



October 2014 Newsletter

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 693

NORWELL, MASSACHUSETTS 02061

WWW.NORWELLHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

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The Norwell Historical Society
P.O. Box 693
Norwell, MA 02061
781-659-1888
www.norwellhistoricalsociety.org

MUSEUM & LIBRARY HOURS

The Jacobs Farmhouse is open by appointment only. Please contact the Society for further information or to schedule a tour.

The Norwell Historical Society Library at the Norwell Middle School (328 Main Street) is open on Wednesdays from 2:00 to 3:00 during the school year or by appointment.

The Norwell Historical Society Archives Center on the 3rd floor of the Sparrell School is open by appointment only.

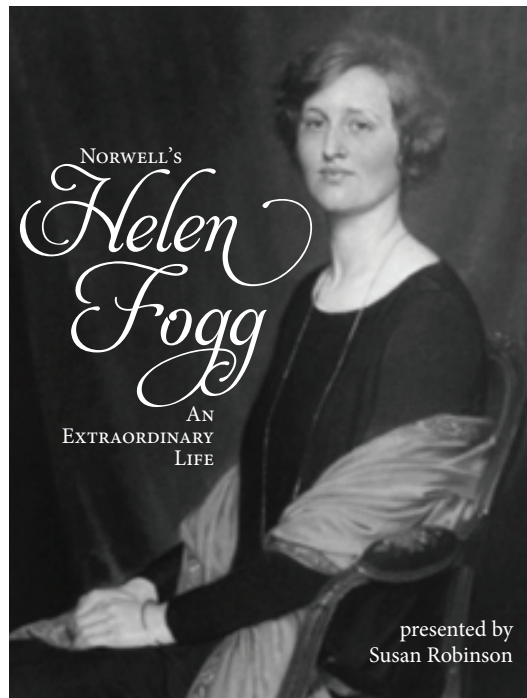
The purpose of this Society shall be: a.) to plan and arrange for the promotion of knowledge about the Town of Norwell by discussion, research, meetings and publications; b.) to collect, solicit and preserve documents, manuscripts, charts, maps, records, photographs, relics, and items of local interest; c.) to arrange, index, catalog and file/maintain such material for use by the members of the Norwell Historical Society and other interested parties; d.) to work with and cooperate with other entities, groups, organizations, and individuals directly and indirectly.

UPCOMING ANNUAL MEETING SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 21ST

The Norwell Historical Society will host its 79th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, October 21st at the Historical Society Library at the Norwell Middle School. The evening will begin at 7:00 with a coffee reception, the annual meeting

will commence at 7:30, and Susan Robinson, historian and researcher, will speak at 7:45.

Mrs. Robinson will speak on Norwell's own Helen Fogg: world traveler and philanthropist who lived from 1903 until 1984, and will highlight Helen's many accomplishments and her life of service.



Helen Fogg, a fourth and final generation of her family to be born and to have lived in Norwell, was a woman who in her own words "...had quite a time with the world, and the world has had its sport with me...". She led an extraordinary life of travel, service, and independence—yet never lost her connection to her town and her church. Helen continues to serve as a role model today.

This presentation is free, but please RSVP so that we may plan accordingly. You may reply via the internet at www.norwellhistoricalsociety.org (and click on the "Events" tab) or leave a phone message on our answering machine at 781-659-1888.

ABIAL FARRAR'S CIVIL WAR

by Bill Slattery

Editor's Note: The following is the second installment of a Society newsletter article originally written in 1990 by Society Archivist Bill Slattery. 2014 marks the 150th anniversary of South Scituate (Norwell) resident Abial Farrar's (pronounced "aah by'el fair'aah") entrance into the Civil War at age 17. In honor of this occasion, we are presenting this article. The remainder will appear in future editions of the Society newsletter.

From military records, it would appear that Abial's father [Civil War veteran Charles Henry Farrar] was stationed at Fort Spinola near New Bern, North Carolina. Holding the coastline for the Union was important to assisting the effectiveness of the Union's naval blockade of the South—to strangle its trade and economy. By the summer of 1863, Charles Farrar was in a position to harvest some business on returning

ABIAL FARRAR'S CIVIL WAR, CONT'D.

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home by supplying shoes, which were in great demand.

The war continued on without [17-year-old] Abial, but not without his notice. Two obituary notices from newspapers dating from this time were found inserted into Abial's Bible. One concerned Warren S. Litchfield, 38th Mass. Volunteers, aged 18, and the other, Walter Foster, 42nd Mass. Volunteers, aged 41. Whether these were intended as family admonitions to Abial, or just people known to Abial that he respected, is unknown.

