with a single bill, cleverly raised from a one to a ten-dollar bill. Purchasing an article for a small sum, she presented the bill, taking her change of good money and go outside to her waiting accomplice, exchange the money she had received for another raised bill and repeat the operation. Several cities were worked in this way, and thousands of dollars turned into the hands of the group. Thus, it seems she was a fitting partner for Bristol Bill, for whom she exhibited the utmost loyalty and devotion up to the day the prison doors closed behind him.

In January 1849 a box of engravers tools and dyes were stolen from Mr. Wilson's office in Boston. He recognized Christian Meadows, who worked for him earlier, and accused him of stealing them. Evidently Christian Meadows evaded arrest and disappeared. The search for him and the stolen tools led to the arrest of the whole gang of counterfeiters.

Mr. Christian Meadows was recognized by Mr. Oscar Hale, cashier at Wells River Bank, then the scene shifts to Groton in late January 1849.

Finding New York City, Boston, and other big cities to dangerous

for operations, Bristol Bill and Margaret O'Connor came to Groton and settled on a farm known as the Clough Place, in the west end of town, about four miles from the village. This farm is up back of where George Vance used to live, now owned by Orlo Goodwin. The Clough place was up back further and is owned, I think, by Seyon Trout Ranch in 1961.

Soon after Bristol Bill arrived, Christian Meadows with his wife and child came to town in search of health. It was said they boarded with Bristol Bill and his housekeeper on the Clough Farm. While the arrival of so many strangers must have created some comments, it did not appear to raise any suspicion, and gradually the newcomers became acquainted with the town people generally, and on very friendly terms with some of the businessmen. Later, a man known as English Jim appeared and was engaged to work on the farm. He was a powerfully built man, a scientific boxer, and a fine marksman.

One can imagine the manner in which the long winter evenings of 1849 were passed at the old remote farmhouse by Bristol Bill, the expert safe cracker; Christian Meadows, skilled in counterfeiting money; and English Jim, the strong-armed, sure shooting bodyguard of the gang. A fine group indeed would have concerned the Groton people if they had known the characters of those strangers for whom officers of the law were searching. Plans were made during the winter for robbing banks in Montpelier, Newbury, Irasburg, Danville, and St. Johnsbury.

As was his custom upon reaching a new field, Bristol Bill began looking for some local person or persons to join and assist him and who would be blinding the community to his real character and purpose. During the winter he cultivated the assistance of these local men of good report, and so excited their curiosity by his glowing accounts of the fortune to be made by counterfeiting money, and the men were fascinated by the lure of easy money. They consented to allow the use of their property for housing the press and other equipment and to render some other aid.

But before the well-laid plans could produce results, the long-armed law reached out and gathered the whole group. Those Groton men were McLane Marshall born in 1816 and died in California in 1898. He was cremated in San Francisco and buried in Groton; Peter M. Paul died in May 1861 at the age of 50 and is buried in Groton; and Ephraim Lowe who died in the Danville jail on March 26, 1850, at 49 years of age and is also buried in Groton.

The gang had been traced after an associate of Christian Meadows, out of revenge or for some fancied wrong, passed on to the engraver, Mr. W. Wilson, an underworld rumor of Christian Meadows whereabouts. Mr. Wilson began a diligent search for the man who robbed him of his

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engraving tools and dyes. His travels lead him to Wells River where he saw and recognized Bristol Bill. Feeling confident Christian Meadows would be close by, he got in touch with Sheriff Kent and Leander Quint and told them his story. Soon, Wilson, Kent, and Quint, accompanied by Sheriff Daniel Coffrin (great grandfather of Dr. Franklin Clark of St. Johnsbury) and several other men were on their way to Groton. Here they learned where Bristol Bill and Christian Meadows were living.

They arrived at the farmhouse after Bristol Bill had retired. Christian Meadows and English Jim were out that night. If they had been there blood shed might have occurred as the gang was well prepared for an attack. Sheriff Kent rapped on the door and called for Bill to come to the door for a minute. Bristol Bill evidently thinking some one had come to visit, came to the door, and was quickly empowered and hand cuffed. Because of his abnormal wrists and very slender hands, he was able to release himself from the hand cuffs, but he failed to escape. His ankles were then fettered and they took him in a cart drawn by oxen. Bristol Bill, who had eluded the police of great cities, came into Groton and was placed under heavy guard.

