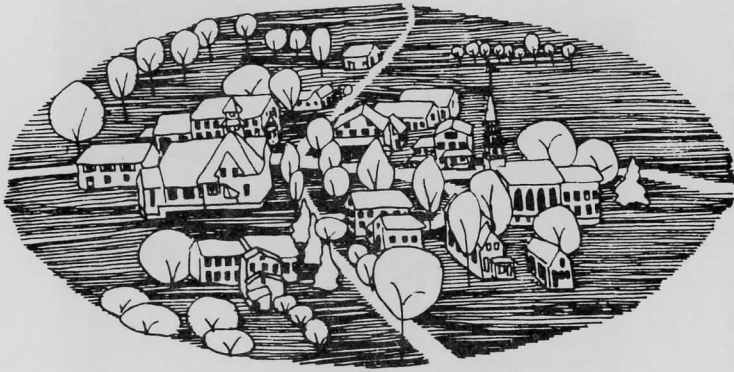


THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS



— BULLETIN —

VOL. XVII NO. 2 DECEMBER 1988

STAFF

Editor - Malcolm Pearson
Assoc. Editor - Myra Pearson
Art Consultant - Joy Linder
Reporters - Rae Johnson (West Sutton)
- Donald King (Manchaug)
- Evelyn Smith (Wilkinsonville)
Distribution - Donald King
Circulation - Elizabeth King
- M/M Francis King
- Marjorie Johnson
- Margaret Ritchie

175 Years Later - Northward Ho!



SUTTON, MA thru NH to LIVERMORE, ME at two and one half miles per hour!! (all photos by Stephen B. LeClaire)

By Ralph (Bud) W. Gurney

SUTTON, Ma. - June 15th was the gathering day of the wagons, horses, and people who, through months of preparations, were now ready to leave on a 200-mile trek to Livermore, Maine. Wally and Shirley Johnson's farm in Sutton Center would be our jump off point, just as it was in 1985 when we left on our wagon trek to North Sutton, New Hampshire.

Here on Thursday morning were 75 to 100 people gathered for support and fellowship, and to wish the 30 pioneers and their wagons a safe trip. Among the thirty participants was a range of ages from 15 to 68 (Wally), which made the average age of the group 33 years. With these bodies came the bounce

of youth, enthusiasm, and of course also came all degrees of nature's infirmities. Collective talents among the group of travelers were the following: police, carpenter, insurance, pipeline installers, commercial artist, electronics, housewife, preacher, school maintenance, elevator installers, fire department, EMT's, fire and safety instructor, etc.

HORSES

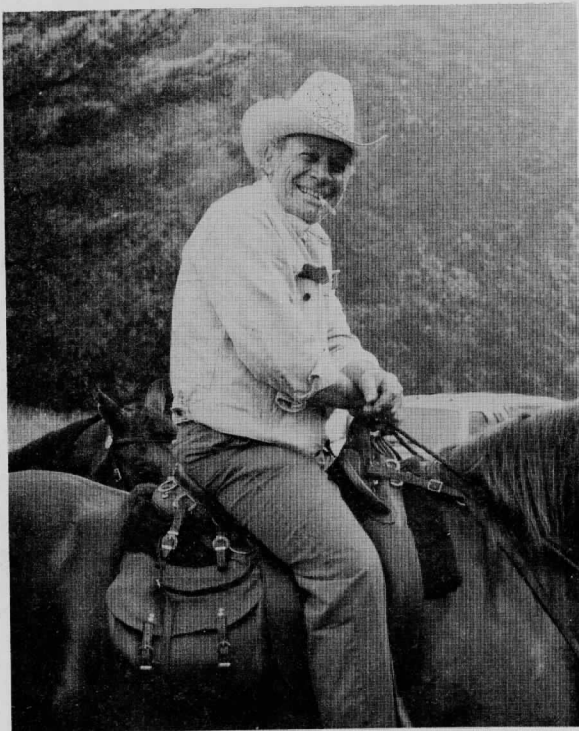
The total number of horses was 19, which included 13 draft animals and six saddle horses. The wagons required 10 working drafters at all times, with three spares. Rotation of ani-

imals was planned for, due to the 200-mile distance, heat, colic (once), a muscle tie up, or any other unknown problem which might occur. The six saddle horses went the distance without missing a beat, but the riders themselves had a few hot seats, although they never complained.

