

Sutton Historical Society Bulletin



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Kate Hutchinson, Editor-in-Chief
Malcolm Pearson, Editor Emeritus

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Harry Anderson

Membership Renewal
Form - 2007

Sutton Historical Society Officers:

President: Wally Baker
Vice President: Cheryl Bonin
Recording Secretary: Darlene
Belisle
Corresponding Secretary:
Chris Sinacola
Treasurer: Ellie Hutchinson
Historian: Johanne Walker
Curator: Paul Brosnihan

Upcoming Sutton Historical Society Programs:

February 6 – “Framed in
Tatnuck” owner Cliff Wilson
will explain the business of
preserving old documents and
memorabilia. Manchaug
Baptist Church, 7:30 PM

March 6 – Champion Fiddler
Dave Poland & Finbar Clancy,
Manchaug Baptist Church,
7:30 PM

A Message from the President

Message from the President:

Our new year literally started with a “bang”. The Sutton Artillery fired five rounds at midnight with a crowd of about 40 people in attendance. (Anyone who wishes to join the Sutton Artillery should contact Steve Colonies at sjcolonies@charter.net.) Polly’s Antiques at the Brick Block was open for company and fellowship, featuring snacks and beverages of all varieties. This event continues to attract more people each year. Thanks to John Sinacola for the lights and to Linda Sincola for the food and refreshments.

We are actively looking for someone who has grant writing experience to guide us in finding funds to maintain our buildings. Several projects are becoming urgent and we would like to take advantage of the funding that may be available. If you know of anyone, please contact me at 508-865-4135 or patwal@charter.net.

Another event we will be having is a second open house in June 2007 at the Eight Lots School House. This is a great way to bring awareness of the history of Sutton to those who are not “old timers” in town.

A Message from the Editorial Staff

Our thanks to Harry Anderson for submitting the article on the naming of Manchaug Pond. We always welcome submissions, but Harry actually did one!

We will be trying out the e-mail address listing later on in the fall. Please send any e-mails to be included to euhutchinson@yahoo.com and put Sutton list in the subject line.

THREE HEROS – transcript of a lecture originally delivered by Carl Hutchinson at the Sutton Senior Center, May 2006

A week from today is Memorial Day when we pause to remember and honor those who have fallen in war. The holiday has its roots in the practice of decorating the graves of Civil War soldiers and was called Decoration Day until just after World War I when the name was changed to Memorial Day and was expanded to honor the dead of all wars. Originally celebrated on the 30th of May, it was changed to the last Monday in May by Congress in 1971. When I originally agreed to speak to you today, I planned to come in my Civil War uniform and talk about it and the hardships of life of as infantryman but as I realized how close we are to Memorial Day and how that began as a Civil War solemn holiday, I decided instead to talk about three of Sutton's Civil War heroes instead.

In a Decoration Day speech to the GAR in 1874, future justice of the US Supreme Court, Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "We have shared the incommunicable experience of war. We have felt and still feel the passion of life to its top. In our youths our hearts were touched by fire." Holmes knew what he was talking about as he was a veteran of the Civil War and wounded three times. Here are three native Suttonians whose hearts were touched by fire.

Elder Job B. Boomer became pastor of the South Sutton Baptist Church about the year 1816. In 1829 he built the house on the top of "Boomer Hill" and it was here, presumably, that George Boardman Boomer was born on July 26, 1832. As a boy, he attended Uxbridge Academy, and as the family moved from Sutton he attended Attleborough Academy and then Worcester Academy.

His older brother, Lucien, and his brother-in-law went to Chicago in 1851 and founded the bridge building firm of Stone & Boomer. George

followed in 1852 to manage their office in St Louis, MO. Barely 20 years old he purchased timberland and set up saw mills to produce the timbers needed for the bridge business. By 1854 he was a full partner in the firm.

And by this time he was beginning to speak out about the evils of slavery. He didn't believe in slavery but believed it was supported by the law and he was a believer in laws. If slavery was to be stamped out, laws would have to be changed. And he began to despair of leaders capable of changing them without war.

Aug. 26, 1859: "When our communities are agitated by the election of prominent officers of government, there is a lack of real patriotism exhibited in the people. Men of talent, good sense, honor, and reputation quietly fold their hands, and refuse to accept any other duty than that of simply casting their votes; they will have nothing to do with public offices, politics, etc.

That there is some good reason for such a course by high-minded men, is true, and alarmingly true; but the fault lies at the door of this same class of men. It took the highest order of talent, the most profound intelligence, the loftiest principle, the most self-sacrificing, conscientious lives, to form our government, and unless it is maintained by the same means, it will, like the proud nations of former times, crumble to atoms.

