

"Robbinston, Washington County, Me. is described by A. J. Coolidge in his history of New England published in 1859, as follows. The town is situated on the west side of the St. Croix, opposite St. Andrews, N. B.; was granted by the State of Massachusetts, Oct. 21st, 1786, to Edw. H. and Nathaniel J. Robbins, of Milton, Mass., in honor of whom the town was named. There were two families here at the time the grant was made, and several others moved in shortly afterwards. Williamson says a Post office was established here as early as 1796. The proprietors entered into the business of clearing a settlement with commendable zeal, and erected a storehouse and other buildings. On the 15th of January 1810, a committee was chosen by the inhabitants consisting of John Brewer, Thomas Vose, John Balkam, Obadiah Allen, Abel Brooks, Job John, and Thaddeus Silbey to present their petition to the legislature for incorporation; and after the usual order of notice made returnable to the next legislature (from which it appears John Balkam was plantation clerk) The town was incorporated February 18, 1811. For many years Robbinston was the centre of trade for the neighboring towns. Ship-building and commerce were carried to such an extent that the harbors of this town and St. Andrews, as well as Passamaquoddy Bay, were white with shipping. The ports of Europe furnished ready markets for the class of ships built here, but, with the change of fashions in shipbuilding the trade has declined, and left the place but a fraction of its pristine glory in this business.

More nearly allied with Robbinston than any other place from its close proximity is Neutral Islands, (so called from its position in the middle of the river which divided the two countries). It is quite small, its area probably not much exceeding six acres; and is noted only for having been as is supposed the winter quarters of the explorer, Pierre De Monts in 1604-5. (The colony of DeMonts was made up of Romanists and Protestants. Among the latter was L'escarbot who was a Huguenot minister, consequently, Neutral Island was the first Protestant preaching ground upon this continent.) Apprehending danger from the savages, he erected a fortification upon the north part, which entirely commanded the river. Traces of this still in existence, were found in 1798 by the commissioners appointed by England and the United States, sent to determine the boundary in this vicinity, some dispute about the same having grown out of indefiniteness of the treaty of (1783) seventeen hundred and eighty-three. Great mortality prevailed among DeMonts' men in that dreadful winter, generally supposed to have been from scurvy; but in the opinion of some, from drinking water from the wells--(several of which were dug by DeMonts) poisoned by the Indians, in retaliation for injuries received. There is but one house on the Island, the residence of the keeper of the lighthouse. This lighthouse was erected in 1856. The British government relinquished all claim to the island upon the final settlement of the northeastern boundary; one half belongs to the heirs of late Stephen Brewer, the other half to the United

States. But to return after this digression, to Robbinston, the attention of the people is now devoted chiefly to agriculture. From the shortness of the season of vegetation in this latitude, and the consequent rapid growth, productions escape in a great measure the fluctuations of climate and the many diseases incident to more southern latitudes. The surface is nearly level but gradually rises in a gentle slope away from the river. Boyden Lake is a fine sheet of water about five miles in circumference, furnishing excellent trout fishing. There are also three or four small ponds the streams issuing from which and terminating in the St. Croix, supply water power ~~for~~ three saw mills, a grist mill, lath machines and a sugar bos machine. There is also a tannery. Population 1028--valuation \$152.67."

Mr. Editor, in sending the above to you for publication, I am led to add items of interest. When De Monts first explored this region in 1604 there was not a white habitation on the American coast from Newfoundland to Florida, although several attempts had been made to establish settlements; Sir Walter Raleigh did not succeed on the Carolina coast; in consequence of disasters, no attempts were made at Newfoundland. Gosnold abandoned his design to settle Cape Cod, consequently the settlement made at Neutral Island and at Annapolis, Nova Scotia, in 1604-5 by De Mont were the first on the coast. De Monts sowed a field of grain on the main land opposite the Island, which is said to be the first grain raised on the continent.

The two families alluded to--their names were Somes and McDonald--settled at Liberty Point. The other settlers were Saml. Jones and Wm. Bugbee, who came from Dorchester, Mass., Mr. Johnson from Stroughton, Jacob Boyden from Foxboro; a year or two afterwards John Brewer came from Foxbury; Jas. Potter from Boston. Thos. Vose of Wilton settled about 1790; Capt. Bradford from St. George, Me., Capt. Lockendoff, Bristol, Me., came a few years later--John Balkam of Dorchester came about 1800, all good and true men. Several of the most influential and respected citizens of Eastport are the descendants of these worthy men--the late Hon. Aaron Hayden, Hon. J. M. Livermore, Late Stephen Jones, John A. Balkam who was deputy Col., also Alden Bradford Esq., E. E. Shead, Rev. Geo. Richardson and Stephen Pine.

