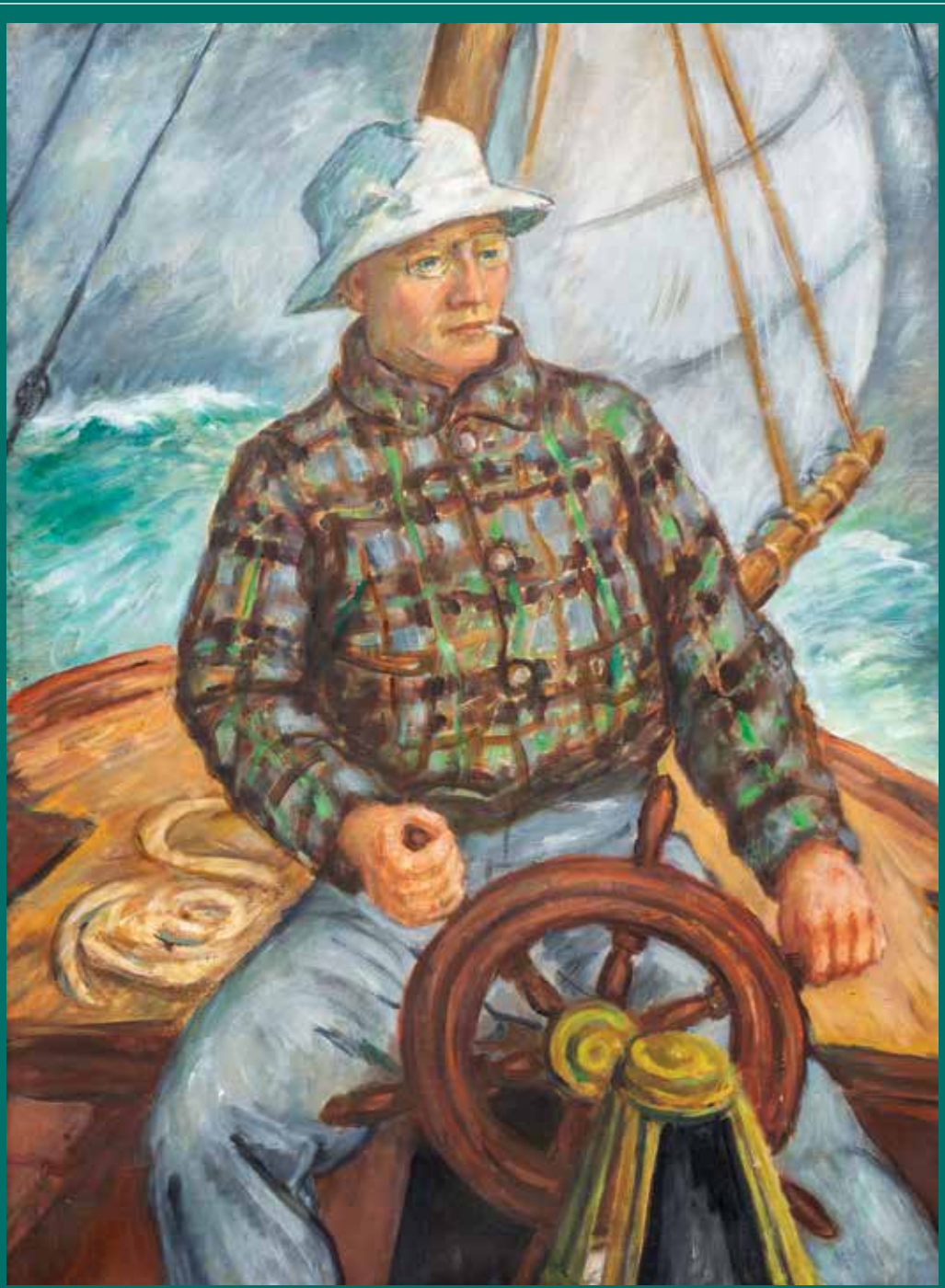
MEMORIES OF MAINE

THE MAGAZINE FOR MAINE HISTORY AND NOSTALGIA



Oil painting of Lincoln R. Colcord (1883-1947) made by Waldo Peirce, circa 1920. *Collections of Penobscot Marine Museum.*

INSIDE

CENTRAL & MID-COAST MAINE
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Inside

MEMORIES OF MAINE
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Whitefield Historical Society

In collaboration with the hundreds of local historical societies, preservation groups, museums, and the countless enthusiasts of Maine's history and nostalgia, our goal is to provide our readers with interesting articles about the people and places that built and preserve that history.

Memories of Maine Magazine publishes 6 regional issues a year. Each issue is distributed widely throughout its area in restaurants, diners, banks, credit unions, historical societies, libraries, variety and grocery stores, and to each of our advertisers. We encourage you to share our magazine with your family, friends and acquaintances and to support the faithful advertisers who help us to keep your Memories of Maine alive.

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We also welcome your comments.

SAM POVICH, FROM FISH CANNERY LABORER TO FAST FOOD KING

by Sheila D. Grant

Photos courtesy Fred Weinberg, Historian, Beth Israel Congregation in Bath

At first glance, Samuel Povich seems an unlikely person to become the "fast food king" of Bath, Maine, but that was how he came to be known. Sam was born in Freehold, NJ, on May 29, 1892, a son to Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Povich.

As a young man, Sam spent a number of years working in fish canneries in Seattle and Alaska. At the beginning of WWI, Sam enlisted in the U.S. Navy. In Sam's enlistment papers, he was said to be of medium build, with auburn hair and blue eyes. Sam served as the ship's commissary steward until 1919. This means that as a young military man, Sam survived both the war and the 1918 Spanish Influenza pandemic. In 1918 alone, Navy and Marine patients numbered 121,225, and of those, 4,158 perished.

Sam Povich poses outside of his grocery store and fast-food eatery.
Bath Historical Society Times of Bath photo.

After the war, Sam came to Bath, where he opened a small grocery store at the corner of Pine and Middle Streets called Sam's. In 1924, he married Sophia Weinstein. No one is certain why Sam chose Bath.

"I don't know whether he came to Bath after WWI because Nathan [Povich] did. There were Poviches in Bath during WWI, so I presume he had relatives there," said Elaine Povich, a descendent of Sam's aunt, Rosa Orlovich Povich, who married Nathan Povich, Elaine's great-grandfather. Elaine, a journalist who has written for *United Press International* and *Newsday*, among others, now writes for *Stateline* and lives in Maryland.

In the 1924-25 *Bath City Directory*, Sam's advertised the sale of staple and fancy groceries, with Hatchet Brand goods being a specialty. Hatchet provided hermetically sealed canned goods produced in Maine factories in Portland and Lubec, and factories in several locations in Massachusetts.

Sam worked hard to make his grocery store a success. In the 1940 United States Federal Census, Sam reported that he and Sophia lived at 477 Middle Street; that he had completed only the first year of high school; and that he worked 83 hours per week as a proprietor. The couple did not have any children.

In the 1942-43 *Bath City Directory*, Sam's was still advertising Hatchet Brand, choice meats and provisions, and candies and ice cream. But at about that time, a lunch counter was added to the grocery store.

The 1946-47 *Bath City Directory* promoted Sam's Sandwich Bar with the tagline, "Bath builds the finest ships; Sam makes the finest sandwiches." The ad also

mentions groceries, provisions and lobster, but food service had clearly become the big draw.

And by publication of the 1949-1950 *Bath City Directory*, Sam's no longer mentioned groceries in their ad, instead saving space to promote French fried onion rings, hot pastrami, hamburgers, hot dogs, French fried potatoes and the biggest lobster roll in Maine. "The surroundings ain't so hot, but the food is perfect," states the ad.

The lobster roll was by far the most popular item on the menu.

"Family lore has it that Sam created the first lobster roll," said Elaine Povich, adding that at least her great aunts and uncles believed that to be the case. "He took fresh lobster, which by the way was not a delicacy at that time – it was considered poor people's food – and he put it in a hot dog roll. I don't know what he put on it. People started coming to his store for the lobster roll."

According to the *Encyclopedia of American Food and Drink* and several websites, the lobster roll originated as a hot dish at a restaurant in Milford, CT, in 1929. So while Sam did not invent the lobster roll, he may have perfected it. People rhapsodize about Sam's lobster rolls to this day.

In 2014, the Beth Israel Congregation created a video of their history. One of the guest speakers was Janice Povich, Elaine's mother, who said that five members of the Povich family are among the original 39 charter members of the Beth Israel Synagogue in Bath, which celebrated its 100th anniversary on January 30, 2022. When she came to Sam's name on the list, she said "…and Samuel Povich, known as the lobster king.

"Sam Povich had a little sandwich shop and grocery store on Pine and Middle Streets and was famous for his lobster rolls," Janice told the audience, going on to repeat a favorite tale about when the very busy proprietor gave her upcoming nuptials his blessing. "He had little time for socializing, but when Don Povich brought me to Bath before we were married, he took me to see Sam. It was a Saturday night and you had to stand in line around the corner to get these lobster rolls. It was .65 cents for the biggest lobster roll you ever saw!

Sam's original founders key was returned to the Beth Israel synagogue in Bath several years after his death, where it remains framed and on display. *Beth Israel Congregation photo.*

"When I finally got to the counter, he said, 'Hi, are you a nice Jewish girl?' I said, 'Yes, I am.' He said, 'Good.' And that was the only conversation I ever had with him," she finished, to appreciative laughter from an audience well acquainted with tales of Sam's and its owner.

In 1995, Sam was the subject of an essay by P.L. Pert, Jr. in the Bath Historical Society publication *The Times of Bath, ME.*

Pert wrote that in its heyday in the 1940s and early 1950s, Sam's drew customers "like metal slivers to a magnet. Sam's was the place to meet and eat as soon as one could get there after the live music ceased at any one of the many Friday and Saturday night public dances," Pert wrote. The sooner, the better, "especially if you disliked standing nine deep in a row of six across. That's the way they lined up at the chest-high counter behind which Sam held forth equipped with a refrigerator, fryolator and a memory for names and faces that made him the envy of every politician in Sagadahoc County. He seldom wrote a food order on paper. From an entire row of six he took orders verbally, and no matter how intricate, set them down unfailingly in front of the correct customer."

Sam's lobster roll recipe included a buttered, lightly grilled hot dog roll which he would then "crowd into the roll from tip to tip and side to side all that he could (something akin to a cup) of bite-sized, refrigerator-chilled chunks of cooked lobster claw and tail meat kissed

lightly with a quality mayonnaise. The end product was a masterpiece, a supreme seafood delight, impossible to eat without a plate to catch the spillover from the roll at each bite," Pert enthused.

People came for the lobster, but returned to chat with Sam, Pert wrote.