On September 1, 1864 broadsides [posters] that had been published in Boston (claiming they came from the Selectmen of South Scituate) were displayed in public gathering places. The posters stated ten men were required within five days or else necessitate a draft and that bounties would be paid—though there is no evidence discovered showing the need for such posters or such incentives in this town. There is also no evidence from town records that any bounties were paid to anyone. About 135 men enlisted from South Scituate during the War and twenty-four died in service. Still, such a poster may have been seen by Abial and others indicating that the nation was calling them to step forward. Technically, however, Abial was too young to join the war without parental permission—and there is no evidence he either sought or received it. Rather, Abial went to the swamp containing maple trees to cut firewood (probably sometime in late September of 1864), but rather than return home he ran off to enlist. Unlike his father [when he enlisted], he did not dare show his face at the town hall on the common where everyone knew him. Before he left town he placed a note on a tree stump with his axe that read "I've gone to war" and it was discovered by his mother, Mary Gould (Clapp) Farrar.

While it is unknown how Abial got there (whether overland or by sea from Scituate Harbor) according to military records he mustered into service on October 2, 1864, on Gallop's Island in Boston Harbor. (An island location made it easier to control any changes of mind were the enlistee to suffer a loss of courage or the bounty-jumper decide to escape.) There is no record to show that Abial ever received more than thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents for his brief service as a soldier. He must have had some funds with him when he left home because physical evidence shows a *carte-de-visite* image of him in uniform that was taken on Gallop's Island by the photographer (or his studio)

A. K. Josselyn. One of these was sent home to his mother. Other copies were likely traded because he kept a small photo album with him containing pictures of other soldiers. Later after Abial's death, some Farrar relative (perhaps William Vinal) added similar pictures taken of family members to this album. In any case, it could have cost a week's wages in those days to have a number of photos made, but as a shoemaker, undoubtedly Abial had earned money of his own. He must have been as proud of his uniform as would have been a young knight in his suit of armor.



Abial Farrar
photograph by
A. K. Josselyn

Abial decided to enlist in the First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, and he would be assigned to its Company M. This enlistment took place on Wednesday, October 26, 1864. He informed officials that he was eighteen years old, a shoemaker by trade, and was born in Scituate, Massachusetts. The record stated that Abial was of fair complexion, was five feet seven inches tall, and had blue eyes and brown hair. Instead of applying his enlistment toward the quota for South Scituate, officials decided to apply it to Ward 2 of the 10th Congressional District, which was then around Springfield, Massachusetts. This was probably due to the quota already having been met in South Scituate. Abial had no trouble passing his physical. He was sent to nearby George's Island, where Fort Warren stood and which served as a training ground and headquarters for the First Heavy Artillery.

Able bodies being needed and with little time for training, Abial sailed on the ship *America* from Gallop's Island on Saturday, November 12th with one haversack, one knapsack, and one canteen. The ship stopped the next day at Holmes Hole (now Vineyard Haven) on the island of Martha's Vineyard to pick up provisions. He reported to his sister, "I was not seasick at all as I expected to be..."

On Wednesday, November 16th, Abial's ship reached Fort Monroe, Virginia. Then he took a boat to the James River, sleeping on board overnight. Landing at City Point, General Grant's main base in Virginia, Abial marched with his fellow soldiers around the city for most of Thursday, November 17th until five o'clock. Then they boarded railroad cars that carried them half the distance to their regiment by nine o'clock. Abial and his comrades marched three more miles before sleeping on their blankets. At this point, Abial's record called him "Private, recruit from depot". The next day they marched to the site of their assigned regiment. The urgency for able-bodied recruits could be surmised from the record of Company M: that

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**TO THE
CITIZENS OF
SO. SCITUATE.**

No. Scituate needs TEN MEN to complete its Quota under the Call for five hundred thousand men.
(Unless this number is obtained before the 5th of September, the Draft will be enforced to supply the deficiency.)
We have been unable to get the men elsewhere, and now appeal to our own Citizens to Volunteer and save themselves from a Draft. The following Bounties will be paid to any person who volunteers before the call next.

ONE YEAR'S SERVICE.

United States Bounty.	\$100
State Bounty,	240
Town and Subscription,	300
Government Pay at \$16.00 per Month,	192
State Aid-when entitled-and CLOTHING,	186
	1018

A drafted man gets nothing except the Government Pay and State Aid, amounting to the Volunteer \$500 more than to the drafted man.
By volunteering now, you can have your choice of organizations, whether Cavalry, Infantry or Heavy Artillery; and if desirable, can join any of the new Companies now forming within the State.
With the certainty of a Draft unless this number is raised, we commend the above to your careful consideration.
Sept. 1st, 1864. Per Order of the Selectmen.
Geo. H. Henshaw, Printer, 100 Hanover Street, Boston.

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE _____ NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

TOWN _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP

Individual (\$15) _____ Business (\$40) _____

Family (\$25) _____ Life (\$200) _____

Benefactor (\$500) _____

Please make checks payable to the *Norwell
Historical Society* and mail to: NHS,
P.O. Box 693, Norwell, MA 02061

AREAS OF INTEREST

Newsletter _____ Public Relations _____

Hospitality _____ Program Planning _____

Library Volunteer _____ Historical Research _____

Photo Cataloging _____ Process Archival _____
Material

Other: _____

ABIAL FARRAR, CONT'D.

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month there were only 38 enlisted men present, five were elsewhere on "daily duty," two were present sick, and about 40 were absent sick. One of Abial's closest comrades in the company was twenty-year-old Allen Bates of Dudley, Mass., who contracted small pox almost immediately upon arrival and, for one reason or another, would remain ill throughout his tenure.

