



May 2012

# Newsletter

NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 693

NORWELL, MASSACHUSETTS 02061

[WWW.NORWELLHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.NORWELLHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG)

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## CONTACTING US

The Norwell Historical Society  
P.O. Box 693  
Norwell, MA 02061  
781-659-1888  
[www.norwellhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.norwellhistoricalsociety.org)

## MUSEUM

### & LIBRARY HOURS

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

The Norwell Historical Society Library at the Norwell Middle School (328 Main Street--Route 123) is open on Wednesdays and Thursdays: from 1:30 to 3:30 during the school year, and 10:00 to noon during the summer.

The Norwell Historical Society Archives Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

## 1862--LINCOLN'S VALLEY FORGE

by Samuel Olson

*Author and Historical Society Board member Sam Olson has written the following article in honor of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War.*

*"These are the times that try men's souls..."*

The darkest period of the War For Independence was the winter of 1778 with Washington's ragged men huddled in makeshift winter quarters at Valley Forge while the British Army occupied Philadelphia just a few miles away. Undoubtedly, a similar period for Abraham Lincoln was 1862, the second year of a fratricidal war that few in the North had predicted would last more than a few months.

The year had begun with a new commander of the Army of the Potomac, 34 year-old George B. McClellan, a West Point graduate. He had assumed command just after the Northern debacle at Bull Run. He was a superb organizer and driller of men, albeit with what many perceived as a messianic complex. He had confided to his young wife that given his reputation he could become dictator of the nation.

While McClellan paraded and drilled for what was to be a knockout blow against Richmond, one of the few bright spots in the war came from the Western Theater in February 1862 where Ulysses S. ("Unconditional Surrender") Grant captured Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland. But Grant's luster was dimmed two months later by "Bloody Shiloh," won by the Federals but with appalling losses.

An event with positive repercussions for the future occurred in March, 1862 with the indecisive clash between the Confederate ironclad Merrimac and the Union "cheesebox on a raft," the Monitor. The engagement (witnessed by South Scituate's Frederick Curtis from a treetop) heralded the age of the iron ship giving the North, with its many iron foundries, a great advantage.

Lincoln had suffered a debilitating personal loss a few weeks earlier with the death by typhoid of his second son Willie. Not only did he have to deal with his own grief but also watch Mrs. Lincoln, completely unable to cope, take another step in her downward spiral toward madness.

In April, McClellan's army was ready to march despite his insistence that he was badly outnumbered by the foe. Lincoln, whom McClellan contemptuously referred to as the "original gorilla," maintained that his commanding general had the "slows," and that he would like to borrow the army if "Tardy George" wouldn't move. The Peninsula Campaign in Virginia ended two months later with McClellan's withdrawal without making a frontal assault on Richmond. Battles fought on the Peninsula such as Seven Days, Fair Oaks, and Malvern Hill had all been Federal losses. Lincoln then removed McClellan from both command of the Army of the Potomac and overall command of all the Union armies.

In September, McClellan was restored to command of the Army of the Potomac when Lee's army began an invasion of Maryland. The two armies met on the cornfields of Antietam on September 14, the bloodiest single day of the war.

*continued on page 2*

# LINCOLN'S VALLEY FORGE, CONT'D.

continued from page 1

After the battle, frustrated by McClellan's failure to pursue Lee's retreating army, Lincoln dismissed "Little Mac" for the final time. However, Antietam was enough of a victory for Lincoln to promulgate the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all the slaves in states still in rebellion.

McClellan's replacement was Ambrose Burnside known for his side whiskers ("sideburns"). That December's ill conceived assault on Fredericksburg was a disaster of major proportions. The despair in the North was so great that Lincoln feared losing all support for continuing the war to preserve the Union and free the slaves. If it had not been for the inception of a bounty system, Lincoln would have been hard-pressed to fill the depleted ranks of the army.

SOLDIERS' REPORT.	
ACCOUNT WITH SOLDIERS.	
BOUNTIES PAID TO SOLDIERS.	
Bounty paid to twenty-two three years men,	\$2,200 00
" " thirty-four nine months men,	3,400 00
" " eighteen three years men,	2,820 00
	\$8,420 00
State aid paid to soldiers' families from March 1, 1862, to February 1, 1863,	\$3,161 92
	\$11,581 92
TOWN AID PAID TO SOLDIERS' FAMILIES, FROM JANUARY 1, 1862, TO FEBRUARY 1, 1863.	
William T. Sylvester,	\$44 00
John Lewis,	48 00
Ensign B. Damon,	15 43
Mary B. Farrar,	26 20
Nathaniel W. Winslow,	16 68
	\$160 31

At left is a page from South Scituate's 1863 town report on the town's first implementation of a bounty system and also an accounting of state and local payments to soldiers' families.