"Not very tall, he faintly resembled a less weighty version of *Beetle Bailey's* army cook, complete with food-stained white T-shirt and apron. A blond fringe of receding hairline framed a face that at first glance appeared perpetually stern."

The look, while put to good advantage with any customer who dared to be rude, was generally misleading.

"Simply stated, Sam liked people," Pert recalled. "He enjoyed making them feel good. He constantly demonstrated this through personal acts of generosity. For example, he would ease a working college student (stopping by for the economy lunch of a hamburger and chocolate milk on a slow, mid-August afternoon) into a conversation about personal hopes and ambitions. At the same time, almost unnoticeably, he provided a plate of hot French fries and dish of quartered kosher dill pickles—his personal contribution to the lunch."

He was a generous tipper at gas stations, and on a larger scale, would reopen Sam's in the middle of the night to feed "a group of bone-weary, hungry firemen" following a particularly difficult fire call.

In the 2014 Beth Israel Congregation history video, a second speaker, Nathan Cogan, also remembered Sam for both his lobster roll and his generosity. Nathan said that Sam was a hero for all the little kids that used to hang out on the South side of Bath, as well.

"Sam may be remembered for the greatest lobster roll in the world—I've bumped into people at Stamford University—a professor there I was visiting one day—'Oh, you're from Maine? Where?' and I said Bath. 'Do you know anything about a place called Sam's?'" As a child, the professor and his father would sneak away from the family vacation at Old Orchard Beach to get lobster rolls at Sam's. It was a favorite childhood memory.

But, "the big point about Sam Povich is deeper than that," said Cogan. "And I heard this from a lot of my classmates who went through the terrible economic times in Bath say between 1946 and 1960 when the town almost shut down. They would say that Sam would give them groceries, Sam would lend them money and never wrote anything down. He just did it out of the goodness of his heart…Sam needs to be remembered for his kindness."

Despite the long hours spent at the grocery and lunch counter, Sam made time to become a member of the Bath Lodge of Elks, Polar Star Lodge of Masons, the Colonial Club, and he was a commander of the Smith-Tobey Post of the American Legion.

Sam was also, as noted above, a founding member of the Beth Israel Synagogue. An article in the January 9, 1922 issue of *The Bath Independent* states that about 250 local Hebrews and many out-of-town guests attended the dedication exercises. The key to the new synagogue was auctioned off as a fundraiser for the congregation, with Max Cohen and Samuel Povich the top bidders, "they thereby gaining the honor of opening the door for the exercises.

The right to have the honor to carry the Torah from Music hall to the synagogue was bought by Nathan Povich and at five o'clock the procession started up Washington Street to the new synagogue led by ex-service men Samuel Povich and Henry Gediman, accompanied by Samuel Greenblatt, a veteran of the Russian-Japanese war."

In 1954, when Sam was 62, his health failed and he was forced to close his business. A few months later, he was a passenger in a car with Philip and Charles O'Hara, and complained of not feeling well near Brunswick. He died before they could reach Bath, less than 10 miles away. His funeral was held at the synagogue he helped to found, and Sam was laid to rest in the Mt. Sinai Cemetery in Portland.

Many years later, a nephew, Hal Gershman, returned Sam's Founder's key to the synagogue, where it was framed and remains on display to this day.

FAITH IN THE WILDERNESS

by Aimée N. Lanteigne

Originally published in our 2012 Spring Edition

The sleepy rural hamlet of Whitefield, Maine, does not seem like the sort of place where a tiny Catholic church could survive, especially not in today's climate of church closings and parish consolidations. But not only has St. Denis Church survived, it has indeed thrived for 169 years, making it the second oldest Catholic church in New England.

Whitefield, named for an itinerant English minister, George Whitefield, who preached in the region in 1745, was settled by Irish immigrants in 1805. The Finns, Molloys, Breens, and Kavanaghs moved to the area and bought farms. At the time, there was no Catholic church in Whitefield so they had to walk to Damariscotta to attend mass at St. Patrick's. (Built in 1808, this was the first Catholic church in Maine and is now the oldest standing Catholic church north of New York.) The importance of the Catholic faith to an Irishman cannot be overestimated, and so a church of their own the Irish community must have. James Keating, an Irish settler in Whitefield, donated eight acres of his land for a church and a cemetery.

St. Denis Church, Rectory, and Cemetery, circa 1906. *Courtesy of Whitefield Historical Society.*

Father John Louis de Cheverus of France visited the Damariscotta-Newcastle area every summer beginning in 1799 and said mass all up and down the mid-coast. By 1804, there were some two hundred Catholics living within twenty miles of the church in Damariscotta. Just sixteen years later, there were 108 Catholic families between the two congregations of

St. Patrick's in Damariscotta and St. Denis in Whitefield. In fact, Whitefield had exceeded Damariscotta in sheer numbers of Catholics, largely due to its influx of Irish immigrants, and thus Whitefield became a rural Catholic center.

Father Cheverus became Bishop Cheverus in 1808, and on June 30, 1822, he dedicated the first church building in Whitefield.

"Sunday, June 30, 1822, in the town of Whitefield, County of Lincoln, State of Maine, the new church erected in the same place was blessed and dedicated under the name of Saint Dennis by me, the undersigned Roman Catholic Bishop of Boston, assisted by the Reverend Dennis Ryan…of the church of Saint Patrick, Damariscotta. I preached from the 7th chapter of the first book of (Chronicles) verses 15 and 16: 'My eyes shall be open and my ears attentive to the prayer of him that shall pray in this place. For I have chosen and have sanctified this place that My name may be there forever and My eyes and My heart may remain there perpetually'."

The first pastor at St. Denis was Reverend Dennis Ryan of County Kilkenny, Ireland. Father Ryan was ordained in Boston in the spring of 1817 and was assigned to Saint Patrick's parish in Damariscotta Mills in October 1818. He was soon moved to North Whitefield because of the population growth in the region.

In the summer of 1827, Bishop Benedict J. Fenwick, SJ,

came to Maine from Boston to visit with James Kavanagh and his family, as well as with Father Ryan and other Catholic families in the area. Upon his return to Whitefield in 1832, the congregation had grown to over 1,200 members. It was at this time that he authorized the construction of a new church made of brick on the same site of the church dedicated by Bishop Cheverus. The church's name was chosen by Father Ryan with influence from Bishop Cheverus. The church is dedicated to St. Dionysius, or Denis, of Italy. St. Denis was born in Italy, but was sent to Gaul (France) in 250 AD where he and two others, now saints, established Christian worship on an island in the Seine River. Their preaching proved so effective that it became a threat to the reign of the Roman Empire and the men were arrested, imprisoned, and eventually beheaded, their bodies thrown into the river itself.

St. Denis Church, Rectory, and Convent taken before the fire in December 1922 that nearly destroyed the convent which was rebuilt with just two stories. Viewed from the Cooper Road, a narrow dirt road with stone walls on each side. *Courtesy of Whitefield Historical Society.*

The very first church in Whitefield was a wooden building about 36' x 50'. The priest actually lived within a section of the church itself until Father Ryan built the rectory, a two-story brick house with a fireplace, on what is now Route 126, west of the church. The new brick church would be built literally atop of the old church, the new brick edifice completely surrounding the old wooden structure. Once finished, the original wooden church was dismantled and removed, much to the dismay of the old settlers. The new brick church, which still stands today, was dedicated by Bishop Fenwick on August 12, 1833.

The rectory was built by Father Edward W. Putnam. He was assigned to St. Denis in 1851 and was the first resident pastor after Father Ryan. Father Putnam envisioned a school and convent in Whitefield, but died before he could see this dream carried out. (In fact, his body is buried beneath the church sanctuary.) His successor, Father James Peterson, followed through with his plans and established the school in 1871. St. Denis Academy was staffed by the Sisters of Mercy from Manchester, New Hampshire "for the purpose of promoting science, literature and morality." The building also served as an orphanage during its existence. It closed in 1887 primarily due to its "inconvenient location." At least two of the nuns who taught at the academy, Sister Mary Zita McDonough and Sister Mary Matthias Molloy, both of Ireland, are buried in Calvary Cemetery near the church.

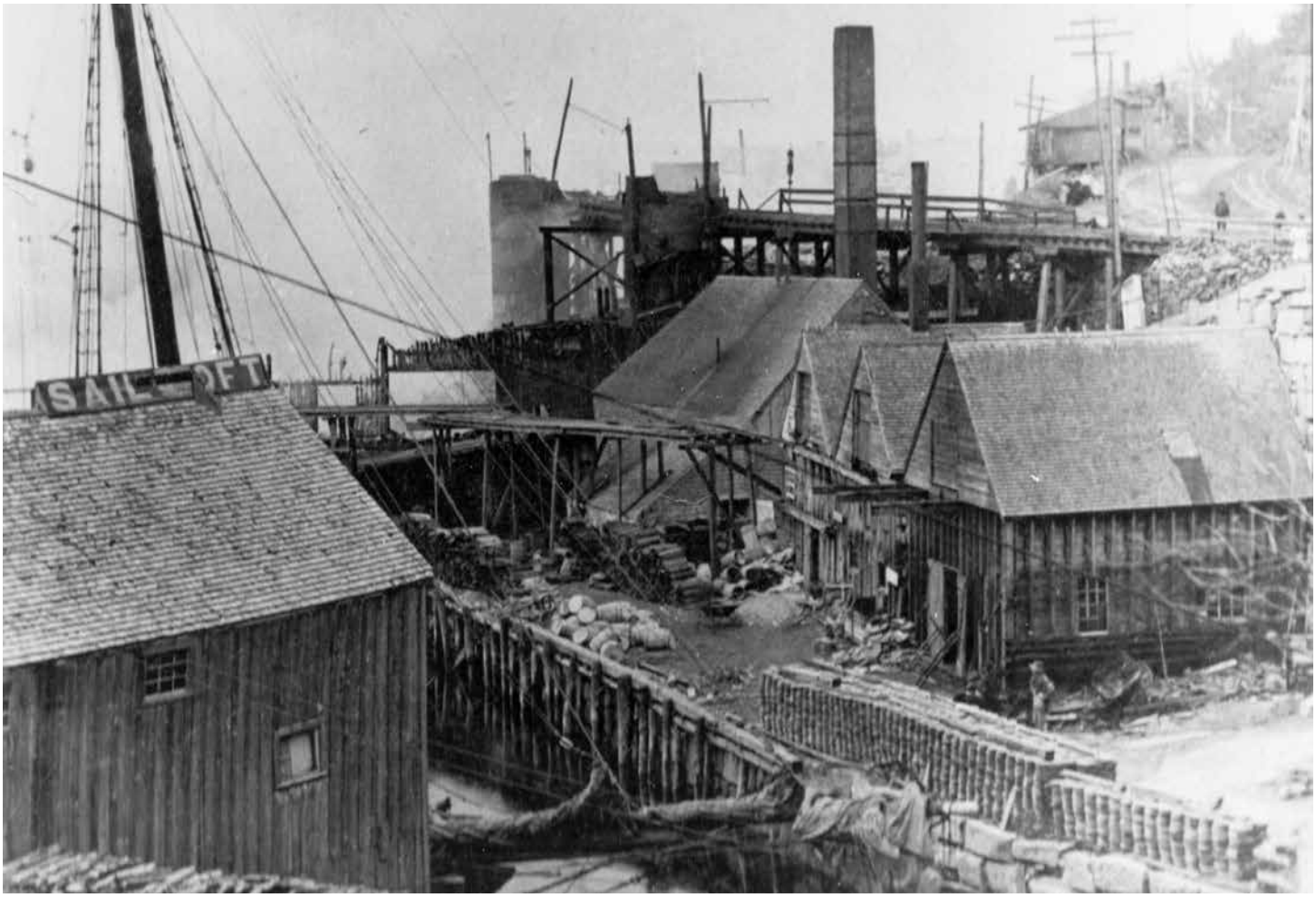
The convent went up in flames on New Year's Eve, 1922, but was rebuilt the following summer with local citizens and volunteers donating materials, time, and labor to resurrect the structure as a multi-purpose Parish Hall. For decades the hall was used as a sort of community center, hosting everything from the famous "Game Suppers" which served a mélange of wild meats such as moose and porcupine, to dances, wedding receptions, baked bean suppers, Beano, and work bees. Today it continues to serve the parish at large by housing Faith Formation classes and Knights of Columbus meetings.