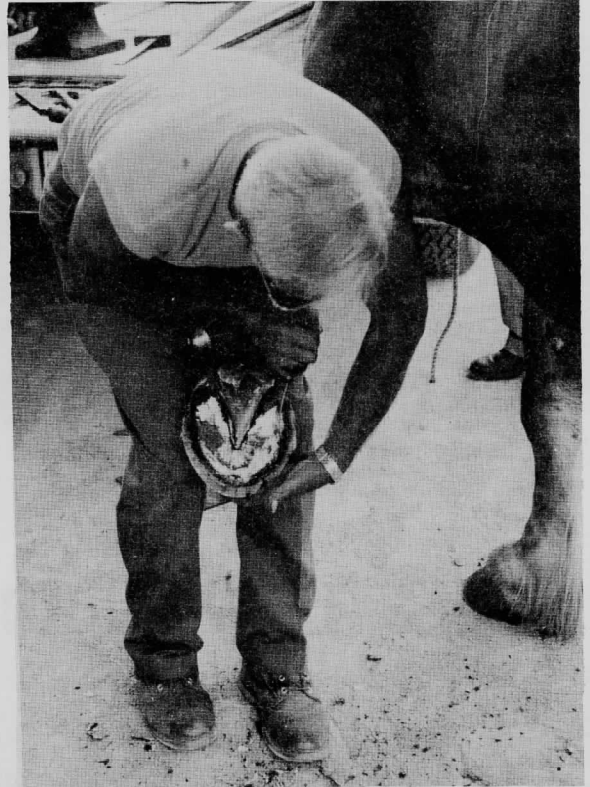
Our wagons did not require any major work, so most of our direction was focused on the animals. When people would ask about the care and concern of our animals, the reply was that they got better care than our wives, plus a bath each day, physical exam, and medical attention right on the spot.

VETERINARY CARE

Our first two overnight camps were visited by Dr. Lori Tumpowsky of Tufts Veterinary School, who individually checked each animal for temperature, heart rate, digestion noise, feet, legs, and other pertinent things that might occur while driving over 20 miles each day. Dr. Tumpowsky's presence at Berlin, our first night's stop, prevented a case of colic from becoming serious by the injection of a pain killer intravenously and by putting oil into the horse's stomach. Wes Gates stayed up all night with his mare, Amy, to watch her and feed her small bits of hay to aid her digestive system to get back on track. The following day she walked behind a wagon to the second camp, and that night Dr. Lori examined her and said one would never know that the mare had been ill. This horse went back to work on day three, and went all the way to Maine. Susan Eigner, a Tufts vet student, joined the trek on June 20th to work with me on inspections. She did all the temperature checks, respiration counts, and began to administer penicillin in one remote case. Also, she was able to see what happens to the horses' shoulders that shrink from working and the necessity to put on smaller collars or pads to protect the animals from getting sores.



OUTRIDER- Tony Carnevale



HORSESHOEING- Farrier, Kilton Lamb
MEDICINE

Our medicine kit was full of all the basics to use on the road, such as syringes, needles, penicillin, furacin dressing, bandages, pain relievers, epsom salts and other things too numerous to mention, as kits go.

SOCIAL

Be aware that to take 19 horses from their homes will bring about a lot of stress and emotion upheaval, particularly with mares, and the feet fly from these mares who would never have kicked at home. Also, it was documented that they even turned on their own partners, at times leaving teeth marks. Let us not be misled into thinking that these were bad mares, for they were only reacting to 5,000,000 years of development to protect their turf, from whence cometh their food, which also might be intended for their foal. They did not know that man was going to supply them with all they would need, plus a little more if necessary. These mares worked hard, worked with different partners, and were the best that one could ask for on the work end. As the old farmers knew, the geldings were the least problem, due to being just neutral.