Officers spent the rest of the night studying the situation, and arrest of all the others soon followed. The women were released and never tried in Vermont with exceptions. The Groton man Ephraim Lowe was taken along with Bristol Bill and Christian Meadows, who secured bail. McLane Marshall and Peter M. Paul were arrested, and turned state's evidence, but Ephraim Lowe died in jail. All were lodged in the county jail at Danville to await trial in June. The arrest was made March 5, 1850.

Meanwhile the officials were engaged in a vigorous search for the gang's equipment which had suddenly disappeared following the arrest of Bristol Bill. Later, a press, dyes for printing counterfeit money, burglar tools, and a variety of keys were found at various and strange places. At the Clough place, where Bristol Bill was arrested, they found a complete set of burglar tools. At Groton village, they found a transfer press weighing about 1,500 pounds, copper printing plates, and some blank copper plates. Under a bee hive of Ephraim Lowe's were three boxes with 135 blank dyes, most of those stolen from Mr. Wilson.

Ephraim Lowe's place was where the great excitement prevailed, I think, and the town was filled with people eager to see and hear everything possible in connection with Bristol Bill and his counterfeit gang.

Their trial was a long, hotly contested one with Judge Poland presiding. I quote "Bristol Bill and another man named Christian Meadows were tried at the June term of court in 1850 for Caledonia County." The prosecutor was Mr. Bliss M. Davis county attorney assisted by Hon. Abel Underwood, appearing for the government. Defense was managed by

two lawyers from Boston. The trial resulted in guilty verdicts for both defendants and they were brought in for sentencing. Both had fetters on their ankles, but their hands were free. After court formalities, sentences of 10 years in State prison for each man, was pronounced.

While writing out the sentences at my desk, I heard a noise and looking up, Bristol Bill was recovering from having struck Mr. Bliss M. Davis with a blow. I supposed with his hand or fist, but Mr. Davis straightened up, put his hand on his neck and cried. "Pull it out! Pull it out!" Mr. Daniel Coffrin, Groton sheriff, sitting nearby sprang up and pulled a case knife out of Mr. Davis' neck. Immediately they carried him from the courtroom to his hotel, and after the prisoners were secured, I adjourned court and followed them, expecting to find him either dead or dying. But as I entered the room he looked up and exclaimed, "I am not dead yet, Judge. You and I will punish a great many more rascals."

A letter from the warden at Windsor State Prison said Bristol Bill was discharged by Governor Fairbanks, after serving six years of his sentence. When released, he was brought back to Caledonia County Court, tried for his attack on Mr. Bliss M. Davis and died while serving his second sentence.

A more romantic ending to his eventful career is the story of his escape from Windsor to a cave in Groton. Surrounded by officers of the law, and preferring death over capture, ended his life with his own gun. But I have also been told he escaped and was found west of what the railroad calls Cook's Shanty in Groton, nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile above Stillwater Crossing that goes down to Groton Pond.

Mrs. Nellie Jeffery wishing to get an authentic report of the case, wrote the warden of Windsor Prison. His reply was "In spite of diligent efforts I have been unable to secure any information regarding Bristol Bill after his discharge from Windsor Prison. Christian Meadows was released by the Governor at the request of Daniel Webster and became a law-abiding citizen."

Records show Margaret O'Connor went to New York, presumably to get money for Bristol Bill, was apprehended, served a sentence and afterwards sailed for Liverpool, England. The Fate of English Jim is not known; but headstones in the village cemetery mark the final resting place of the three deluded men whose names have become just a memory, McLane Marshall, Peter M. Paul, and Ephraim Lowe.

May I borrow Lloyde Squire's quote: "I know not what the truth may be, but I have told the tale or story as it was told to me." So I guess this will have to go for both Mrs. Jeffery and A. John White.

(edited for readability by Andrea Blair, 7/1992) (and by J. W. Benzie 4/2022)

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**STONE HOUSES in story by Waldo F. Glover**



Robert Taisey stone-house in Groton built around 1810.



James Whitehill stone house in Ryegate built around 1808.

## OLD SCOTLAND IN VERMONT



William Gilkerson stone house in Barnet built around 1800



John Orr stone house in Ryegate built around 1798..

## OLD SCOTLAND IN VERMONT

By WALDO F. GLOVER

*Condensed from VERMONT HISTORY, Vol, XXIII No. 2, April 1955  
The Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society, pages 91—103. Ed*

- . . the mountains, hills, lakes, dashing streams in southern Caledonia County bear a striking resemblance to old Caledonia beyond the sea. WOULD you like to see a wee bit of Old Scotland in New England? Then come to the hills of southern Caledonia County, Vermont—to hills cleared and cultivated by the Cochrans, Gibsons, Gilfillans, McLams, Nelsons, Taiseys, Whitehills, and scores of other families as indigenous to Scotland as the heather. But this story is not about people, but about a few ancient stone houses, reminiscent of the old country.