That men of no principle, no integrity, no character, no reputation but that of ambitious schemers, have by dishonorable means, in many instances, reached those heights of power which should be occupied only by the greatest minds, augurs no good to our nation The reckoning time will surely come for this wrong,

and we may be called to pay a heavy penalty for it as a people.”

In 1860 George was planning on scaling back his business activities to do some traveling in Europe but was too caught up in the politics of the time to go. He supported Stephen Douglas in the 1860 presidential race. When war broke out in 1861 he seems to have hesitated about what action to take but when a friend was killed in August, he determined to raise a brigade of three companies to support the Union cause. This was no easy task in Missouri which was wracked by clashes between Unionists and Secessionists. By November his unit was partially formed and was incorporated into the 26th Missouri Volunteers with Boomer as its colonel. The 26th MV began to see action in February of 1862 though mostly limited to skirmishes and minor battles until the spring of 1863 when they participated in the Vicksburg Campaign. General Grant ordered the 17th Corps to cross the Mississippi and advance on Vicksburg from the east.

It took several months and 120 miles of marching, but Boomer finally got across the Mississippi in May. He headed north toward Vicksburg and led his brigade to a bloody victory on the outskirts of Vicksburg on May 12th at the expense of 550 men of the brigade killed or wounded. On May 22nd he was ordered to assault a fortified position with his brigade and was killed while leading the charge. He was 30 years old. At the request of Provisional Governor Gamble, Abraham Lincoln posthumously promoted him to the rank of Brigadier General for “gallant conduct” A funeral service was held in St Louis and then the body was shipped back to Massachusetts for burial at Rural Cemetery.

Herbert Allston Kimball was born in Sutton on February 15, 1847. He attended a “great war meeting” at the old Congregational Church in July of 1862 and amid the enthusiasm of the

speakers, drums beating and flags flying he enlisted in Company F, 36th Regiment of the MVI at the absurd age of 15. He went to Worcester to begin training in early August and left on September 2nd for Washington, DC. As the 36th began a march to Leesboro, Kimball was unable to keep up with the older men. He’d drag into camp late to the men calling him a baby.

But the baby proved their equal and then some in the days and years to come. Over the next 3 years, Kimball participated in the battles of South Mountain, Antietam, both battles of Fredericksburg, the siege of Vicksburg (where Boomer was killed). He was the private orderly of Major General John Parker for 2 months during the Vicksburg Campaign and attended the surrender ceremony. He went on to take part in the battles of Jackson (Mississippi), Blue Springs, Loudon, Campbell’s Station, Fort Sanders and the Siege of Knoxville, the East Tennessee campaign and the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania. In many of these actions, Kimball performed reconnaissance missions into enemy territory (many of them he performed alone and at night) and proved to be a reliable courier of dispatches between headquarters and officers in the field.

Kimball was wounded in the Wilderness and was ordered to hospital but refused to go. He was wounded again, this time seriously in the head, at Spotsylvania. The bullet could not be removed and remained with him the rest of his life. He was sent to Columbia College Hospital in Washington, DC, to recuperate from his wound and it was there that he met Abraham Lincoln who regularly visited the wounded. Lincoln examined a bead collar Kimball was making for his mother and they became friends. Lincoln visited the hospital 2 or 3 times a week and always stopped by to see him. The collar that Kimball made is in the collection of the Sutton Historical Society as are many other of his souvenirs of the war.

At the battle of the Wilderness, Kimball is credited with saving the life of then Major William F Draper who after the war lead the company his father started, Draper Mills, to pre-eminence in production of weaving machinery, served a term as US congressman from Massachusetts and US Ambassador to Italy. A wounded Confederate soldier had seen Major Draper and was taking aim when Kimball spotted him and rushed forward in time to strike the musket with his own. Though the musket discharged, the bullet went through Draper's hat.

In early 1865, the now Colonel Draper promoted Kimball to the rank of Sergeant and recommended that Massachusetts Governor John Andrews promote Kimball to Lieutenant but Andrews declined citing his youthfulness. Sergeant Kimball was only 17. At the ripe old age of 18, Herbert Allston Kimball was mustered out of the infantry on June 8, 1865. He became a successful merchant in Worcester, MA. I was unable to learn the date of his death but he was still living in 1919. He is buried in Worcester in the Hope Cemetery.