John Brewer was a prominent and influential citizen, took great interest in the affairs of the town, held offices of trust and responsibility, was appointed Post Master during Gen. Washington's administration, was appointed Major Genl. 7th Div. Maine militia, was Post Master twenty-five years, succeeded by Genl. John Balkam. Gen. Brewer married a Miss Mark of St. Stephen, N. B. She was a lady of intelligence and refinement; she took great interest with her husband in the affairs of the town, and was always loyal to the government under which she lived. Gen. Brewer died in 1832, Mrs. B. survived her husband some twenty years. Jas. Porter resided but two years in the place, moved to St. Stephen where he was a leading business man for many years, highly respected. Hon. Thos. Vose occupied the house erected by Gov. Robbins on the land now owned by Thos. Cleveland, near the

entrance to Mill Cove. Mr. Vose resided here about ten years and then moved to where the village now stands, he having built him a fine mansion; he was for forty years extensively engaged in shipbuilding and lumbering, and was one of the leading business men in this region. He represented his district in the first legislature, was also on Gov. King's council, held various town offices, was a man of good discernment and judgment in all matters pertaining to town or State. Mr. Vose used to relate the following amusing story: Gov. King in travelling stopped at a hotel; he ordering a room, supper, bottle of wine, boot jack, and a pair of slippers, a Frenchman stopping at the same hotel not wishing to be outdone, also ordered a room, supper, two bottles wine, two boot-jacks and two pairs slippers, remarking that he had traveled in Europe, had seen the King of France, also the King of Germany, but the King of Bath was the greatest of them all. Good for the Frenchman.

Mr. Vose died in 1848. After Mr. Vose vacated the Robbins house John Balkam arriving in town with his family occupied it. He too was an influential man, was chosen to the Maine Senate, was a member of the Gov.'s council, appointed Post Master in 1821 or 1822, was at one time Major Gen. 7 Div. Maine Militia, was prominent in all matters pertaining to the church, and was for many years a leading member of the democratic party. Gen. B. died in 1832. (He also built him a fine residence, which was destroyed by fire about twenty years since.)

The cottage standing in front of the Brewer Mansion, (now owned by Hon. S. S. Pike) was built as early as 1792; the Capt. Bradford house built two or three years later is now standing, also the house built by Saml. Jones probably as early as 1786.

ST. CROIX

Robbinston, March 29. 1876.

Reminiscence of Robbinston and its Pioneers.

No. 2

The proprietors having erected a store-house, saw, and grist mill at So. Robbinston, (Mill Cove,) the settlers took up land in this part of the town. Saml. Jones made a clearing and built a house on land now owned by Mathew Cleland, Mr. Johnson and Bugbee settled on Robbinston ridge, Jacob Boyden settled near Lake Nasahick (Indian name,) since known as Boyden Lake; John Brewer located where the village now stands. The best mill privileges being at South Robbinston, also a good harbor, no doubt the settlers expected the village would be located at or near the cove. The township is six miles square and was at that time a dense forest, inhabited only by Indians and wild beasts, the growth principally pine, spruce and hardwood, which had not yet succumbed to the woodman's axe or the devouring flames, enemies of the forest. No doubt the lumber was what attracted these settlers beyond the pale of civilization, as they soon commenced lumbering operations; and finding a ready market for their timber, spruce, and shingles, at St. Andrews, where it was shipped to England and the West Indies. There was at that time great privilege for takings fish, the St. Croix being alive with salmon and alewives--in the season for them, -- the settlers not only supplying their own families, but finding a market abroad.

The growth of the town was slow; there does not appear to have been much increase of population for several years. Mr. Jones opened a store supplying the settlers with goods; there was considerable trade with the Indians for furs, &c. The Indians had a settlement on the hill, near where the town house now stands; there were also several Indian settlements on the river, but their principal village was at Pleasant Point in the adjoining town of Perry, where it is said in 1796 there were five hundred wigwags, and the canoes of the tribe resembled a large white viar on the shore; it is further said that this tribe (originally called Openangees,) could put upon the war path fifteen hundred fighting men. The present population is not over five hundred souls. Alas! the poor Indian! We seem to hear him exclaim; The footsteps of civilization has blotted out the war-path of our fathers; the axe of the pioneers has felled the forest, and scared away the game; the march of improvement has dammed up the waterfalls; and the salmon, frightened by its clatter, have ceased to frequent our streams. The scythe of Time has mowed a wide swath in our ranks, cutting down its victims of all ages and conditions, leaving but a remnant of our once countless host." Tradition has it a great and bloody fight took place between a tribe of Indians called Mismacs (who came from the east), and the Openangees on St. Andrews Islands situated near the town, and connected by a bar, the tide leaving it at low water.