- Ryegate settled by The Scotch American Company from Inchinnan, Scotland, and Barnet settled largely by The United Company of Perth and Stirling a year later , it is a wonder they were not covered with stone houses patterned after the country homes and peasant cottages of their motherland. Surely no lack of building material, for most every lot in these towns, had more than enough field stones per acre for a cottage, and Blue Mountain outcroppings of granite were waiting to be quarried. Why, then, did Scotch pioneers not build more stone cottages, especially as they had artisans of many trades, including stonemasons?

Time was an essential factor. During the spring and summer of 1773 James Whitelaw and David Allan, agents of the Scotch American Company, toured the American colonies from Ryegate, formerly a New Hampshire Grant, to North Carolina looking for land They carefully weighed advantages of areas offered for sale and decided on Ryegate where they purchased the south half of town from the owner, Dr. John Witherspoon, a Scotsman and Presbyterian President of College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. Imagine the excitement of colonists to the news and their eagerness to go to New England and build homes in the wilderness for the "city" of their dreams. The first families arrived May 23, 1774 in Ryegate, and by the end of a twelvemonth, when the Revolutionary War put a damper on immigration, a considerable body of settlers had been assigned land. With forests to clear, houses to build, crops to raise, and families to feed all work was done as expeditiously as possible. There was simply not time to build stone houses like those in Scotland. Log houses were built in a fraction of the time and would serve

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temporarily. Ryegate pioneers had never seen log houses in Scotland, but there were plenty in Newbury; and workmen there to show them how to build one. So, they built log houses in Ryegate and Barnet.

When the log houses began to decay, or need of larger homes for the owners pride and comfort of families, why didn't they build stone houses? If Wordsworth's poetry definition be true "emotion recollected in tranquility" - why didn't nostalgic memories of Old Scotland, with pioneering days over and a more leisurely tranquil life, materialize in more stone cottages? Except for loyalty to the Presbyterian Church, and persistence using barley broth as a principal daily food, they adopted most practices of their neighbors, especially Newbury to the south. Plank or frame houses were predominant in New England, so with lots of timber and sawmills nearby they built plank or frame houses.

And all did – except five: John Orr, James and Abraham Whitehill in Ryegate, William Gilkerson in Barnet, and Robert Taisey in Groton. They built stone houses. This story is about their work or what remains of it. The exact age of some of these houses is impossible to determine, but they were all built between 1797 and 1812.

The Orr house is likely the oldest. When Frederick Wells wrote the History of Ryegate, he had reliable information this house was built "some years before 1800." John Orr, native of Kilmalcolm, and member of the Scotch American Company, arrived in Ryegate spring of 1774 and assigned two lots by the commissioners: a large farm lot and a house lot in the proposed "city" near Ryegate Corner. He exchanged these lots in 1797 for two hundred acres of virgin forest in the western part of town on the Groton line, where he was again a pioneer, clearing land and erecting buildings. It is unlikely he built another log house, so the stone house was probably built then, or before 1798 at the latest. The Orr house differs from the others. The walls up to the eaves are stone, but the gables are wood. This house stood as originally built for over a century. About forty years ago the front wall was razed and a wooden addition added. Its original appearance can only be seen from the rear. This farm remained with the descendants of John Orr for 155 years, the present owner being Charles Hooper, a great-great-grandson.

The Gilkerson house on Gilkerson Hill in Barnet probably is next oldest, being built before 1800. The farm was settled about 1774 by John Galbraith of Parish Balfron, Scotland, and in 1785 came into the possession of John Gilkerson, of Kilwinan, Scotland. Log houses for Galbraith and Gilkerson were sufficient; but when William Gilkerson, John's eldest son, was engaged, he evidently wanted his future bride, Agnes Somers, a lass from Cambuslang, to be queen of as fine a stone house as any she had known in Scotland. William married January 28,

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1802, but as he lived on his father's farm, he probably worked on his stone house sometime before the turn of the century. Judging from the great care evident in the construction of this house, it took some time, perhaps years in building.