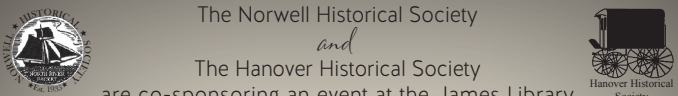
The main campsite for the First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery was called Fort Alexander Hays, which was no more than one and one-half miles from enemy lines south of Petersburg, Virginia. The "fort" consisted of earthen works dug amongst a few trees. Most artillery was not here, but closer to the front lines at Fort Stedman. There, members of the regiment would take turns at sentry duty and manning their pieces. Back at Fort Hays, Abial wrote, "we drill 6 hours a day, 3 in the morning and 3 in the afternoon."

Apparently, Abial arrived at camp in time for a fine Thanksgiving feast. Fine, that is, if the official regimental history is to be believed: "Marching orders came November 28, but a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner was not missed." Officially noted on the menu: turkey, geese, duck, chicken, pigeon, pie, cake, gingerbread, butter, jellies, grapes, and apples. Abial, however, wrote to his sister, "You told me what you had [on] Thanksgiving. I will tell you what I had. I had about a pound of turkey that almost stunk like rot it had been cooked so long and a few other things."


Those unused to the conditions could not easily enjoy a feast being so near the front line "where the roar of artillery and musketry had not entirely ceased for months..."

...to be continued in the next issue

The Norwell Historical Society
and
The Hanover Historical Society
are co-sponsoring an event at the James Library



This Will Actually Happen:
A Family History
A multi-media show by
Greg & Betsey Josselyn



Sunday, November 16th
3:00 p.m.

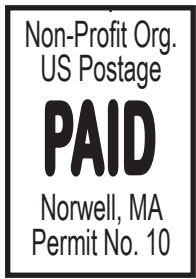
This unique performance inspired by the early 20th century diaries of Hanover resident Nora Hanson is a multi-media show where history comes to life. A moving reflection on the power of memory, family identity, and inheritance.
Meet Nora through the fragments she has left behind.

Tickets and information at www.jameslibrary.org
\$12 in advance/\$15 at the door

The James Library
AND CENTER FOR THE ARTS
24 West Street, Norwell



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79TH ANNUAL MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21ST
AT THE NORWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS AND MEMORABILIA

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| <p>A NARRATIVE OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL _____ \$20
 by Samuel H. Olson
 This book chronicles the life and times of our town from 1845-1963 through a collection of articles previously published in <i>The Norwell Mariner</i>.</p> <p>SHIPBUILDING ON THE NORTH RIVER _____ \$45
 by L. Vernon Briggs
 The definitive book on ships built on the North River and the shipyards that lined the shores. Written in 1889, and re-printed in 1988.</p> <p>HISTORIC HOMESTEADS OF NORWELL _____ \$15
 Learn more about our stately houses and the people who lived in them. This book, well-illustrated with drawings, discusses architectural features and includes genealogical information.</p> <p>HENDERSON MAP _____ \$3
 Interesting hand-drawn map suitable for framing. Drawn by Anne Henderson and first issued in 1967, it is a favorite depiction of the location of historic homes.</p> <p>1879 MAP _____ \$3
 This map is reproduced from a hand-drawn map of South Scituate in 1879. It shows the locations of road, homes and their owners. Suitable for framing.</p> <p>NORWELL TILES _____ \$10
 These 6" X 6" white tiles depict various scenes: Kent House, Cushing Center, etc. <i>Limited number.</i></p> | <p>THE ABCs OF NORWELL _____ \$10
 by Gertrude Daneau
 This coloring book is perfect for children (of all ages!). This illustrated book can be used as a text for teaching budding historians, or as a quick guide to Norwell's many famous personalities and historical features.</p> <p>HISTORY OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL _____ \$25
 by Joseph Foster Merritt
 A recently re-published history of the town to 1938. A unique narrative considered to be an invaluable account of Norwell prior to WWII.</p> <p>MORE THAN JUST A COOKBOOK _____ \$5
 This book is full of time-tested favorite recipes submitted by locals. Beyond the gastronomic delights, we have included sketches, interesting narratives and accounts of historic events.</p> <p>THE WAY WE WERE _____ \$20
 by Jeanne Garside
 This book is a series of articles written for Norwell's Centennial Celebration in 1988. Illustrated with old photographs, it tells what times were like in 1888.</p> <p>JACOBS MILLS PAINTING REPRODUCTION _____ \$25
 This 8" X 10" reproduction of the 1830s Jacobs Saw and Grist Mills painting is canvas-mounted on board and ready for framing. The original hangs in the Jacobs Farmhouse. (Framed copies available at the Society for \$75.)</p> |
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All the above items are available at the NHS Library in the Middle School on Wednesdays during the school year (2-3:00 p.m.), or you may call Wendy Bawabe at 781-659-1464, or you may request a publication using this form and enclosing a check (made payable to NHS). Mail to: NHS, P.O. Box 693, Norwell, MA 02061.