POLICE

Police support is a worthy subject, as they not only supplied the safety factor, but they enjoyed our train as well. In one case, a lady police officer in Bolton, Massachusetts made a contribution to our fund. "Thank you, Ma'am, it was much appreciated for Waters Farm." The Worcester County Sheriff's Department sent along a cruiser, with Dave Lanoie behind the wheel, to assist us through Worcester County.

There were lots of school kids from Grafton and on into Harvard, who stood by the side of the road and waved to the wagon train. These small happy faces were a reward to the weary travelers passing through their town. One really sees America at three miles per hour. There is something very special about the relationship of man and horse and how it brings out the nice, friendly folks, young and old, along the way.

CAMP SITES

Camp sites were arranged long in advance, so we had time to meet and get to know our hosts.

BERLIN, Ma. - We were hosted by Fred and Ruth Wheeler at Balance Rock Farm, with their children, grandchildren and their great-grandchildren. Here again is the All-American family at its best, taking in 19 horses, 30 folks on the wagons, and a host of people who came to see us in our first camp site. This was just the beginning of the families along the road who just reached out to make us feel at home, away from home. Our weary horses were washed with water by the gallons from their wells; it takes about 30 gallons of water per animal. We were concerned about the volume, but Fred Wheeler said, "Go ahead, we can always dig another well." We must not forget to mention that Fred's son and daughter-in-law allowed us to use their swimming pool. (Pretty rough going, as you can see.)

TYNGSBOROUGH, MA. - Our host here was Robert Hicks, a real estate man, who took the time to say "hello" Friday night when we arrived to set up our camp at his grounds. The horses were washed at his pond, and some horses were even taken for a refreshing swim.

Saturday had the kind of weather that people and horses run into only rarely, starting well and then nature turning on the heat. In days of old, this would be the day which would wreak havoc on man and beast. On the old western trails, many horses were forced and stressed, even to death, which in our period we would not tolerate. Temperatures rose, and after 15 miles we decided not to continue, but to stop and transport the horses the last seven or eight miles to our next camp at the Dick and Betty Wood Farm in Atkinson, New Hampshire. We were about seven or eight miles short of the campsite when we pulled over to rest

and get all of our facts together on how to move 19 horses and five covered wagons, plus the one-horse express wagon.

I caught up with the two horse trailers, driven by Red Bedrosian and Jim Brigham, a few miles up the road and told them to stand by for a modern day express delivery of horses. I then proceeded to the Wood farm to see Dick and go over the situation. At this moment, our man Dick Wood was on his way to our place looking for us. Phil Whitney and I arrived at the Wood farm to meet his son and tell him of the situation, and that we needed some flatbeds to move the wagons. Dick Jr. asked us how many we needed. It was like the story of the loaves and the fishes feeding the multitudes in the Bible.

The Wood family and their neighbor, Russell Dickie, started to wave their hands and the trucks began to move. Dick Sr. came back and got his horse trailer and hit the road, and about two hours later, 19 horses, six wagons and 30-odd pioneers were into camp, the horses at the pond, the gas pump pushing cool water on the hot bodies of man and beast. Now, if you think that this is some kind of miracle, the best is yet to come, for the Wood family had their neighbor, Charles Kenney, barbecuing chicken on a set of grills. God, it was good! A large tent was put up for shelter, if needed, and of course it became the bed chamber for some.

SUNDAY - Again a decision was made, due to the heat, that we would move our horses to Epping, New Hampshire, where we were to eat lunch with the Epping Historical Society at Rumbrook Morgan Farm, the home of Meggie Preston. So we hitched about two miles from her farm and drove our wagons, also carrying a Selectwoman from the town, into the Farm. After a nice meal, we switched a spare horse and then drove another 11 miles to our Barrington, New Hampshire campsite. Let me not forget to mention that the Sunday A.M. move which Dick Wood, Russ Dickie and the horse dealer next door made (the 2nd move), was at no cost to us, who were invading flatlanders. Thank you good folks of the Hills, and God love you ALL.