James Whitehill's house in North Ryegate was built in 1808 and Abraham's in 1812. The Whitehill brothers were not members of the Scotch American Company, but were from Inchinnan, and knew about the company, and colony in Ryegate; and doubtless welcomed the opportunity to join their kinfolk in America. This opportunity came in 1798 when the historic "Witherspoon Tract" of six hundred acres in the north-west corner of Ryegate, bordering Groton on the west and Barnet on the north, was for sale.

In 1774 John Witherspoon, President of Princeton gave this tract to his son, James, who went forthwith to Ryegate, accompanied by a group of servants, including, several colored slaves. (John Phelps listed in 1800 Groton census as "other free person" probably came with the group). Ryegate was part of Gloucester County, New York then, and it was two years before the Republic of Vermont's constitution abolished slavery. James Witherspoon had cleared about twenty-five acres and built log houses when the Revolutionary War erupted. Espousing the Colonial cause, as his father who signed the Declaration of Independence did, James returned home, joined General Washington with rank of major, and fell at the Battle of Germantown; and with him fell the dream of a Witherspoon "estate" in North Ryegate.

James Whitehill possessed this tract in 1798 where he found the Witherspoon clearing overgrown, and the buildings in ruins. Here he built a log house for himself and one for his brother Abraham who came in 1800. They lived in log cabins while clearing the forests and building their stone houses. James Whitehill's stone house remained unchanged until 1833 when his son, Abraham II, who inherited the farm, made a major "improvement." He razed the east gable and most of the lower wall and constructed a wooden gable over a recessed porch. A wooden ell to the north was also added, presumably for a growing family. The farm remained in the James Whitehill family through three generations. Upon death of Corwin Whitehill, grandson of James, in 1929, the Whitehill Family Association acquired it, thus assuring the preservation of what remains of the old stone house. The Association holds reunions here in August each year and Whitehill Library Association, books are distributed from here.

Abraham Whitehill's stone house had no "improvements" when it was a residence. In 1857 William Whitehill, son of Abraham, built a wooden house where he considered a more suitable location, and the old stone house of 1812 was allowed to disintegrate. The walls, however,

stood intact well into the eighteen-nineties when Quincy A. Whitehill, grandson of Abraham, needed stone for the foundation of his new barn; and the old house proved a tempting source. The west gable and the two side walls were razed, leaving the east gable standing for another quarter-century, a very picturesque ruin. Abraham's farm remained in the family possession until 1946, when it was sold by his great-grandson and passed out of the family.

The last stone house of Scotch origin, one of the most picturesque of the group, was built by Robert Taisey in Groton. It was not in Groton's grand list of 1808, but was in the next record of 1812. Probably built about 1810, it was featured in Congdon's *Old Vermont Houses* and the author gives an excellent description of the house but was misinformed about dates of the house and Taisey family. Robert's father William was a member of the Scotch American Company, but did not come over with the first contingent in 1774. By waiting to come with the next company of about sixty, who left Scotland the spring of 1775, they arrived in Boston just before the Battle of Bunker Hill, and British authorities didn't allow them to proceed to Ryegate. Their options were joining the British army, going to Nova Scotia, or returning to Scotland. Most, including William Taisey, chose the latter; and twenty years later in 1795 he returned to New England, with his wife and two sons, Robert and William. They went first to Ryegate; but finding the best land already taken, turned westward to the new town of Groton and purchased lot 39.. Robert sold it later to his brother, William, and with his aging father settled on lot 25, the "Stone House" farm in 1801, living in a log house until completing the stone house, about 1810. For the remainder of his life, forty-three more years, this was Robert's home. After his death the farm passed through several hands but the last half-century it has been in possession of the Fellows family.

The five houses were all similar style, being about the size and shape of the average one-story New England cottage of 1800. They were all built of stone found or quarried nearby, principally rubble and random ashlar, the shapelier blocks being used around doors and windows and at outside corners. The solidly built walls were about two feet thick, with openings for windows widening towards the inside to admit a greater amount of light. Interestingly, William Gilkerson transported sixty-one barrels of lime from Burlington by ox team for mortar used in his stone house construction. The Whitehill brothers were more fortunate, for they discovered limestone on their own land. Today their kiln is a historical landmark. They manufactured lime for their stone houses, and chimney and plaster work throughout the neighborhood. As the Taisey house in

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Groton is but a scant mile and a half from the Whitehill kiln, it is quite likely Whitehill lime was used in their cement work.

