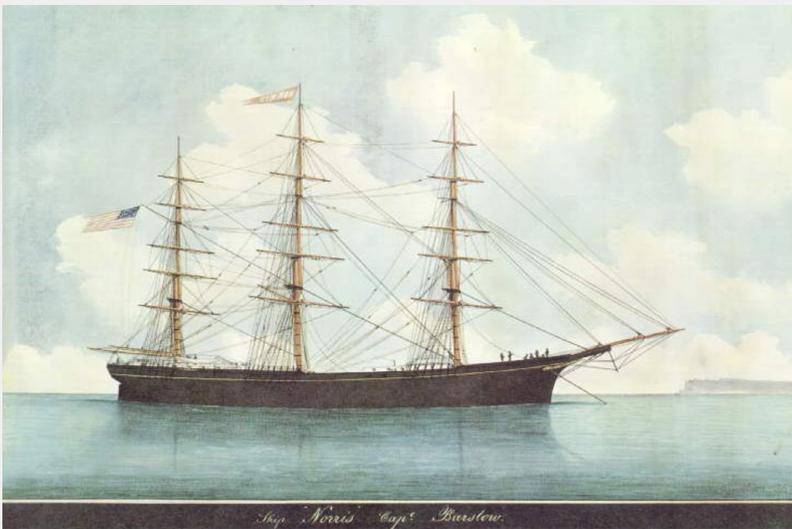




Newcastle Historical Society Newsletter

JANUARY 2022 ISSUE

JANUARY 1895: SHIP "NORRIS" LOST



The ship Norris of 1,155 tons burthen is seen here at anchor off Le Havre. This portrait of the Norris is housed at the Peabody-Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts.

Elbridge Norris was a prominent shipbuilder in the twin villages.

His shipbuilding abilities were well known and when he died in September 1874, the local newspaper stated that "no name in Maine had reached a higher proficiency in his trade". One week before Mr. Norris died the ship "Norris" was launched from his shipyard. The *Norris'* cargo was loaded from the Newcastle wharf and she was towed down the Damariscotta River in October of 1874. Observers described her as a "model of neatness and beauty," according to Mark Biscoe in "*No Pluckier Set of Men Anywhere*". For almost 20 years, the *Norris* successfully carried her cargos across the world.

On October 11, 1894, her captain -- John A. Barstow from Newcastle, Maine -- loaded the *Norris* with cannel coal in Newport News, Virginia and set sail for Barcelona, Spain. The journey was expected to take about 40 days. On board with the captain were
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OFFICERS



Tim Dinsmore
President

Vacant
Vice-President

Karen Campbell
Secretary

Karen Paz
Treasurer

Arlene Cole
Museum Curator

SHIP "NORRIS LOST" *(continued from cover)*

his wife Helen, daughter Mabel Ella and two nephews, two passengers and a crew of 18. More than 40 days later, no word had been received from the Norris. In the January 19, 1895 edition of *The New York Times*, an article reported that the American full-rigged ship "Norris" -- which had been expected to arrive in Barcelona by December 1, 1894 -- had not arrived. In shipping circles the opinion was expressed that the Norris had been lost at sea with no survivors. No word was ever heard from the Norris.

There is a cenotaph in the Thomaston Village Cemetery memorializing Capt. Barstow, his wife and daughter describing them as lost at sea at Le Havre. The beautiful ship launched from the Damariscotta River and all those aboard her were -- according to a sea captain who knew the Norris -- consigned to a "watery grave".



NHS: OUT & ABOUT

Although our museum wasn't open this year, NHS worked to maintain visibility in the community as well as highlight aspects of Newcastle's history by creating an exhibit on Edbury Hatch for display at the Boothbay Railway Village Bicentennial program in June, and in August by setting up a photographic exhibit based on Dinsmore-Flye Collections negatives in Veteran's Park, Newcastle. We also held two sales of notecards and matted photos from our collection outside of Sherman's Bookstore during the holiday season.



INDUSTRIES IN LINCOLN COUNTY IN 1820

The industries listed in Lincoln County in Moses Greenleaf's *Survey of Maine* (1829) included: 43 tanneries, 75 grist mills, 101 pairs of stones, 115 saw mills, 117 saws, 27 carding machines, 18 fulling mills, 5 other kinds of mills, and 2 cotton & woolen factories. Carding machines processed cleaned wool into loose, fluffy rolls called rovings, which were then spun into yarn. Filling was a step in the process of cleaning and thickening wool. (Witherhedge www.historicalarchives.com)

JOIN, RENEW OR UPGRADE TODAY



Membership in the Newcastle Historical Society is open to all who want to help preserve the history of the town of Newcastle.