FAITH continued on page 35

BURNING DAY AND NIGHT

LIME IN KNOX COUNTY

by Mike Kelley

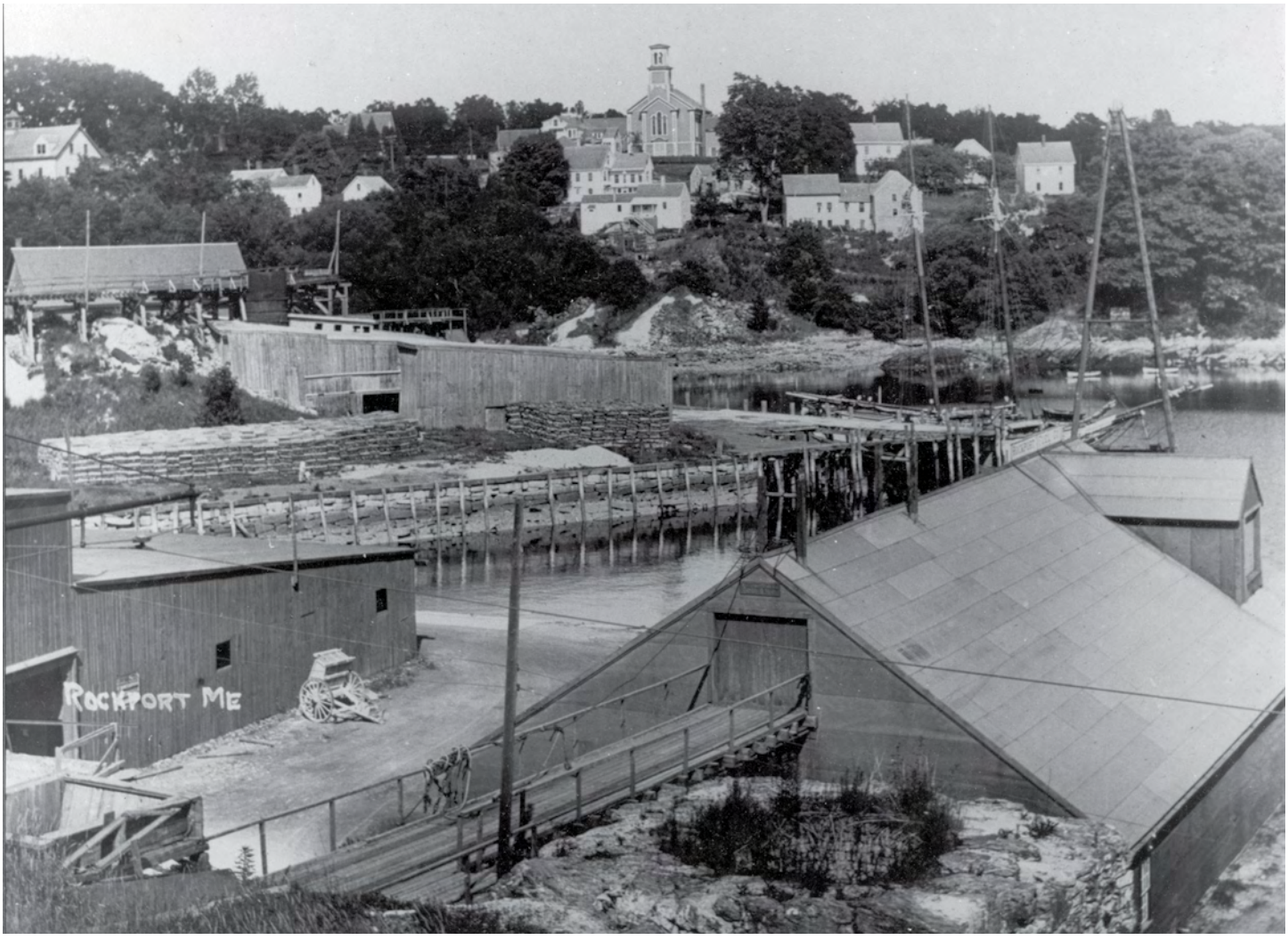


View of Rockport lime kilns and sheds from Pascal Avenue. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

Limestone, a small town in Aroostook County, home of the former Loring Air Force Base, may be named for its limestone deposits, but another area in the state, more than four hours away, was arguably one the limestone capitals of the country.

In the 1800s, the seaside towns of Camden, Rockland, Rockport, and Thomaston were known nationally for their limestone.

"The Knox County area was one of the leading producers of lime in the United States during the



Rockport harbor, circa 1900. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

nineteenth century, and lime was the mainstay of the local economy," Roger Grindle wrote in his 1971 book *Quarry and Kiln: The Story of Maine's Lime Industry.*

At kilns up and down the Knox County waterfront, limestone deposit or calcium carbonate was burned to produce calcium oxide, which was used on plaster, mortar and other building materials. Calcium carbonate is found in sedimentary rock from the Earth's crust and comes from the fossilized remains of ancient marine animals.

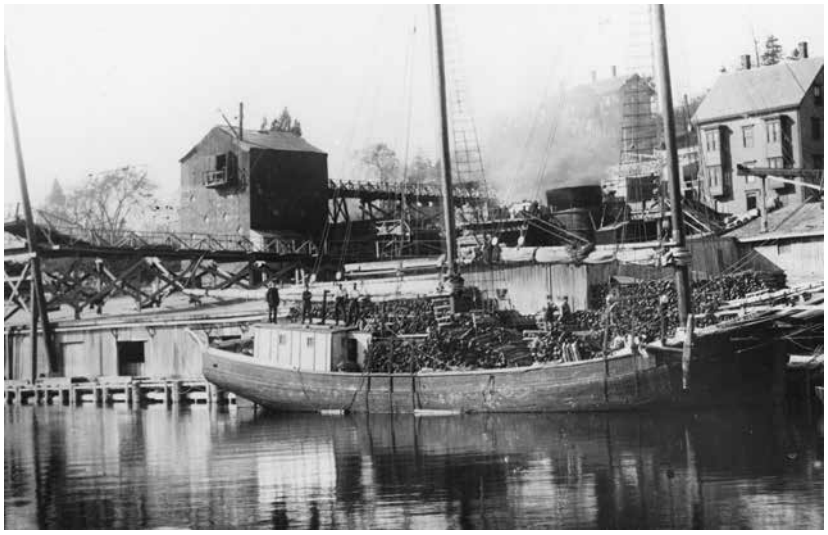
The finished product was placed in casks and shipped via schooners, many made locally, to markets across the eastern seaboard. Maine limestone was used to help build the cities of Boston, Wilmington, New York, Providence, Charleston and Norfolk.

Maine lime was also used to repair one of this country's most notable landmarks.

Close to 300 casks of lime were shipped to Washington D.C. in 1817 to help rebuild the United States Capitol, which was damaged during the War of 1812 when the British set fire to the building in August of 1814. The building was not a total loss, thanks to a deluge of rain that fell the next day. Maine limestone was also used in the construction of the original Capitol building.

"Maine manufacturers sold a major part of their product in New York," Grindle wrote. Purchase of Maine lime by New York, he said, "climbed during the building boom of 1825 and the rebuilding necessitated by the great fire of 1836."

The industry in Knox County dates back to 1733 when



The Heather Bell was built in 1890 at St. John, New Brunswick to support the lime industry in Rockport. *Courtesy Walsh History Center, Camden Public Library.*

William McIntyre opened the first limestone quarry near the former Maine State Prison in Thomaston; shipping limestone from there to Boston. The industry was strengthened by Samuel Waldo, a wealthy landowner, and Henry Knox, former U.S. Secretary of War, who settled in Thomaston after the Revolutionary War.

After the Revolution, the lime industry began to take off, especially in Rockland (then part of Thomaston) and, according to the town of Rockland, in "1850 there were 136 lime kilns burning day and night. Schooners brought wood from the islands and Canada to fire the kilns, and farmers in outlying towns made barrels in which to ship the powdered lime."

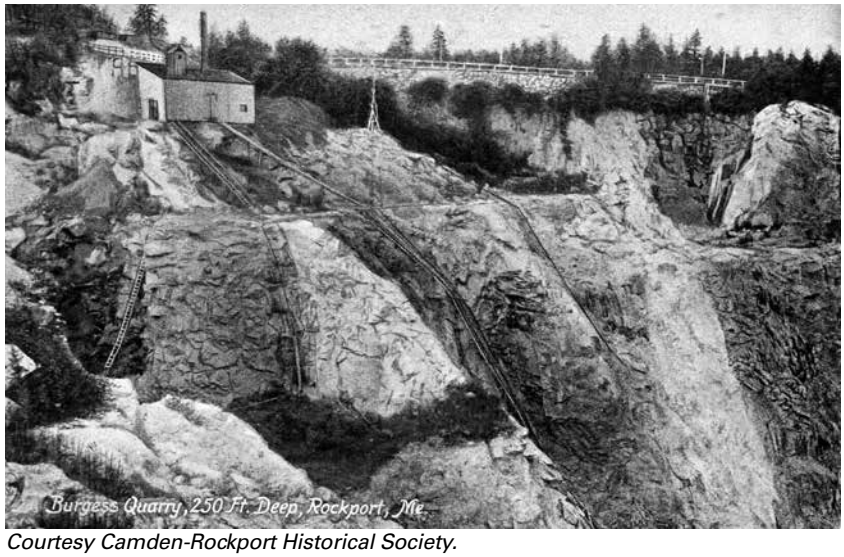
By 1859, it was estimated to be a $100,000 industry (the equivalent of $3.3 million today) and 156,500 casks were shipped across the United States, but as the nation's attention turned to the Civil War, the market began to decline.