In 1795 serious difficulties having arisen between this

Reminiscence of Robbinston and its Pioneers.

No. 2

country and France, a collision seeming inevitable, President Washington issued a proclamation appointing a national fast; the proclamation having in some way reached the good people of Robbinston, (there was no post office or post route at that time;) they had no minister, the itinerant had found his way into this almost unknown region, but his visits were few and far between; what is to be done; the fast must be observed for the President has said so. They went to St. Andrews, N. B., and invited parson Andrews, and Episcopal clergyman, to preach on the occasion, the services were held at the house of Genl. John Brewer, the sermon, which the writer of this read a few years ago, was good and appropriate, and would not disgrace a modern pulpit; there could not have been in the town at this time more than 10 or 12 families.

Hon. E. N. Robbins, one of the proprietors of the town, and who was at one time Lieut. Governor of Massachusetts, frequently visited the place and took great interest in anything relating to the town, and was highly esteemed by the people. Gov. Robbins was dignified and affable in his address, and was a gentleman of the old school, a generation of men long since passed away. His sons after the death of their father frequently visited the place, and are true representatives of an honored parent. The Robbins farm, so called, was sold by the heirs about twenty years ago; they now own no land in the town.

The settlers coming from Massachusetts where they had been accustomed to the sound of the church going bells, found themselves shut out from all religious privileges, they established meeting upon the Sabbath, sermons being read by Father Jones and Bugbee; in absence of a pastor this early custom has been faithfully followed to the present time, a period of twenty-five years.

They built a log school house; among the first teachers were the late Benj. Jones Esq., from Dennysville, a Mr. Bugbee who came from Dorchester, a relative of the pioneer. Several years afterwards a man by the name of Spooner came from Boston and taught several years; was well educated. On one occasion his head not being exactly level, the boys taking advantage of the situation thought they would have some sport, one boy rolling his manuscript threw it across the school room at another boy. Spooner failing on inquiry to discover the offender and determined that the guilty one should not escape punishment, made the attempt to ferrule every scholar in the house; one after another fled from the house, leaving Spooner alone in his glory. Spooner afterwards resided in Cooper. He was found dead on the roadside.

A post office having been established in 1796 a man by the name of Cram carried the mail between Moose Island (Eastport) and Robbinston. There being no roads at that time, Cram traveled on the shore and the banks of the river, probably using his coat pocket for a mail bag. Years afterwards this became a distributing office for the English mail, and was one of the best paying in the State. The following persons have been Post Master: John Brewer,

Reminiscence of Robbinston and its Pioneers

No. 2

John Balkam, J. M. Balkam, T. H. Vose, T. H. Briggs, J. W. Cox,
Cyrus Balkam, C. L. Washburn, Rufus Gates, the present incumbent
Thos. B. Vose.

ST. CROIX.

Robbinston, Apr. 28, 1876.

TIME : Sat Apr 10 2010 01:17PM
TERMINAL : 511
TITLE : Tagalog [sound recording].
CALL NUMBER : 499.211 T125s lplnf
BARCODE : 34240003451400
STATUS : IN TRANSIT
Received. Belongs at LewPL Nonfiction.

Reminiscences of Robbinston and its Pioneers.—No. 3.