My last hero is William Horace Hutchinson, eldest son of Edwin Haven Hutchinson, born February 2, 1846. He was mustered into

Company C, 25th Regiment MVI but I don't know the date. He was only 18 when he was killed at Cold Harbor, Virginia, on June 3rd, 1864, during an assault on a fortified position that has been compared to the Charge of the Light Brigade. Certainly it was a charge that should never have been made because it had no chance of succeeding. By June of 1864, the 25th MVI was what was known as a skeleton regiment of only 300 men down from around 1050 when it was formed. On June third it was combined with 2 other skeleton regiments for the attack. Of the 300 men of the 25th who reported for duty that morning 220 were killed, wounded or captured.

I have had two people tell me that they have seen a diary written by Willie's father with an entry that says, "Brought in hay this morning. Picked up Willie at the train station this afternoon." That's about all I know of Willie Hutchinson. He's buried in Howard Cemetery. He answered his nations call for help. He took part in the charge that caused his death even though he must have known how dangerous it was. He was a hero and he was my fourth cousin four times removed.

THE NAMING OF MANCHAUG POND

Submitted by SHS member Harry Anderson

Daniel Gookin (1612 – 1687) had a great interest in the welfare of the Indians and in 1656 was appointed Superintendent of the Indians of Massachusetts. His Historical Collections of the Indians of New England (1) is invaluable to the study of Massachusetts Indians. The following account is summarized from that text.

John Eliot (1604 – 1696), in his work to bring Christianity to the Indians by 1670 had brought the Gospel to 14 Indian towns. His Indian followers were called "praying Indians," and the towns call "praying towns." Seven of the oldest towns where the majority had become believers were each granted land by the General Court of Massachusetts in parcels varying from 3,000 to 6,000 acres.

In 1673 and again in 1674, Eliot's work continued and he and Gookin made the journey to revisit some of the newer or less established praying towns to "encourage and exhort them to proceed in the ways of God." These newer towns had not yet reached the status prerequisite for land grant by the General Court. The first town to be visited was Manchage. Gookin estimated a population of 60 souls and observed that it was "seated in a fertile country for good land."

Gookin recorded its location in distance from known locations over long established Indian trails. Using Gookin's information, J. Fred Humes in History of the Town of Sutton, Vol. II (2) fixes the location of the Indian town of Manchage in vicinity of West Sutton. It likely extended to the pond and westward to include the valley and rolling hills toward Oxford.

In 1675, a year after the last visit of Eliot and Gookin, King Philip's War left the

village named Manchage destroyed and uninhabited. Its population seemed to have vanished with the wind, never to return.

While Gookin refers to the Indian village as Manchage, Humes points out other early names for the same area. The first mention of the area was contained in a document signed in 1668, bearing the designation "Monuhchogok." A land grant of 2,000 acres authorized by the General Court in 1681 refers to the area as "Marichouge." Over the years this grant became known as "Manchaug Farm" until its partition in 1712.

Humes provides nine variations of the name, all designations for the same area. The profusion of names most likely results from different people translating the Indian tongue into English vocabulary. Humes without hesitation states that Manchaug Pond takes its name from this old Indian village and give no credibility to the popular myth (3) that the pond was named for an Indian chief who drowned there.

- (1) Daniel Gookin, Historical Collections of the Indians of New England, (Massachusetts Historical Society, 1792)
- (2) J. Fred Humes, History of the Town of Sutton, Vol. II, (Town of Sutton, 1952), "West Sutton in the Early Days."
- (3) History of Sutton 1704-1876, Benedict and Tracy

RETURN TO:

Sutton Historical Society
4 Uxbridge Road,
Sutton, MA 01590

IN MEMORIAM

OUR GOOD FRIENDS AND SUTTONIANS

Doris Humes George Keith

Future Sutton Historical Society Events

June 5 – Meet at the Congregational Church parking lot on the common at 6:15 PM to carpool to the General Artemus Ward House Museum in Shrewsbury.

August 1 – 6:00 PM Pot Luck Supper at the Eight Lots School House with author Joe Doherty, who has been writing a series on “Finding Sarah”.

September 4 – 9 to 2 PM Annual Labor Day Flea Market and Bakesale at the Blacksmith Shop. Be sure to bring your baked goods!

October 24 – 7:30 PM Meet at Asa Waters Mansion for a joint meeting with the Millbury Historical Society. Guest Speakers are Tom and Brenda Malloy from the Association for Gravestone Studies. (Date subject to change – watch for the notice)

For further information on any of the above programs, please contact Wally Baker at 508-865-4135