More than 890,000 casks were produced in 1860, but by 1863, that number fell to slightly more than half a million casks. The market did rebound after the war, with Rockland's output increasing to more than 800,000 casks in 1866 and topping a million in 1868.

During The Panic of 1873, a global depression and banking crisis that hit industrial America particularly hard, the number of casks produced by members of the Knox County Lime Association dipped from 1.1 million in 1872 to just over 487,400 in 1873. The industry rebounded, and as the 1880s approached, there was optimism in the market again.

According to *Rockland Area Lime Industries*, a 2006 Images of America Book by Courtney C. MacLachlan, lime manufacturers David R. Hoch and Paul G. Merriam "developed a reputation for having a specialized body of knowledge on the properties of lime and their knowledge was in demand."

"They traveled to other lime-producing facilities



Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.

Rockport village veiled in dust and smoke from the lime kilns. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

in Missouri, Virginia and California to share their experience."

Rockland also had a fair amount of activity. In 1882, according to the *Rockland Opinion*, a newspaper that published between 1875 and 1917, three firms in Rockport manufactured 167,000 casks. *The Rockland Free Press* reported that by 1883, the output had grown to 350,000 casks, and by 1887, it had grown to 383,000.

The lime industry, Grindle noted, played an important role in the town's overall economy. "General business conditions in Rockport during the 1880s and 1890s depended to a great extent on the success of lime manufacturers," he wrote.

In 1890, Maine's lime output was valued at $1.5 million ($45.2 million today). In 1892, the output was valued at $1.6 million, but as the mid-1890s hit, the output fell to just over $608,000.

It was during the 1890s that a new transportation model was being introduced.

"To cut the animal and human labor needed to move limestone from quarry to kiln," according to the Penobscot Marine Museum, "the Lime Rock Railroad was built in 1890 in Rockland and Rockport. Trains ran on trestles, so that limestone could be dumped into the top of the kilns."

"Steam and electricity were applied to various phases of the quarrying process and the Lime Rock Railroad (in Rockland) mechanized the carrying of stone from quarry to kiln. Such innovations were expensive and their installation by individual lime manufacturers was often dependent upon the status of the New York lime market and the availability of surplus capital."

Rockland had a railroad to transport limestone, and Rockport had its own railroad that brought limestone

Working kiln, circa 1900. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

Lime sheds with rows of wooden casks prepared for shipping lime. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

three miles from Simonton Corners to Rockport Harbor. The Rockport Railroad, started in 1887, operated for close to 15 years, until 1900 when Rockland's Lime Rock Railroad and half of Rockport Railroad was purchased by Rockland-Rockport Lime Company.

Worrying about increased competition from Canada, lime manufacturers in Knox County, including Rockport's H. L. Shepherd, went to Washington to lobby in favor of the Tariff Act of 1890, also known as the McKinley Tariff, which raised the tax on foreign imports thereby helping U.S.-based industries, such as the lime industry.

The Tariff Act of 1890 came on the heels of a historic event for the Camden-Rockport area. The town of Rockport was officially formed in 1891 when it split from Camden. According to Grindle, Rockport residents opposed the separation, but the leading businessmen in Camden supported it.

"When it became evident that the bill dividing the towns would eventually pass, Rockport's manufacturers fought to preserve their primary interest, the lime quarries," Grindle wrote. "They sought, and succeeded in obtaining, a special act of the legislature to set off the limestone quarries to Rockport on the grounds their owners were located there."

Grindle said Rockport witnessed "a real business boom" in its early years as a separate community and "its leading lime manufacturers were directly involved in this success."

The lime industry in Rockport, Grindle wrote, was impacted by "The Great Panic of 1893 and the depression that followed." During the financial panic, stocks tanked, banks and businesses failed, railroads went bankrupt, the shipping industry was devastated, unemployment skyrocketed, and many lost their homes.

By 1894, many of Rockport's kilns had closed. Although 14 were still operating in town in 1899, the market was not what it had been.

As the 20th century approached, Rockland's Cobb Lime

Narrow gauge Rockport Railway cars loaded with limerock. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

Company, led by William Cobb (Maine's governor from 1905 to 1909) had purchased many of the area's smaller lime businesses and Grindle notes "persistent rumors circulated in 1899 that a consolidation of the lime interests in Rockland, and perhaps in all Knox County, was about to happen."

The rumors were correct. In 1900, many Knox County lime manufacturers were sold and consolidated into Rockland-Rockport Lime Company.

The new company soon had control of over $2 million "worth of kilns, wharves, sheds, Rockland's Limerock Railroad and half of the Rockport Limerock Railroad."

Grindle said the consolidation changed the face of the Maine lime industry.

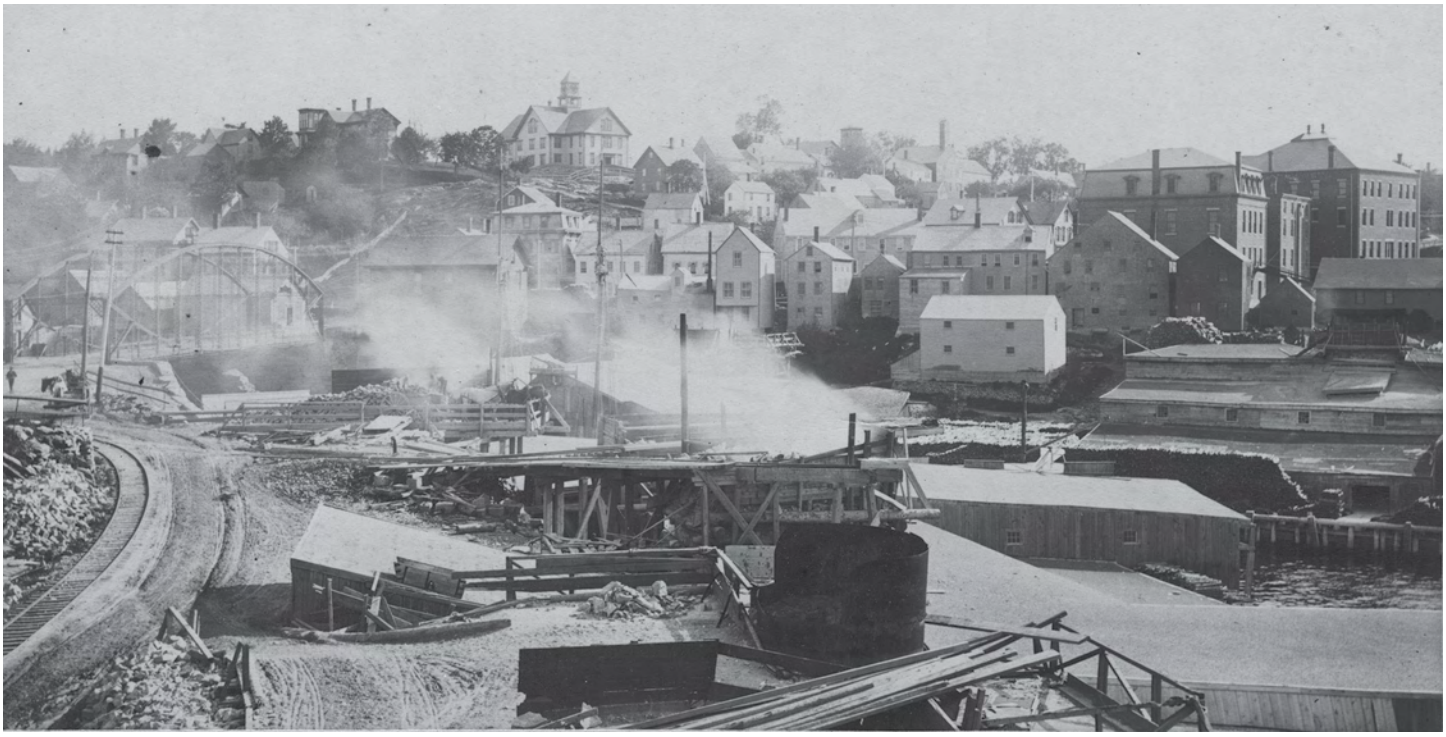
By the end of the 1800s, the lime fleet from Knox County included 200 vessels, according to *Rockland Area Lime Industries.* The number of lime schooners "dropped significantly" in the early 1900s when the Rockland-Rockport Lime Company "began buying up smaller companies and shipping lime to market in huge barges towed by steam tugs." By 1930, there were only 30 to 50 lime schooners and by World War II, the large barges had taken over completely.

As competition from other lime-producing states increased, and new building materials were introduced in the 20th century, more and more lime kilns in Knox County closed down. A fire in 1907 destroyed many of the lime kilns near Rockport Harbor. The industry in Rockport never recovered, and by the mid-1900s the local lime industry was virtually non-existent.

The legacy of the once-thriving industry lives on.

There are efforts under way now by Legacy Rockport to continue to preserve the remnants of the limestone industry.

The effort is focused on preserving the two lime kilns



Smoky Rockport harbor. *Courtesy Camden-Rockport Historical Society.*

closest to the Harbormaster's building. Earlier restoration efforts in the 1980s preserved a nearby triple kiln and an old granite kiln.

Legacy Rockport is also in the midst of restoring a nearly 100-year-old Vulcan locomotive that once brought lime from the quarries to the kilns, but for decades has sat unused in Marine Park.

In 1970, the Friends of Rockport Harbor Trust were successful in getting some of the old lime kilns in Rockport nationally recognized. The Rockport Historic Kiln Area, near the present site of Rockport Marine Park was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970.

"The history of the lime industry in the State of Maine is of local, state, national and even of international importance," the group wrote in the National Register of Historic Places nomination. "For over a century, Maine lime, produced for use as mortar and finishing plaster, dominated New York and other east coast markets. Almost all of Maine's lime was produced in the Knox County towns of Thomaston, Rockland, Rockport and Camden."

A WRITER BORN AT SEA

by Elizabeth Bennett

Photos courtesy Penobscot Marine Museum

Lincoln Colcord was born at sea. In 1883, the ship, the *Charlotte A. Littlefield*, was rounding Cape Horn in the midst of a winter sou'wester. Lincoln's father, the captain, had been navigating mountainous waves for several days. The ship was leaking and the pumps were starting to lag behind when the captain's Chinese steward came to him with an urgent message from his wife. Dripping wet, the captain left his post, went below, and delivered a son. They named him Lincoln Ross Colcord, after his father Lincoln Alden Colcord.