There had not been much increase of population up to 1800, the town having been settled about fourteen years; about this time and for several years afterward settlers continued to arrive, principally from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, all good and reliable men, many of them first class mechanics. The first meeting called for the purpose of choosing plantation officers, also State and County officers was April 1800. We find the following record, "voted to dispense with the choice of State officers." George Stillman Esq., received fourteen votes for County Treasurer; Thos. Vose, Obidiah Allen, Saml. Jones Jr., Assessors. The first money voted by the inhabitants was one hundred and fifty dollars, for support of schools. There appears to have been no want of candidates for Register of Deeds in 1804, as appears by the records, Stillman Smith received seven votes, Jere O'Brien three, Levi Fairbanks two, Ralph H. Bowles one. The first election for State Officers was in 1807, for Gov. Jas. Sullivan received twelve votes, Caleb Strong seven; for Lieut. Governor, Levi Lincoln eleven, Edw. H. Robbins, Esq., six. Strong and Robbins were federalists, Sullivan and Lincoln were Republicans, (or Democrats.) E. H. Robbins the nominee for Lieut. Governor, was the proprietor of the township, his opponent received nearly twice as many votes. Robbins was personally popular with the people of Robbinston, but politically unpopular as appears by the vote. A vote was taken at this meeting to see if the people was in favor, or opposed to a separation of the Dist. of Maine from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; 15 votes being the whole number cast were against separation, as the Dist. of Maine did not become an independent state until 1820, it would seem that it took the people twelve years to find out that it was for their best interest "to paddle their own canoe." At a meeting of the inhabitants Sept. 1819, Thos. Vose received thirty-eight votes, and was chosen delegate to attend a convention at Portland, to frame a Constitution for the new State of Maine. Gen.

smugglers in demand. Government sent officials to R., to watch the movement of things, but somehow the quantity stored from time to time grew beautifully less, to the delight of the people across the river, It would appear that the officials were not as efficient as they should have been. Doubloons were very plenty at that time.

War having been declared in 1812, Robbinston being situated on the lines between the countries was an important place in a military point, a large barrack was built, it stood on the rising ground a few rods west of where the church now stands, a company of minute men were drafted into the service. Thos. Vose was appointed captain. Taft Coomstock of Lubec first Lieutenant, a Mr. Gould of Eastport second Lieutenant; other companies were ordered here, one commanded by Capt. Gregory, Wm. Delesdenier of Eastport, holding a commission under Gregory. Two other companies stationed here were commanded by Nash and Manning, Maj. Gen. John Balkam commanding the forces, stationed here and at Eastport. Things putting on a warlike appearance, two or three British men of war lying off St. Andrews—Privateers were fitted out, a vessel being captured by a privateer was brought to Robbinston with a valuable cargo. The commander of one of the men of war finding it out sent a barge manned with a number of men and officers to recapture it, also to capture the privateer. The officer in command at the barracks determined to fire into the barge, but the citizens objected to such a fool hardy proceeding. The officer was finally persuaded to desist; had he proceeded in the attack the town would have been bombarded, and laid in ashes. Samuel F. Morse of Machias being detained on board of one of the ships of war as prisoner, his friends hearing of it, determined to get him clear, so two of them boarded the vessel with fresh provisions for sale. Morse improving his opportunity slipped unobserved into the boat and made his escape. The commander was so incensed at the turn things had taken he held the two men as prisoners, threatening to carry them to England. The men not easily frightened told him that was just where they wanted to go, as they had a great desire to visit England. Through the influence of some of the leading men of St. Andrews they were finally allowed to go free.

At the breaking out of the war Gov. Robbins had a ship building at Robbinston, nearly ready to launch, receiving a part of her cargo of boards, and bricks, while on the stocks. Gov. R. was very much alarmed fearing the English would burn her on the stocks. He finally launched and sent her around to Calais.

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a meeting of the merchants Sept. 1820. Thos. Vose received thirty-eight votes, and was chosen delegate to attend a convention at Portland, to frame a Constitution for the new State of Maine. Gen. John Brewer received twenty-one votes for the above office. Mr. Vose was in politics a Republican, Mr. Brewer a Federalist. At an election for Representative to Congress in 1818, it appears that only three persons assembled for that purpose, one selectman, town clerk, and one other person, consequently no vote was taken; it would appear that the "politician" was not around that year, such a state of things would not answer for 1876, when the President elect, has but one majority electoral vote. Appropriations having been made by a vote of the town for the support of preaching, as well as schools, the people realized the importance of having a house of worship built. Many will recollect the old "white meeting house" on the hill, a few rods south of A. G. Buck's residence, it was a structure of no mean appearance (for the times) with its tower supported by three pillars, and in it a bell, which on a calm morning could be heard two miles, and which never failed to notify the inhabitants of St. Andrews, as well as Robbins-on that the glorious Fourth of July had arrived. Many are the incidents connected with the old white meeting house. On one occasion when the people were assembling for worship, a lady on entering her pew found an Indian in a kneeling posture; it was evident from his appearance that he had been imbibing rather freely, and was in no fit frame of mind for devotional exercises. He was requested to leave which he did, saying, "Killhog (Kellogg) he say me pray." On another occasion a Presbyterian minister,