To begin, renew or upgrade your membership, please mail this form and your check payable to the Newcastle Historical Society at P.O. Box 482, Newcastle, ME 04553. You can also join online at nhsmaine.org

Membership Levels

Lifetime:	\$150
Business:	\$50
Family:	\$25
Individual:	\$15
Student:	\$10

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Town/State: _____

ZIP Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

OUR MISSION

- To collect and preserve historical memorabilia and important records relating to the area and Town of Newcastle
- To encourage and promote interest in Newcastle history among local schools and the general public through exhibits, lectures and other special events
- To maintain and operate an historical reference center for the public



OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

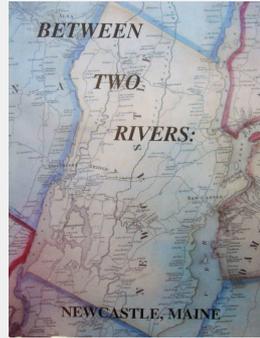
We are proud of the many accomplishments achieved by our society members, including:

- Creation of a museum that houses thousands of artifacts and records about Newcastle's history
- Formation of an extensive genealogy collection
- Scanning and maintaining a database of the Dinsmore-Flye Negative Collection, consisting of more than 80,000 historical negatives of Newcastle and the surrounding area
- Serving as financial representative of archaeological projects in Newcastle
- Funding of annual Lincoln Academy Scholarship
- Presentation of lectures on various historical topics
- Publication/sponsorship of history books focused on Newcastle

NEWCASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOKSTORE

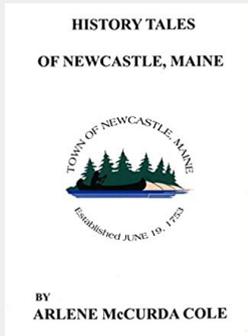
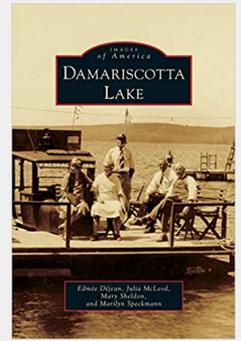
Between Two Rivers

by Arlene Cole
A softcover history of
Newcastle with maps and
photos
\$20



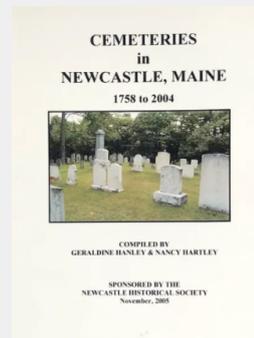
Damariscotta Lake

by Edmee Dejean, Julia
McLeod, Mary Sheldon &
Marilyn Speckman
A softcover pictorial and
written history of
Damariscotta Lake's people,
culture and traditions
\$20



History Tales of Newcastle

by Arlene Cole
A softcover book containing
130 articles on Newcastle
history
\$20

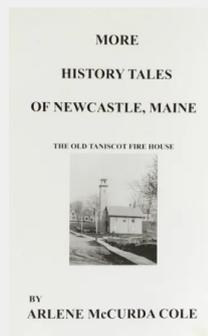


Cemeteries of Newcastle

by Geraldine Hanley &
Nancy Hartley
A softcover book of
burials in Newcastle from
1758 to 2004
\$20

More History Tales of Newcastle

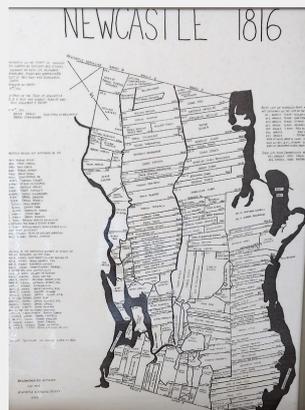
by Arlene Cole
A softcover book containing
more stories of Newcastle's
history
\$25



HISTORICAL MAPS



**1878 Newcastle &
Damariscotta
Panorama Map (18" x 12")
\$5**



**1816 Map of Newcastle
(36" x 24")
Laminated: \$20
Non-laminated: \$15**

To order, send check or money order (including \$5.50
for shipping and handling) and mailing instructions to:
Newcastle Historical Society
P.O. Box 482
Newcastle, Maine 04553

DUTCH SETTLEMENTS IN SHEEPSCOT

BY ARLENE COLE

When we think of Newcastle, we think of the English-speaking people who came to make their homes here. One of the earliest settlements was at the village of Sheepscot, often referred to as Sheepscot Farms. The Sheepscot River made a perfect "highway" for all, but it may have been settled by the Dutch before the English arrived.

The Rev. David Quimby Cushman in his *The History of Ancient Sheepscot and Newcastle* writes, "There is evidence that it dates back to a very early period of colonial history." It is likely that some of the early settlers who came to the Pemaquid area preferred an inland settlement and, thus, chose Sheepscot. Cushman continues, "The Duke D'Rochefaucault says, in the 2nd volume of his travels, "some attempts were made by the Dutch to settle a colony at Newcastle as early as 1607." Although this appears to be too early a date, the Dutch -- by tradition -- did settle in Sheepscot. It is possible the Dutch arrived and settled here before the English."