His father was a seaman, like five generations before him, and had begun sailing in 1872 at the age of 15. By 1881, he was a captain and had married Jane Sweetser. On their wedding night, they left for a three-year, round-the-world voyage. Both Lincoln and his older sister Joanna were born on that extended honeymoon.

The Colcords were part of the Searsport shipping trade. American shipping was booming in the mid-1800s. Searsport was an ideal place for shipping because most of the lumber from northern Maine was easily floated down the Penobscot River, where it was turned into ships. In Searsport, there were as many as eight ship yards. All of those ships were sold to captains from Searsport because Searsport was home to an abundance of captains. In fact, in the mid-1880s, 10% of the full-rigged American ships were mastered by captains from Searsport. It was not

Joanna and Lincoln Ross Colcord with Lincoln atop his tricycle at the side of their uncle, Frederick Ross Sweetser's, house.

Lincoln Ross Colcord and Captain Lincoln Alden Colcord standing along the shore behind the Colcord house in 1898.

Lincoln (Link) Ross Colcord.

Lincoln Ross Colcord as a young man.

uncommon for a Searsport captain to meet his neighbors at Chinese ports or even out on the open sea. Like the other Searsport captains, Colcord's cargo and destinations varied widely. He carried wheat or lumber from Seattle, wool or coal from Australia, nitrate from Chile, case oil from New York or Philadelphia, sugar from Java, jute from Calcutta, rice and cement from Hong Kong, and tea and silk from China.

Lincoln and his sister spent most of their formative years sailing, first on the *Charlotte A. Little* and then on the clipper bark *Harvard*. It was common for a captain to take his family along on a voyage. It was a splendid place for a young boy. They all resided in the cabin. The crew was not to fraternize with them, but the children nonetheless made friends with the Chinese cook. They had long conversations with him while he made bread, clanged pots, and fed them cookies. Lincoln's mother allowed him to climb the masts and walk the man ropes a hundred feet above the deck. Also, there were ship races. Two ships, upon meeting each other on the open sea, would race. These races could last for days, and it was Lincoln's pride that their ship was the invariable victor.

Even on the sea, though, there was still school. His mother taught him to read before he was old enough to remember learning. He learned geography from pouring over nautical charts for amusement. His father handed him the *Wells College Algebra* text, and Colcord said this

self-teaching method afforded him better understanding than "any amount of explanation could have imparted."

Sadly, however, Lincoln Colcord could not remain at sea. The first British steamship was launched in 1821, made of iron and fueled with coal, and by the time his father had begun sailing in the 1870s, American shipping was on the decline. "My feelings and aspirations… have sunk in the tide of time," Colcord wrote. "When I grew up, there was no sea career for me. The day of sailing ships was done; and I did not give a thought to steam." His father resignedly began commanding a steamship, and in 1900, Lincoln went to the University of Maine to study engineering.

Link and Joanna aboard one of their father's ships.

A tremulous letter to his father abroad expressed that his heart wasn't in his studies. Colcord was uncomfortable on land; he wanted to be back at sea, and if he couldn't do that, he wanted to write about the sea. Colcord feared his father would not approve of a career in writing. To his relief, his father gave his blessing. His father replied that, while writing might seem like an uncertain career choice, nothing is certain, not even a career in engineering. Thus, Colcord embarked on a writing career. Before he quit his studies, Colcord wrote "The Stein Song." It was an immediate hit and became the university's school song. The dean of the engineering department, however, was unimpressed. With less insight than Colcord's father, he told Colcord he should focus more on his studies. Colcord quit the university and never returned.

Colcord made use of his studies, working five years as a surveyor for the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad, building railroads, and filling in swamps, living in snowy logging camps, and playing poker with lumbermen in the evenings. Still, he did not give up on his ambition to write. His first short story was published in 1908, a sea story. By 1916, he had published three books and a host of poems and short stories, including his novel, *The Drifting Diamond.* These too were sea tales. Many of the stories were narrated by the reminiscing Captain Nichols, and they often featured Chinamen, especially the wise and true businessman, Lee Fu Chang, modeled in part after Colcord's childhood cook.

In 1916, Colcord met Colonel Edward House, an advisor to President Woodrow Wilson. House recommended Colcord to the *Philadelphia Ledger.* A year later, Colcord left his significant fiction career and moved to Washington, where he worked as a staff correspondent for the *Ledger.* Colonel House always kept a bevy of reporters abreast of White House business, but Colcord and House were especially close. Colcord, young and idealistic, wrote many articles in enthusiastic support of Wilson's liberal politics. However, when he came to believe that Wilson's peace treaties were tainted by corruption, Colcord's enthusiasm turned to enmity. In an about-face, he became a controversial proponent of the Bolsheviks, and was dismissed from the *Ledger* in August of 1917. By the spring of 1918, Colcord had been picked up by *The Nation*, a premier left-liberal magazine, and he moved to New York as an associate editor and Washington correspondent.

For several years, Colcord relentlessly wrote political articles, but they stopped abruptly. This period of his life was marked by disillusionment and disaster. Colcord

Jane French "Jennie" Sweetser Colcord, wife of Capt. Lincoln Alden Colcord with her children.

moved back to Searsport and published another book of sea stories, *An Instrument of the Gods*, in 1922. When his wife died of cancer in 1924, he moved to Minnesota with his sister, and helped Ole E. Rolvaag translate his *Giants of the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie* into English.

In 1930, he was back in Searsport with a new wife, a daughter, Inez, and a son, Brooks. Ready to settle down, and eager to stay in Searsport, when his "Stein Song" suddenly became an international sensation, sung by Rudy Vallee and played in nightclubs in Shanghai, Lisbon, and Egypt, he settled with the publishers for a piddling $3000, so he wouldn't have to spend the summer in New York haggling over royalties.

From Searsport, he wrote mostly for the *New York Herald-Tribune*, opinion pieces and reviews about sea-related books (once exposing actress Joan Lowell as a fraud, when her autobiography fictitiously claimed that she had been raised at sea).

He wintered in his mother's home in Mount Vernon, New York, partly for his health, and partly to keep in touch with his friends and colleagues in New York and Washington. He wrote a friend about his lack of political involvement: "Spring is coming and I've got to plant the garden besides. The world isn't worth trying to save at the expense of letting your garden go—because you can't save it anyway. I got over that idea quite a long time ago."

Before his death, Colcord was involved in one last project. The Colcords kept a busy house, constantly entertaining friends: seamen, journalists, artists of all stripes—and historians. With these historians, Colcord began organizing the Penobscot Marine Museum in 1936. Colcord and his wife gathered paintings and ship logs for the museum. In 1941, he helped start *The American Neptune, A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History.* He gave lectures about the causes of sea storms and how to use a sextant. Colcord died unexpectedly of heart failure in 1947.

Colcord wrote in his poem, "Captain Robert Belknap Goes West:"

The life ashore seems mainly given up
To building strong defenses against error.
No one seems glad, as when a man sets out
To handle his own ship, meet his own fortune,
And pay his price for what he fails to win.

The son of six generations of sailors was his own captain; he handled his own ship, and his heart was always at sea, even when ashore.

MAINE LEGENDS

PATTEN ACADEMY'S 1947 BASKETBALL TEAM

by Aimée N. Lanteigne

Few things are more thrilling, more pure, or more enjoyable than high school basketball in Maine. It embodies everything real, everything true that Mainers value…hard work, camaraderie, tradition, and hometown pride. There have been many storied teams that have played their way into the history books and the hearts of Mainers. One such team was the 1947 Patten Academy Eagles. Their epic march to a New England championship was quite literally the stuff of legends.

Patten sits at the junction of Route 11 and 159 in Penobscot County, just east of the Aroostook County border. It is northeast of Mount Katahdin. Simply put, Patten is off the beaten path. Its economy is centered around potato farming, lumber, sporting camps, and a summer colony on the lake. Today, young men and women from Patten attend Katahdin Middle/High School, as Patten Academy, which opened in 1848, no longer exists.

At a time when high school basketball was just getting back to normal after the major disruption World War II had on all American sports, the fact that Patten Academy had enough boys to field a team is a minor miracle in and of itself, and those particular boys were

The Houlton Chamber of Commerce presented a trophy to each member of the 1947 team.

phenomenal young men, on and off the court! Patten had eighty-eight total students in 1947, and only 29 were boys! Out of that small pool, nine players stepped forward to play for the team, not knowing they would make history.

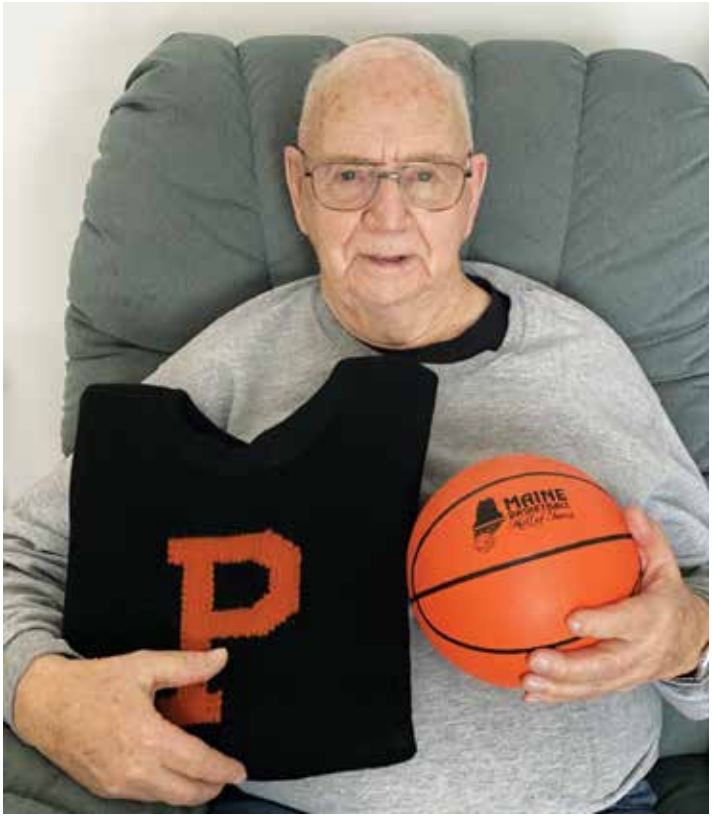
Even though they lost to Presque Isle, a Class A team, early in the pre-season, 35-73, the Eagles dominated the remainder of their competition. Former player Thurston Townsend recalled, nearly seventy years later, the team practiced hard for their coach every night. He said the coach tried to teach them plays, but "we didn't learn them very well." Other team members included fellow seniors Lloyd Wilson and Carroll Hatt, as well as underclassmen, Hollis Bates, Gilman Rossignol, Ken McCourt, Harley Dow, Lynn Vickery, and Howard Cunningham. Jack Seeley was the team manager. The team's bus driver was Clive Hatt, Carroll Hatt's uncle.