A description of the horrible casualties of Fredericksburg, both from bullets and disease, can be seen in Louisa May Alcott's "Hospital Sketches." She had joined Dorothea Dix's hospital corps only to be stricken by typhoid from which she never fully recovered.

The despair wrought by Fredericksburg is also captured in Longfellow's poem "Christmas Bells":

*Then from each black accursed mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South  
And with the sound  
The carols downed  
Of peace on earth good will toward men.*

The new year began on a positive note with Lincoln's signing of the official Emancipation Proclamation. The succeeding months of 1863 brought their ups and downs for the Federal armies. But in early July came the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, considered the turning point of the War.

Thomas Paine's "The Crisis," with words that inspired Washington's rabble-in-arms in 1778, are equally apt in describing Lincoln's perseverance during his own Valley Forge in 1862--through difficulties and discouragement which would have broken a lesser man.

*The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country, but he who stands by it, deserves the love and thanks of men and women."*

## NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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: \_\_\_\_\_



**STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL**  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**AT THE JACOBS FARMHOUSE**  
**3:00 - 5:00 pm**

Tours of the Farmhouse  
Garden & Farm Tours  
Strawberry Shortcake & Lemonade  
Baked Goods Sale  
Children's Games

## Of Note...

The large silver maple tree on the front lawn of the Jacobs Farmhouse is no longer standing. An April wind storm toppled the large tree, which was estimated to be over 100 years old by Norwell Tree Warden Wes Osborne. Fortunately, a number of "tree cookies" were donated to the South Shore Natural Science Center to be used as outdoor seating by children!

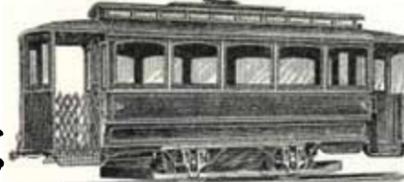


## Did You Know?

...the answer to the last issue's Trivia Corner Question? **Norwell's Rev. Samuel May enlisted a group of Sunday School children to help him fight for temperance. What was their group named and what was their chant?**

**The answer is:** The group was named the Coldwater Army. They paraded around the town accompanied by musicians carrying colorful temperance banners made by Rev. May and chanting "So here we pledge perpetual hate to all that can intoxicate!"

After awhile, the pressure exerted by May and his army of children caused 5 of the 6 rum dealers in town to close up shop. The lone holdout eventually capitulated too, according to Chapter 3 of Sam Olson's *A Narrative of South Scituate & Norwell*.



## Trivia Corner

**TRIVIA QUESTION:** The electric car line from High Street to Washington Street to Rockland, and from Norwell to Nantasket was built in the 1880s. When was it discontinued?

**ANSWER:** in the next issue! OR...read the Letter "E" in Gert Daneau's *ABCs of Norwell* to find out the answer right now!

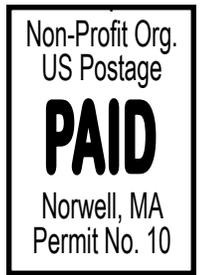
## Dear Society...

*The books mentioned in the [September, 2011] newsletter, ...I was very familiar with them. My uncle's books, grandma Annie's and grandfather Arthur Loring Jacobs'—particularly his sketch book! Grampa died around 1930 while living in Wellesley—and was a very talented artist. ...It's amazing that these [books] have surfaced 15 years later. I am glad the sketch book, particularly, is in safe hands. It meant a lot to me.*

Sincerely,  
Marcia Jacobs Adam, Scotia, NY



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 **STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL**  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**AT THE JACOBS FARMHOUSE**

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## NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS AND MEMORABILIA

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|---|---|
| A NARRATIVE OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL _____ \$20<br>by Samuel H. Olson<br>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> .    | THE ABCS OF NORWELL _____ \$10<br>by Gertrude Daneau<br>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. |
| SHIPBUILDING ON THE NORTH RIVER _____ \$45<br>by L. Vernon Briggs<br>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.                          | HISTORY OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL _____ \$25<br>by Joseph Foster Merritt<br>A recently re-published history of the town to 1938. A unique narrative considered to be an invaluable account of Norwell prior to WWII.  |
| HISTORIC HOMESTEADS OF NORWELL _____ \$15<br>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. | MORE THAN JUST A COOKBOOK _____ \$5<br>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.   |
| HENDERSON MAP _____ \$3<br>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.   | THE WAY WE WERE _____ \$20<br>by Jeanne Garside<br>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.   |
| 1879 MAP _____ \$3<br>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.   | JACOBS MILLS PAINTING REPRODUCTION _____ \$25<br>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.)       |
| NORWELL TILES _____ \$10<br>These 6" X 6" white tiles depict various scenes: Kent House, Cushing Center, etc. <i>Limited number.</i>  |   |

*All the above items are available at the NHS Library in the Middle School on Wed. & Thur. (1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., see summer hours on front), or you may call Gert Daneau at 781-659-2226, 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.*