Unlike most wooden New England cottages of the period, none of these stone houses have a large central chimney. Each was heated by fireplaces with flues incorporated into the walls of the gable ends resembling most of the country homes in Scotland. The Gilkerson and the Taisey houses had four fireplaces on the ground floor, one in each corner room. Two flues in each gable end ran slantingly upwards and towards each other until they nearly came together, then straight upwards into a short chimney at the peak. The Orr house had two fireplaces, one at each end of the house, parlor end and kitchen end, the kitchen one being much larger including the oven. The parlor fireplace has been closed for many years but could be opened for use. The kitchen fireplace was sealed up many years ago, adjudged unsafe. Fireplace arrangement in the Whitehill houses is little known, with the Abraham house a total ruin, and the east gable of the James house removed in 1833. However, the west or kitchen end has been preserved. Here is a huge fireplace and oven with a heavy stone mantle extending over both. This shapely stone probably came from Blue Mountain, as quarries furnished mantles and hearthstones for many houses in Ryegate and Groton at an early date.

The house built by Gilkerson is in the best state of preservation. This house fell into the hands of the Kitchell family who appreciated its possibilities both as an architectural gem and as a charming home. Bricked-up fireplaces were re-opened and put to work. Especially picturesque is the great fireplace with its connecting oven in the dining room, formerly the kitchen. The pine paneling, which had been concealed for many years as "old fashioned," is again visible.. Restoration has been undertaken, not to destroy, but to enhance the original features most worthy of preservation. But the Gilkerson house is not as reminiscent of the rustic beauty of a stone Highland cottage as the Taisey house. "This one needs only a thatched roof," writes Congdon, "to be a typical moorland cottage. The way the roof finishes along the gable wall without any moulding and eaves stop against a stone bracket or corbel are characteristically Scottish details." Weathered to a soft gray by the alternate sunshine and storms of seven-score years, with its outside aspect virtually unchanged by "improvements," except for its too brilliant roof, the Taisey house snuggles on its wind-swept hillside, a veritable bit of Old Scotland.

The county name Caledonia is a perpetual reminder of Old Scotland. It was suggested by Gen. James Whitelaw, Ryegate and Col. Alexander Harvey, Barnet, leaders of the two Scotch companies, and outstanding citizens in part of old Orange County that became Caledonia in 1792. But the name, however given, is not a misnomer, not only because of Scotch influence in early days, but also for the physical features of the region; the mountains, hills, lakes, and dashing streams of Caledonia County Vermont, bear a striking resemblance to those in old Caledonia beyond the sea.

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## GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

### Highlights of GHS June 1 Meeting

Brent Smith, Susan Pelkey Smith, Cheryl LeTourneau, Allen Goodine, Deborah Jurist, and Sarah Spira were present. Brent was thanked for turning on the water!

Mark Bushnell, history writer for VT Digger, gave permission to reprint some of his articles, if cited as author. and his books are listed.

Spring Newsletters were ready to be mailed. Deborah asked Terry Miller to separate the labels for expired memberships from those paid-up. A form to pay current dues is included to delinquent members. Only 60 members are paid-up. Terry posted the Spring newsletter on our website.

Minutes of April Meeting approved. Draft minutes should not be printed in the newsletter, but we all reviewed them, and timing made sense to include them this time.

Susan gave Treasurer's Report: Checking balance \$4,889.49; CD \$15,201.55; 2021 expenses \$3,100. Received two lifetime memberships. No fundraising plans yet this year. Suggested reprinting a collection of Newsletter articles for possible saleable products.

Brent and Matt Nunn examined the rotting threshold and determined no structural risk. Susan took a photo of it and maybe Dwaine can repair it, with his brother's help.

Cleaning PPH last year for open house cost \$180.00. No decision made about cleaning now. Susan found the name of last year's cleaner: Keri Graves, North Country Cleaners, 2297 Symes Pond Road, Ryegate, VT 05042. Deborah has flower pots ready for the PPH and will bring them down. Help keeping them watered may be needed.

Media upgrade: Reviewed GHS cassettes, and VHS tapes: 2 by George Ricker and 2 by Norma Hosmer. Terrence will digitize Alice Goodine's VHS tape to post on our website. Cheryl has a VCR for Sarah to use. Early baseline record of web traffic to our site was about 29 visits last month (some probably ourselves).

Property History Project—several reports ready to be posted on web. Map of original lots surveyed to be posted on web site as a resource.

Key to the PPH given to librarian Sarah Spira for Library to loan out. Plans for Groton History Day in August and/or FFD in October to include open house, cemetery tour with Brent, and presentation of Library building history with Allen.

Next meeting is planned for 3 pm. Tuesday June 28, at the PPH.

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