Wilson was the center, and according to his teammate Bates, could jump "a foot and a half higher than he was supposed to for his height." Rossignol was a skilled, natural athlete, and Hatt could knock down a shot almost on command. According to 92-year-old Thurston Townsend, the last member of the team living in Patten, Gil could dribble down the court faster than he could run down it! McCourt and Townsend were the primary guards. In fact, their coach told them never to shoot! Their roles were defensive ones. Patten Academy played man-to-man defense and learned how to get the ball away from their opponents. On offense, their job was to feed the ball down low to the big guys. The other boys subbed when needed and pushed the starters every night in practice. They often scrimmaged against Coach Phair, Assistant Coach Arthur Crouse, and local men home from the war. This gave them an edge over any competition a school boy club could throw at them. Their coach, Willis Phair, was by all accounts a hard man, quiet, but very strict. He was the principal at Patten Academy and also a science teacher. Phair was from Limestone, and played for the University of Maine. He coached at Aroostook Central Institute in 1940.

Patten Academy had only been playing basketball for one year prior to their bid for the New England Championship in 1947. Before this, our nation was at war and many young men were in the service, leaving very few youth behind to cobble together a team. Townsend had no real interest in playing. Team members spoke with his father to ask permission for his son to play that winter because they were so low on numbers. The elder Townsend gave his consent, but made it clear he was not going to force him to play. Since there wasn't much else for those farm boys to do, besides chores, Thurston

decided to play. The team played on weekends, and they drove their own vehicles to their games, sometimes traveling 100 miles away to Caribou just to scrimmage. Most boys had their licenses at 15 back then. In addition, the boys came from all different parts of town. Outside of basketball, they didn't associate much.

The team had just missed going to states in 1946 when they lost to Milo in the Eastern Maine final. Coach Phair was so indignant over the loss, he punched a hole in the locker room wall. And as the 1947 season was about to begin, Rossignol was sick, Dow had moved out of town, and Townsend threatened to quit. To top it all off, they needed new uniforms. The school's colors were black and orange, but uniforms in those shades were nowhere to be found! The team took what was available and ended



Thurston Townsend at his home in Patten.


Hollis Bates and Thurston Townsend at 2016 Maine Basketball Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

up wearing blue and gold uniforms that year, although the Patten cheerleaders retained their black and orange sweaters and skirts.

There were no other teams in the far northeast corner of Penobscot County, where Patten Academy was located, and most Aroostook County schools didn't want to play them. Thurston says it's because they were so good! The Aroostook teams they did compete against included Oakfield, Hodgdon, Island Falls, Sherman, Limestone, Caribou, and Presque Isle. Townsend said the Oakfield baskets were so close to the ceiling, you had to be right under the hoop to score. There were no 3-point shots

PATTEN continued on page 26

A GENTLE MAN IN AN UNGENTLE TIME

by Nancy Klimavicz Battick

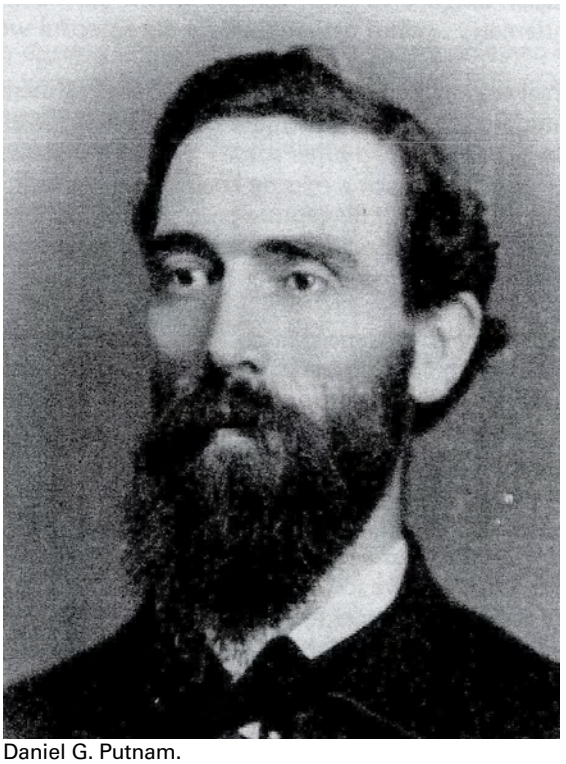
The following article is courtesy of the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society Newsletter—
The Shiretown Conserver, Volume V, Number 4, Winter 2001-2002

While Daniel Putnam might not have qualified technically as a martyr for his religious beliefs, it is certainly true he died because he refused to resort to violence. He was a gentle man, raised to believe in goodness and literally turning the other cheek. In 1863, he was a farmer, Quaker, loving husband, soon-to-be father, and trapped in the emotions, maelstrom, and violence of the American Civil War.

Daniel was born in Brewer, Maine, the son of Israel and Adeline White Putnam. His ancestors came from Buckinghamshire in England to Salem and Boston in the early to mid-seventeenth century. Daniel's parents moved to Maine in the l820s, where Daniel was born in 1832.

The family then moved to Dover and show up in the census records. The son of a prosperous farmer, Daniel pursued the same career.

His photo shows a handsome young man sporting the whiskers customary for the age. In October, 1861, he married Mary M. Woodward of Atkinson, daughter of Isaac and Rebecca Damon Woodward. From all accounts, the two were extremely happy, and the knowledge that Mary was expecting their first child in 1863 must have made their happiness complete.


Daniel G. Putnam.

But the War was never far from anyone's mind in 1863, not even a Quaker farmer and his wife, especially when the wife's family had already made sacrifices to the Union. Mary's older brother, Seth, a member of the 20th Maine Regiment, was killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg; her younger brother, Joseph, in the 2nd Maine, was severely ill and dying slowly, and another brother, Israel was also in the service. More pain was to follow in Mary's life.

The Union armies ran on the North's industrial might, which was formidable, and volunteers. The earliest volunteers were moved by sheer patriotism, and many were lured into service by the prospect of bounties paid to men who served. Eventually, the North resorted to the draft. Many men resisted. There were riots in some parts of the country; immigrants who hardly spoke English often found themselves in battle. And thus it was that Daniel Putnam, aged 32, received his draft notice, and was enrolled as a Private in the 16th Maine Regiment on August 14, 1863 for a term of 3 years. In September, Mary gave birth to a son, Israel Franklin. Daniel never saw his son.

In addition to worrying about his wife, Daniel ran into immediate problems with his officers. In a memoir written by one of his fellow soldiers in the 16th Maine, it is reported that Daniel's refusal to bear arms, and his request to be assigned to a duty not requiring killing earned him scorn and punishment, despite his offer to serve at the battlefront. His request

was refused.

When Daniel persisted in his refusal to bear arms, he was "strung up by the wrists, his feet barely touching the ground for four hours, until exhausted and then cut down." Daniel told the author of the memoir, H.F. Andrews, later a General and State Senator in Iowa, that his arms had no feeling for hours after this incident. The officers ordered Daniel's gun and equipment fastened to him and he carried them passively. Andrews reported Daniel never used the weapon assigned to him. This eyewitness described Daniel Putnam as, "honest, courteous, an intelligent gentleman…who never uttered a disrespectful word against his tormenters."

Daniel Putnam was captured at the Battle of the Wilderness on May 5, 1864 along with another soldier from the 16th Maine. At first Daniel was reported as "deserted" and his pay was stopped for a missing knapsack, haversack, canteen, tent, weapon, etc., until the report of his capture became known. Daniel was sent to Andersonville Prison in Georgia where the gentle rarely survived, victimized by guards and fellow prisoners alike. When Sherman advanced into Georgia in 1864, the Confederates in charge of Andersonville rightly anticipated revenge from Union troops and abandoned the facility, shifting all but the dying to other camps. Left behind, Daniel died of scurvy brought on from starvation on September 18, 1864, and is buried there. His campmate from the 16th Maine, Joseph Parsons of Hermon, died 12 days before.

Mary remained a widow, fighting to gain a small pension. 1n 1867 she was granted $8 a month with $2 additional for the care of her child. Fortunately, she lived with her family, and her brother, Benjamin, acted as surrogate father for Frank.

Unfortunately, the tragedy of the Civil War continued to assail the Woodward family. Mary lost not only her beloved husband and brother, Seth, but her brother Joseph died of war-related tuberculosis in January 1866. Younger brother Israel was severely wounded, captured, and died in a Richmond prison camp in the fall of 1864, shortly before Daniel's death. Mary's sister Jennie lost her sweetheart at the Battle of the Wilderness, and her sister-in-law, Mary Emma Thurston (Benjamin's wife)

PUTNAM continued on page 32

The Patten Academy Eagles, 1946-1947 from left to right: Jack Seeley, Lloyd Wilson, Carroll Hatt, Gilman Rossignol, Howard Cunningham, Ken McCourt, Harley Dow, Thurston Townsend, Lynn Vickery, Hollis Bates, Coach Willis Phair.

PATTEN continued from page 22

back then. Patten racked up a total of 709 points in their fifteen regular season games to their opponents 373. There was only one six-footer on the team. Everyone else was "short," according to Thurston. He and Ken McCourt were about 5'6".

The play the Patten boys used most effectively was the Figure 8. It is an old-fashioned, give-and-go, cut-to-the-hoop type of offense that made it tough for the defense to ever even touch the ball. No dribbling, just passing the ball until someone got open. Former player Hollis Bates said, "It was marvelous to watch its effect on the opposing teams." The Patten Eagles rode this offense to success, all the way to the regional finals at the Brewer Auditorium. Seeded sixth going into the tourney, The Eagles took down Milo in the quarterfinals and Limestone in the semis to earn their spot against Lawrence in the Eastern B Regional Final. Even though Lawrence had recently dropped from Class A to Class B, they still boasted a couple hundred more students than Patten, 284 to Patten's 88. Patten pulled out a close win 43-42 thanks to 24 points from Wilson and 15 from Rossignol. Lloyd Wilson pulled down a whopping seventy-five percent of the rebounds. Ignoring an announcement to stay off the court, Patten Academy fans stormed their classmates, lifting Coach Phair onto their shoulders. Cheerleaders Joyce Hall, Winifred Quint, Dolores Kilgore, Jerry MacIlroy, and Patricia Harvey ran to the boys to give them congratulatory kisses (at least one of which was the real deal, as Joyce was the sweetheart of Gil Rossignol.) In an interview with the *Bangor Daily News* in 2016, Townsend said the team never talked about basketball off the court. "We just felt like nobody could beat us, we were arrogant enough for that." The team was greeted upon their return to town with bells, sirens, and firecrackers led by a thirty-vehicle entourage. Main Street was draped in the team's five color trademark ribbons (orange and black, for the original school colors, blue and gold, for the new uniforms, and white for their warm ups). Townsfolk even displayed an effigy of the Lawrence High School mascot at the corner of Main and Katahdin Streets. Coach Phair and the team were given keys to the town by Town Manager Eldon Shute.