It is quite possible the Dutch came to Sheepscot because of the Duke of York. The Duke of York -- later King James II of England -- was a brother of Charles II. According to Samuel Eliot Morrison in his *History of the American People*, Charles II gave his brother, the Duke of York, the present state of New York, the entire region between the Connecticut and Delaware Rivers, Long Island, Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard and the present state of Maine east of the Kennebec. The Dutch were settled in New York (then New Amsterdam) and up the Hudson River. It would be logical for the Duke of York to be involved with settlements, both with the Dutch in New York and in Sheepscot.

Cushman writes that it was in 1664 that the Duke of York was granted this large area, which included Sheepscot. The Duke of York never came to Sheepscot. After he had subdued New Amsterdam and renamed it New York, he appointed commissioners to come to Maine. In her *High Points in the History of the Newcastle-Damariscotta Area*, Florence M. Sturges writes, "Governor Dungan, an agent of the Duke of York, removed many Dutch families from the settlements on the Hudson to his new province of Sheepscot where they remained until the outbreak of the French and Indian Wars."

This area was called "The Duke of York's property" or "The Territory of Sagadahock". The commissioners erected the area into a county they called Cornwall. The Sheepscot plantation they called Dartmouth or New Dartmouth. The Duke continued his claim to the area for about 25 years. In 1689, The Duke of York -- who had become king -- abdicated his crown and his American possessions, including Sheepscot.

Cushman continues to write that the inhabitants in the Sheepscot area were principally English, German and a few French, but there were some of Dutch extraction. Although English names have survived, "there undoubtedly was a sprinkling of Dutch names among them or before them." The older inhabitants whom Cushman knew in his time were "well persuaded" that the Dutch once lived locally and at a date as early as that at Pemaquid. He also writes, "A Dutch colony had been sent from New York by the Duke of York to Sheepscot Neck where -- with characteristic thrift and labor -- they cleared the surrounding wilderness and wrested from the sterile soil such abundant harvests that Sir Edmond Andros called the Sheepscot Valley "The Garden of the East." When the second Indian war broke out the people fled the area.

(Continued on page 6)

DUTCH SETTLEMENTS

(continued from page 5)



The earliest known photo of Sheepscot Village, taken from Dyer's Neck circa 1885. The sidewalks, fences, four barns, stores at right, schoolhouse at upper left and blacksmith shop (small building at the center by the river) have all gone.

Fannie S. Chase writes in her *Wiscasset in Pownalborough* that "Tradition among the old settlers places the Dutch on this river (Sheepscot) at a very early date. Pipes, tiles, and other proof of the presence of Hollanders have been extracted on the Newcastle shore. Sullivan states that there was a settlement there (on the Newcastle side of the Sheepscot) as early as in any part of the Pemaquid country." Chase does not identify Sullivan.

Editor's Note:

*The settlement of Sheepscot is still a controversial topic today. Local historians and accounts from early documents -- as Mrs. Cole noted -- allude to the presence of early Dutch settlers in the area known as Sheepscot. However, more recently, artifacts such as Dutch fireplace tiles and clay tobacco pipes with distinctive markings have been found at all Maine seventeenth century sites. These objects are viewed as evidence of trade networks and not irrefutable evidence of Dutch settlement in a specific location. A Ph.D. dissertation in 1986 at the College of William and Mary titled *Trouble to the Eastward* by Dr. Emerson Baker (currently professor of history at Salem State University) reported that the earliest Anglo-American settlement appears to be in the 1650s and reported no evidence of a Dutch settlement at Sheepscot. The matter of Dutch settlement at Sheepscot continues then to be a topic for discussion.*

DUES REMINDER!

We need your support. Please remember to renew your membership in the Newcastle Historical Society. See page 3 to renew!

A GENEROUS THANK YOU

Newcastle Historical Society recently received a welcome surprise -- a note with a check from the Glidden Cemetery Association Directors. The \$250.00 donation was made in appreciation for the help three NHS members provided after a car ran off River Road on Dec. 13th and crashed into the Glidden Cemetery. Glidden Cemetery is a private cemetery established in the 1800s and is the resting place of many old Newcastle families including the Gliddens and Dodges. Frances Perkins -- who served as the Secretary of Labor under Franklin Roosevelt -- is also buried in the Glidden Cemetery.

Extensive damage was done to the cemetery's recently restored wrought iron fencing and several gravestones were broken. NHS members Betsy Evans, Dick Cleveland and Karen Paz -- learning help was needed to clear broken glass and metal fragments and collect stone fragments from broken monuments -- volunteered to help. Enough help was given to alleviate the immediate safety concerns.

Thank you Betsy, Dick and Karen for your work, and thank you Glidden Cemetery Association for your generous show of appreciation. Both Newcastle Historical Society and the Glidden Cemetery Association have a common interest in the restoration and preservation of historic Newcastle cemeteries. We are glad our organizations were able to work together to begin to repair the damage done to this beautiful old burying ground.