BARRINGTON, N.H. - The Steven Chinburgs hosted us next, also for an extra day, as the hot weather was not going to allow us to drive these horses, and as we said, these animals get better treatment than our wives, or almost as good. A decision was again made to skip the Sanford and Buxton, Maine, stops,



"ARCHOVER"



Ruth and David Putnam



AT LAST! . . . LIVERMORE, ME

and to make a move directly to the George Hall Farm in Windham, Maine. Marcel and I went to see George, and again help was forthcoming, with George letting us take his new flatbed trailers to bring in our wagons to his farm. The road on Tuesday was full of floating canvas, as the wagons were coming up Route 202 to Windham from New Hampshire. What a sight! You can bet the horses were very contented to ride inside, with the air cooling them as they rode. This Hall family is another classic example of caring people, and once they got to understand our flatlander dialect, we were treated to the best of old New England hospitality that could be found in Windham.

Stanley let us put our horses in his small pasture, which was adjacent to our wagons. Also, he took a hold of the horse that the farrier, Kilton Lamb, was shoeing in the driveway 'til the job was completed.

Russell and his wife let us use their shower down cellar, and this sure made things smell better in the camp.

Thank God for the many acts of kindness which these weary travelers experienced. We realized that we were not totally aware of the blessings of home.

Brother George Hall left his shop open so that we could have access to his toilet and wash bowl, and there was a continuous line of humans always heading down the hill with a towel on or under their arms.

George's wife took a bunch of pictures and sent duplicates to Steve LeClaire and me, which are now incorporated in our collection. Thanks, Sandra! This camp was settled on Tuesday, so Wednesday was an extra day of rest for the whole gang. Still, we had to take all of the horses for a long walk as Thursday the road would be waiting for us all. This extra day was needed to get all our souls recharged, and that is exactly what happened, and all began to get the spirit to move. People began to come and visit and talk of their lives working with horses in the woods, and at this time we were allowed to share a little of their lives, and this made us feel at home.

Thunderstorms were all about, and kept us up 'til 1:30 a.m., and then were up at 4:00 a.m. to start feeding the horses. But, we did not have to move the horses to a barn which was available, if necessary, in case of lightning. The horses were really all excited and anxious to move. You could sense it by the way they acted, heads up and chomping on the bits. At 7:00 a.m. we were on the road to the Auburn Airport where the next camp was located, about 20 miles away, and the traffic was not too bad on Route 202.

Police came along to help us through GRAY, and then we supplied our own security for most of the final route, with Phil Whitney on the rear with his trailer with its large sign saying, "WAGON TRAIN - GO SLOW."

Up we went on 202 'til we got to Old Hotel Road, where we were able to turn off to a little less traffic; but we now ran into more hills to offset the traffic. The weather was just perfect, with blue skies spattered with some nice clouds and not much humidity, and how the animals loved it! They just walked along at a smart pace, set by our old lead team, Duke and Dan.

At the Auburn-Lewiston Airport, we were greeted by John Carey, the Airport Manager, and Fern Giguere from the Maintenance Department, who both offered any help we might need. "Thanks" to the Auburn Water Department for allowing us to connect to the fire hydrant. It sure was a blessing.

The camp was roomy, with a sandy bottom making soft beds for 19 happy horses. That evening, one could always see three or four drafters sprawled out, making the most of the sand and cool evening breezes. The saddle horses seemed to stand most of the time that I was watching them; always ready to go, I guess.

Lots of folks came to visit that night, and of course some of our families caught up with us at this close ending of the trail.

Friday A.M., we hitched all of the teams, and of course our Chuck Wagon boss and cook was given the "odd couple" of horses, one five-year-old red Sorrel mare, who was matched to an 11-year old English Shire for the next two days. They worked well, just looked odd, but when you need pulling power, and the mare's mate and sister suffered a "charlie horse," you just have to fill the harness and move the food wagon.