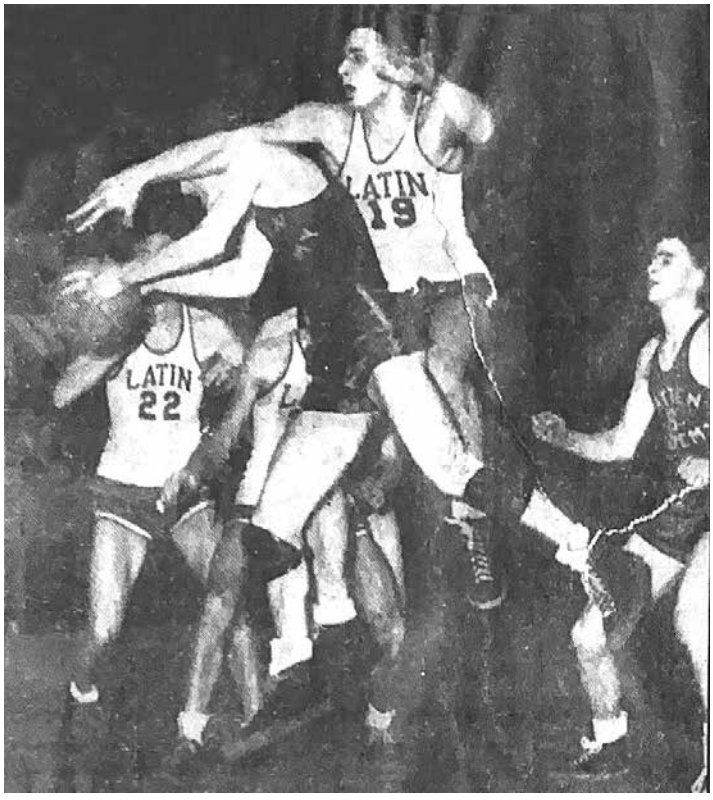
On to Lewiston! The Western B champions, Gould Academy of Bethel, would face off against the Patten Academy Eagles at the Lewiston Armory. Patten community members presented Gould officials with several bags of Maine potatoes from their neck of the woods, a gesture of goodwill and sportsmanship, before the game. Townsend says there was never any ill will between opponents. Perhaps the patriotic camaraderie engendered by fighting and sacrificing through a world war together put basketball in its true perspective. It looked like the Eagles winning streak just might be over as the team was down by seven in the third, but a fourth quarter rally gave Patten the victory, 36-33. Handsome Gil Rossignol netted a game high of 16 points, Hatt and

McCourt each had 7, and Wilson tossed in 5. While his stats did not appear on the scoreboard, Townsend's back court defense clinched the title.

Next up was the New England championships. On Thursday, March 20, the team traveled to Sherman to catch the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad for their connection to Boston. Townsend's parents hadn't come to any regular season matchups, but the New England tournament was a huge deal. They would go to Boston and support their son and his teammates in their once-in-a-lifetime chance for school boy immortality. Ken McCourt's father sold a cow to be able to afford the trip, and another family reportedly gave up drinking for two weeks to save enough money for the train ride to Massachusetts. Although the game was broadcast on the radio, anyone that could possibly afford it made the trek to Boston to cheer on their hometown heroes. One Bangor reporter recalled, "The last person out of town turned out the lights."

Boston Garden was unlike any gymnasium the Patten boys had ever been in. In fact, it would be the first time any of them had seen glass backboards! They had always played on short courts with wooden backboards. Their opponents would be Boston Latin, an all-boy prep school with 1,800 students. There weren't that many residents in the entire town of Patten! The odds of beating the big city boys were astronomical. The biblical reference to David and Goliath was not over exaggerated. Boston Latin had the height, the depth, and the home court advantage. Their boys entered the Garden on March 22, 1947, wearing tuxedos. They were ready for the post game celebratory banquet to have taken place after their trouncing of the team from Maine. But those boys from Maine had that intangible quality of grit that blinded them to the possibility of losing. Ironically, Hollis Bates was a former schoolmate of the boys from Boston, as he had lived in the city before his family moved north to Patten.

The Patten boys were not nervous in the slightest. It never occurred to them they might not win. Although a couple of the boys had an upset stomach, it was not due to nerves. Caroll Hatt had been sick the night before the game, and continued to feel unwell on game day. Gil Rossignol woke up the morning of the game with the flu. After being checked out by a doctor, he was told he probably shouldn't play, but the decision would be up to him. Coach Phair put no pressure on him either way. But Gil was a hard-nosed scrapper, a Mainer through and through, and he would not let the flu rob him of the chance to make history. He skipped breakfast, lunch, and dinner…and suited up for the game. The 13,909 fans that



Gilman Rossignol of Patten Academy ducks from Elliott Corman (19) of Boston Latin High, attempting to grab the ball from Rossignol in the third period of the Patten-Latin Class B basketball game at the Boston Garden Saturday night. Other players are Francis Collins (22), Latin, and Carroll Hatt (8), Patten. Patten won 35-32 in an overtime period.

PATTEN continued on page 34

TREATING THE EPIDEMIC

MAINE'S TB SANATORIUMS

by Camille Smalley

Photos courtesy of the Fairfield Historical Society

A hacking cough, intense chest pain, fatigue, and the most feared symptom of all, the bloody handkerchief, were all symptoms of the deadly infection tuberculosis (TB). Also known as consumption and called the "robber of youth," tuberculosis ravaged Europe and spread to the United States. In the early nineteenth century, consumption killed one in seven people. At the time, patients were largely treated at home, which often meant the rest of the family became infected and ill. Many scholars and researchers believed, for this reason, tuberculosis was a hereditary disease as opposed to a bacterial one.

Caregivers became exposed by droplets from the patient's intense coughing. Although tuberculosis infected the wealthy, the disease ravaged families of the lower classes. Squalid conditions among the working poor, including the lack of clean water and poor hygiene provided a breeding ground for the bacteria. While many images of the illness show sickly patients in crowded cities, tuberculosis ran rampant through rural places like Maine. By the late nineteenth century, tuberculosis was the

leading killer of Mainers.

In Europe, the care model shifted from home treatment to sending a patient to a specialized hospital, called a sanatorium. Sanatoriums became the standard of care for patients suffering with tuberculosis. In 1854, the first sanatorium opened in Germany, on the border of Poland and the Czech Republic. On top of a mountain, the sanatorium offered patients a hygienic environment amid fresh mountain air. Italians built sanatoriums on the waterfront, believing the ocean air provided more relief than that of mountainous regions. Regardless of location, the sanatorium offered patients a quiet, clean, environment, away from their families. In 1889, the American Society of Climatology in Boston acknowledged the sanatorium model of care as being the best option for the working class and their families.

By 1900, the sanatorium became the primary model for tuberculosis treatment. The Maine State Sanatorium Association, organized in 1901. In 1905, the association opened Maine's first sanatorium in Hebron. Dr. Estes Nichols served as the sanatorium's medical director and Margaret Kavanaugh as the Superintendent and supervising nurse. Patients slept in beds lined with doors that opened to the outside for fresh air. The sanitorium required patients purchase their own hot water bottle, sputum cups, thermometer, bedding and fur coat. The cost of the sanatorium was ten to twelve dollars per week, with an additional two-dollar fee for each patient visitor. The cost of the sanatorium became unwieldy for most patients. It wasn't uncommon for a community to band together or a neighbor to help pay someone's sanatorium bill.

Although the high cost left many families strapped, the beds at Hebron filled. The demand for care in Maine continued to grow exponentially, and another sanatorium organized sixty miles away in Fairfield. The Central Maine Association for the Relief and Control of Tuberculosis organized in 1909 and a small, tented field hospital was developed. At the time, the sanatorium consisted of several treatment tents with a wooden structure.

Two years later, wooden buildings replaced the tent hospital. In 1913, disaster struck the budding facility. A fire

raged and burned the wooden hospital to the ground. As the hospital sought to rebuild, Valora A. Chase donated a generous sum, nearly five thousand dollars, in honor of her husband Frank. The facility was renamed Chase Memorial Sanatorium. The newly built sanatorium was larger and offered more beds and space. The new hospital featured large windows and doors for optimum air flow, as well as a large dining hall and walking trails around the grounds. Once again, beds began to fill.

However, the tuberculosis epidemic continued to ravage Maine. In 1915, the Maine State Legislature passed a law for the treatment of tuberculosis for Mainers in state-funded sanatoriums. With the new bill, the Maine State Sanatorium Association began looking for another hospital to operate along with the original state sanatorium in Hebron. The board of Chase Memorial Sanatorium sold their hospital to the state of Maine for $15,000. Chase Memorial Sanatorium became uniform with the Maine State Sanatorium, featuring a similar look and feel. By 1920, Chase Memorial Sanatorium, now referred to as Central Maine Sanatorium, built a children's ward and a surgical site.

Maine's two TB treatment facilities operated in tandem. Chase Memorial Sanatorium served as a receiving facility and provided long-term care. Staff triaged patients in Central Maine, and based on their condition, determined where the patient would go. Patients with a curable form of tuberculosis would be sent to the Maine State Sanatorium, also referred to as Western Maine Sanatorium, in Hebron

which now featured a men's cottage, women's cottage, central heating plant, and an onsite creamery. In 1919, the legislature approved the construction of additional quarters for soldiers, mariners, and marines suffering from the disease. Most of the patients at the state sanatoriums were working class Mainers. Privately owned TB facilities existed in Bangor and Lewiston, and it is likely that wealthier patients sought treatment there.

Chase Memorial Sanatorium housed long-term patients and those suffering from chronic tuberculosis. With 125 beds, and similar to its Hebron counterpart, Fairfield featured a series of cottages to house patients. It was noted that Cottage A, the location for chronic patients, was one of the best facilities in New England. The Fairfield facility contained buildings, with notable Maine names like "Jewell," Downs," "Milliken," and "Hardy." The

Chase Memorial Sanatorium, Fairfield, circa 1914.

hospital could provide care for 208 patients with a staff of 92 members. Any patient requiring chest surgery was transferred to Fairfield.