The West Auburn Church was our next stop, to fix a harness that was chafing Duke. A modern diaper was pulled from our Indian medicine bag to stop any further irritation; and it worked. As noon approached, we were in the area of the North Auburn cemetery, with a lot of room along the road to stretch out the wagons and not create any hazards for the train. Here, we watered the horses and fed ourselves.

At this stop, Pam, one of our EMT's, treated an infected toe on Mike, our 15-year-old member of the train. He had this infection long before he came with us, but did not tell his mother. It is nice to report that the penicillin brought healing and comfort to Mike.

About five miles from the Airport, a near tragedy occurred when an over-wide field potato picker, towed at high speed, came over the hill and struck an outrider's horse, opening up a six-inch gash which required fourteen stitches. Marty Linder saw it

in his truck's mirror and yelled "A horse got hit." Not only was the machine over-width and moving fast, but a long rod stuck out about 18 inches, which split the horse's flank. Thank God it wasn't worse!

Up the road apiece, a man was waiting to sell us some hay, and again good folks came forward. This hay farm was owned by Dr. Hugh Johnston and his wife, who allowed us to bring the injured horse to their place, as their Vet was on his way to treat one of their horses. While we waited for the trailer to bring the injured horse here, across the street was an ice cream parlor, and we were treated to free ice cream. The owner also gave us a check for \$50 to give to the Washburn-Norlands Living History Center.

Our horse received the necessary stitches to close the wound, and we were ready to proceed again to Turner. How nice people are!

Slow moving wagons allowed people to begin to feel and touch the real New England and its people, who are always present, but most of us move too fast. The green hills, rivers and brooks, homes tucked into the hills, and that endless ribbon of blacktop which takes us again to a new experience as we turn again another corner.

In Turner, Maine, we would stay at Lawrence Coldwell's farm, where we had left two flat trailers to tow our wagons home. I spoke to Curtis Bonney at Norlands, telling him that I had met Larry, and it was going to be a beautiful campsite, and Curtis said "Who?" When I said "Larry," Curtis said, "He is known as Lawrence." Well, whether it's Larry or Lawrence, all we can say is that the Coldwell family are good people to put up with our gang. Ralph Coldwell gave us a hand with the unstacking of the trailers - we had them one on the other to move them up from Massachusetts.

When we were within a few miles of the Coldwell farm, we looked down the road and saw Larry coming with one big handsome Belgian mare hitched to a two-wheel show cart. It is real nice to have your host come and meet you when you know that he has left a lot of chores behind just to reach out and say, "Welcome."

We would now be camping about eight miles from our final destination, the Norlands Living History Center, and all of our good friends there.

Here, in Turner, we met a few more friends from home, and some from New Jersey (Betty Waters), who came up to see us into Livermore and to comment that they were pleased to see that all arrived safely. A campfire was lighted after dark, and many sat around in a circle of comfort, just watching the fire and possibly dreaming a little, knowing that the next morning at 4:00 a.m. it would start all over again; but the next miles would be to our destination, the Norlands Farm.

Saturday A.M. we started our final move for Livermore, Maine, just a few miles up the road. At the town line, we all stopped and took pictures, and kissed old mother earth in fun, for we had been on the road ten days and covered 200 miles with six wagons, 19 horses, 30 people, and others who joined us on the way.

Two members of our train, Joy and Bill Nydam, would ride by ox-cart to Norlands, as Simeon and Betsey Waters did back in 1803. The rest of us would follow fifteen minutes behind



Joy and Bill Nydam

in our wagons.

We were surprised by the presence of Dick and Betty Wood of Atkinson, New Hampshire, and Russ and Joan Hall from Windham, Maine, who came to see us arrive at Norlands. We were all really pleased, for these are really family who come along and share the final mile.

Saturday morning started with rain, turned to sun, open sky and clouds, which allowed us to meet the many people who awaited our arrival. Billie Gammon and all of her wonderful women (I'm prejudiced) and menfolk who run the farm were there to say "hello" and to help us set up camp. Food was available and finally rest, which was long overdue. But soon rain poured down, and forced all to move from the field camp to high ground and put all our horses under the wagon shed.