In 1921, the state of Maine opened a third sanatorium – the Northern Maine Sanatorium in Presque Isle. Here, patients from all stages of disease were treated. By the late 1930s, the hospital was in dire need of upgrades, around $8,000 worth. The Works Progress Administration offered a grant for the repairs, and the work was completed by 1939. The Northern Maine Sanatorium housed 120 patients across three buildings, the Wilson Building (women's quarters), the Powers Building (men's quarters), and the Knight building (children's quarters). Each of Maine's state sanatoriums had similar features including a water tower and plenty of wide-open space. The facilities included their own gardens and livestock.

The goal of these sanatoriums was twofold; to separate the infectious individual from their families and to cure the infection, if possible. Patients in Fairfield often spent months, even years at the facility, and many died there. In 1954, data revealed 73 tuberculosis deaths occurred. Maine's death rate, 7.8 deaths per 100,000 rivaled the national death rate of 10 deaths per 100,000.

A 1956 study of the Maine Governor's Committee on Tuberculosis, under Edward Muskie, explained the goal of sanatorium care was to "rehabilitate the patient so that he may return to the community as a useful, self-sustaining, and respectful citizen." In other words, the patient could

SANATORIUMS continued on page 33

PUTNAM continued from page 25

lost both brothers from wounds and disease acquired in the War. The family also lost cousins in the conflict. The entire family must have been terrified when Benjamin was drafted in 1865, but the war ended before he left Maine.

Mary died of "paralysis" in 1910 with her sister Jennie at her side. Her son Frank never married, looking after his mother and widowed aunt. He died in 1916. He and his mother lie buried beneath a solitary obelisk on top of a rise at Pine Grove Cemetery, not far from Mary's sisters, Lydia W. Gerry, and Jennie R. Hutchinson. The monument lists Daniel, his regiment, and his place of death.

Outrage over the conditions at Andersonville persists to this day, though conditions at prisoner-of-war camps in the North are now coming to light. After the War ended, the Commandant of Andersonville was tried as a war criminal (the only Confederate so tried), found guilty, and hanged.

No charges were ever brought against the officer who tortured Daniel Putnam and forced him into combat, and eventually to his death.

Note from the author: Daniel Putnam's wife, Mary Woodward, was my great-grand aunt.

For further reading on Andersonville, see *Andersonville: The Last Depot* by William Marvel; *The Report of Maine Andersonville Monument Commissioners* is a primary source on Maine men who are buried there; and *Company D, 16th Maine Volunteers: A Brief History of the Individual Services of Its Members*, 1862-1865, by H.F. Andrews.

SANATORIUMS continued from page 31

return to a life of work and pay Maine taxes.

Maine's case and death rate continued to decline and by 1959, the state decided to close the Western Maine Sanatorium at Hebron and the Northern Maine Sanatorium in Presque Isle. At this time, most hospitals featured tuberculosis wards. By the 1960s, antibiotic regimens became the primary treatment for tuberculosis. On June 30, 1970, the Central Maine Sanatorium closed.

The property and remaining associated buildings were purchased and turned into a home for recovering alcoholics, and later, became the Pleasant Hill Nursing Home. The nursing home utilized two remaining buildings. However, Pleasant Hill became fraught with issues, being found guilty of misappropriating patient funds as well as not holding funds in a trust as required. The nursing home closed in 2001 and the vacant buildings

still remain in Fairfield. Many paranormal groups have toured the building, searching for ghosts of the past. The building is now the source of various click bait titles for abandoned building and paranormal enthusiasts. Today, the Presque Isle buildings serve as apartments while the Western Maine buildings were torn down.

PATTEN continued from page 27

packed Boston Garden were the most fans that had ever attended a high school basketball game at that time. The teams burst onto the court, each going through their pre-game warm-ups, and the fans went wild. The fans were cloaked in darkness as the spotlights pinpointed the action on the court. The boys had no idea how many people were there. They could only hear the cheers. Coach Phair glowered at the boys, "Don't worry about getting your picture in the paper. We have come here to win…"

Sam Marinella put up the first bucket for Boston Latin within forty seconds. Thurston Townsend put up a shot for Patten and was fouled. "You know you can't shoot! You're not supposed to!" his coach hollered at him from the bench. Nonetheless, Townsend sank both free throws to tie up the contest. With patient defense, Patten led by 2 at the end of the first quarter, 7-5. But Boston Latin collapsed on Patten's big man, Wilson, and prevented him from scoring in the second quarter. The half ended with Patten up by only one point, 12-11. The city boys began to pull away in the third, building a seven point lead, but then Wilson began breaking free from his defenders and knocking down two-pointers. Hatt and Wilson kept dropping 'em in while Rossignol, Townsend, and McCourt stopped the Latin boys from scoring. With a four point lead and 45 seconds left on the clock, Boston tried to stall the ball but turned it over and then got into foul trouble. Patten tied it up at 31, and the game went into overtime. The fans gasped in elation. In the three minute runoff, Ken McCourt ran out in front of a Boston player to steal the ball, put up a jump shot in the paint, and nailed his one and only bucket of the game. "I thought the roof was coming down," he would later say, the roar of the crowd was so deafening. Marinella scored again for the Latin club, but when Hatt nailed a bucket with only seconds to go, the game was all but in the books at 35-32. From the hardwood to the rafters, the building was aflame with screaming fans: Patten residents, players, cheerleaders, the press, even some Boston fans who had fallen in love with the boys from Maine, all going absolutely wild with joy over this unbelievable triumph. No amount of adversity had been too much for them to overcome. Low numbers, the wrong colored uniforms, long distance travel to games, sickness, and inexperience…none of it mattered. Their coach said if they worked hard, they could win, and that was all there was to it.

There is a film of the game. Susan Morrision, who now lives in the Carolinas but has ties to Patten, is attempting to digitize the film.

Patten Academy was met the next morning by the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad which brought them back first to Portland's Union Station for a reception, and then on to Bangor for an even bigger one. The Bangor and Brewer High School bands and cheerleaders were there at the station to greet them. They even hosted a banquet for the team at the Penobscot Exchange Hotel. A bus picked them up and drove them home up Route 2. Lincoln closed its schools and stores that day, and everyone in town came out to cheer them on as the bus passed through town. Townsend said it was the same in every town they passed through. The entire state had adopted them as their own. Everyone was so proud of them. Hollis Bates recalled years later there were so many highlights of this epic thrill, it was hard to remember them all. But one that stands out above them all was clear. "I think the most exciting thing for me was when we got off the bus back in Patten, and I looked at the crowd and saw my mom."

The celebrations had only begun. A reception was held in April to commemorate the town's 100th anniversary at which Governor Hildreth attended. The town was regaled in the "five colors" of the team and signs from every window proclaimed, "Eagles, Come Home to Your Nest." The Houlton Elks Club gave every member of the team a black and orange letterman sweater, which Thurston still has, and Tagget & Gartley provided coupons for each young man to be measured for their own championship hat. The Houlton Chamber of Commerce gave each player their own trophy cup. As for the original trophy, it has been lost to the ages. Over the years, it became worn and damaged. When Patten Academy closed and Katahdin Middle/High School opened, the trophy moved there. It was sent for repairs, but after that, no one knows what happened to that legendary talisman.

Joyce, the cheerleader, and handsome Gil who toughed out a flu bug to help his team win glory, married right out of high school. In fact, Gil quit school right after basketball season. Some of the boys formed a pick up club called the Patten Gizmos, and played around the state for a while. In 1997, the remaining team members returned to the tiny Penobscot hamlet for their fiftieth anniversary of that underdog victory. Coach Phair was gone, but his words lingered with his players. He always believed that every person has three or four highlights of their life that they can look back on in their old age and smile about. But Phair said, "My highlights all came at once…last Saturday night…That is one of those once-in-a-lifetime teams…I got my biggest thrill when they fought back to take the lead against Boston Latin…Then when Lloyd tied the score to send the game into overtime I was

thrilled again…and Ken McCourt's basket…and Hatt's… well! Those were my thrills." Carroll Hatt won a million dollars in the lottery and retired to Florida. Hollis Bates became an electrical contractor in Lewiston. Thurston Townsend skipped a year then went to UMaine. He worked for Agway for twenty years, and then took over the family farm and retired at 62. He has one son and four daughters. Some of his children played ball for Katahdin High School.

In 2016, the '47 Eagles were inducted into the Maine Basketball Hall of Fame. At the ceremony, the MC asked, "Thurston and Hollis, are you here?" The two 84-year-olds sprung from their seats and sprinted down to the podium. The MC began laughing, "Look at these two fellas go!" The elder Eagles got a standing ovation that night.

This past March, upon the seventy-fifth anniversary of their New England victory, Thurston Townsend was honored at halftime of the 2022 Maine Class B championship, held at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor. Once again, and maybe for the last time, a member of that remarkable team brought the crowd to their feet.

Much has been written about this remarkable team. What more could I add for these deserving champions? Maybe this; many people say basketball is just a game, and they are right. But for the few who have heard the deafening cheers of thousands of joyous fans chanting your school's name in victory, a victory you fought tooth and nail to earn, it is a sound that can lift you up above the present and transcend you to another place in time. The ravages of time and old age can not touch you. You are young again. And you forever will be. When the last Eagle flies home to his final nesting place, I hope he soars above the hardwood of Boston Garden one last time, hears those fans echoing in the rafters, and as he turns his head to look back over his wing, I hope he sees that familiar train steaming for home with all his old chums aboard.

You are legends now, boys. You are legends.

FAITH continued from page 8

St. Denis Church, now merged under the umbrella of St. Michael's Parish with other regional congregations in Augusta, Gardiner, and Winthrop, is still the vibrant Catholic community it was when it first began 169 years ago. According to current pastor Father Frank Morin, "St. Denis has parishioners involved in music ministry, catechists involved with the religious education of the children, adults participating with the youth ministry programs offered to our parish's teens, representatives on St. Michael Pastoral and Finance Councils, people bringing communion to the home bound, and those involved with the "CHIP" social service agency who advocate for and serve the poor. Several are regular readers of God's Word at weekend Mass. Besides the Irish Festival sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians Society Chapter based at St. Denis, there is the Knights of Columbus organization sponsoring many charitable and service activities throughout the year and for many years they've allowed AA to meet on Saturday mornings in the parish hall."

Will St. Denis survive another 169 years? It has already withstood war and depression, plague and prosperity, fire, and economic crisis. It has watched mournfully as neighboring Catholic communities have been forced to close the doors of their churches due to a shortage of priests and a financial shortfall in the Diocese of Portland as a whole. As for its future, Father Morin states, "I hope the church community there continues to prosper because of the generosity and active involvement of this part of the wider St. Michael Parish." It cannot be denied that the presence of St. Denis in Whitefield has made a positive impact on the community and its people for the better part of two centuries. One can only hope that generations far into the future can continue to worship and serve at the far-flung outpost of St. Denis Church. Started by a handful of Irishmen who left the Emerald Isle seeking a better life, they proved anything is possible if only you bring a little faith to the wilderness.

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