Sunday was load up day - wagons on flat beds, particularly two that went to Sutton driven by Ray Bessette and his son. Horse trailers were moving out with teams and multi-teams, starting for New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The last trailer out had four horses which averaged about 2,000 pounds each. Now these mares were tucked in for a 200-mile ride home to Massachusetts, which ended at 7:30 Sunday night.

In reflection - we met America at three miles per hour - found real fellowship and friends en route - told the world about our New England heritage, and all arrived home healthy, but much wiser after ten days on the trail.

"Thank you, folks," whom we met along the way - you made it all possible.

* VHS WAGON TREK tapes are available from the Sutton Town Clerk

MONTHLY MEETINGS -

MAY - The Society met at the GRP Hall with two visitors present; Jeannette Hebert and Frank Kilmer. Mary Arakelian updated information on the Blackstone Valley Heritage Homecoming days September 28 to October 2. Bud Gurney reported on plans for the Wagon Trek to Livermore, ME., trip in June and Malcolm Pearson explained about the archaeological trip with James Whittall to Connecticut by Society members. John Petraglia for the program discussed the issue of historic homes in the Blackstone Valley.

JUNE - The painting of the GRP Hall was completed in May. The Annual Flea Market was held in lieu of a regular meeting \$275.00 was raised.

JULY - A pot luck picnic was held at the Eight Lots School House. Guests included: Maria Lajoie, Betty Howe, M/M Carver, Eleanor King, M/M Tom Curren, Betty Magna Kotain, Doris Blondin, Ron Jacobs, and Dorothy Blackwood. Albert and Arelene Gray showed examples of wood carving and explained the technics of the craft.

AUGUST - A pot luck supper was enjoyed at the Blacksmith Shop by the Society. There was no business meeting.

SEPTEMBER - The Society met at the GRP Hall. Guests were: M/M Gerard LaFlash. Leona Dona donated a genealogy to the Society. Joseph Sennett, the Massachusetts State Geologist with charts and maps presented many geological examples of local interest. The Labor Day Flea Market raised \$244.15.

OCTOBER - The Society met at the Manchaug Baptist Church. Malcolm Pearson was presented a video tape of the June Wagon Trek to Maine for his Society services by Stephen LeClaire. Directors voted into are: Barbara Bessette, Leona Dona, Daniel Griffith, Mary King, Nancy Lavoie. Ethel O'Day, and Malcolm Pearson. The Blackstone Valley Heritage Chorale rendered an entertaining program.

MAY TO DECEMBER- WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Vartkes "Red" and Norma Bedrosian
Peter and Joan Bell
Albert and Margaret Fulton
Richard and Gail Hallen
Marcel and Nancy Lavoie

Hazel and Peter Nelson
Glenn and Michele Picou
Philip and Cheryl Rawinski
Robert and Alice Shaw
Frederick and Barbara Swenson

IN MEMORIAM -

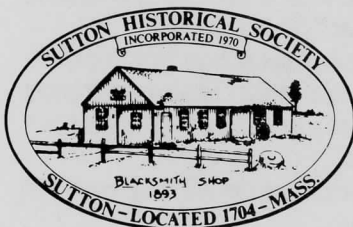
Michael Ward

*Dorothy Davis
*June E. Holbrooke
*Doris E. Jones
*Alice R. Lynch

*Kenneth W. Merrill
*Marie E. Nowakowski
*Dr. Rudolph F. Nunnemacher
*Evelyn H. Phelps

THE APRIL FUND APPEAL TO MEMBERS RAISED \$3058 TODATE. THIS GENEROSITY PROVIDED FOR THE OUTSIDE PAINTING OF TWO BUILDINGS OWNED BY THE SOCIETY. THE FUND IS OPEN AND DONATIONS ARE WELCOME.

From



Box 127

Manchaug, MA 01526

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
Manchaug, MA 01526
Permit No. 1