part of her cargo of boards, and bricks, while on the stocks. Gov. R. was very much alarmed fearing the English would burn her on the stocks. He finally launched and sent her around to Cobscook where she would be less exposed. She was about four hundred tons. Mr. Joshua Briggs was the master builder. Her name was the Sagadahoc. A few years since the Boston Advertiser published an interesting account of this ship. She proved to be a very successful vessel, clearing the cost of building the first voyage she made, it is said. She was the largest ship sailing out of Boston at that time, which is now more than sixty years since.

ST. CROIX.

July 26, 1876.

It is rumored that an arrangement with the Cuban rebels has been entered upon by the Spanish authorities upon the following conditions: Peace is to be declared and autonomy is granted to the island. A Spanish captain general is to remain five years, after which the governing power is to be elected by the people.

There is some prospect of a "corner" in the potato market in New York city.— The prices are now higher than for many years, and potatoes are scarce and in great demand.

Austria declines the Porte's request to mediate between Turkey, Servia and Montenegro, because averse to taking singly such a step, but advises the Porte to treat directly with the principalities.

The Electoral Committee will be composed of Messrs. Edmunds, Morton, Frelinghuysen, Thurman and Bayard, on the part of the Senate, and Messrs. Garfield, Hoar, Payne, Field and Tacker from the House.

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Fairbanks two, Ralph H. Bowles one. The first election for State Officers was in 1807, for Gov. Cas, Sullivan received twelve votes, Caleb Strong seven; for Lieut. Governor, Levi Lincoln eleven, Edw. H. Robbins, Esq., six. Strong and Robbins were federalists, Sullivan and Lincoln were Republicans, (or Democrats.) E. H. Robbins the nominee for Lieut. Governor, was the proprietor of the township, his opponent received nearly twice as many votes. Robbins was personally popular with the people of Robbinston, but politically unpopular as appears by the vote. A vote was taken at this meeting to see if the people was in favor, or opposed to a separation of the Dist. of Maine from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; 15 votes being the whole number cast were against separation, as the Dist. of Maine did not become an independent state until 1820, it would seem that it took the people twelve years to find out that it was for their best interest "to paddle their own canoe." At a meeting of the inhabitants Sept. 1819. Mr. Vose received thirty-eight votes, and has been delegate to attend a convention at Portland, to frame a Constitution for the new State of Maine. Gen. John Brewer received twenty-one votes for the above office. Mr. Vose was in politics a Republican, Mr. Brewer a Federalist. At an election for Representative to Congress in 1818. It appears that only three persons assembled for that purpose, one selectman, town clerk, and one other person, consequently no vote was taken; it would appear that the "political" was not around that year, such a state of things would not answer for 1876, when the President elect, has but one majority electoral vote. Appropriations having been made by a vote of the town for the support of preaching, as well as schools, the people realized the importance of having a house of worship built. Many will recollect the old "white meeting house" on the hill, a few rods south of A. G. Buck's residence, it was a structure of no mean appearance (for the times) with its tower supported by three pillars, and in it a bell, which on a calm morning could be heard two miles, and which never failed to notify the inhabitants of St. Andrews, as well as Robbinston that the glorious Fourth of July had arrived. Many are the incidents connected with the old white meeting house. On one occasion when the people were assembling for worship, a lady on entering her pew found an Indian in a kneeling posture; it was evident from his appearance that he had been imbibing rather freely, and was in no fit frame of mind for devotional exercises. He was requested to leave which he did, saying, "Killhog (Kellogg) he say we pray." On another occasion a Presbyterian minister from St. George, N. B., by the name of Dunbar, supplying the pulpit; just before the service commenced the people and minister stood upon the steps of the church to witness a baptism by immersion. The river by the Methodist people. Mr. Dunbar never witnessed a baptism by immersion in his own country (Scotland), he was so impressed with the ceremony that he became an immersionist. He afterwards settled in New York city where

ton with a valuable cargo. The commander of one of the men of war finding it out sent a barge manned with a number of men and officers to recapture it, also to capture the privateer. The officer in command at the barracks determined to fire into the barge, but the citizens objected to such a fool hardy proceeding. The officer was finally persuaded to desist; had he proceeded in the attack the town would have been bombarded, and laid in ashes. Samuel F. Morse of Machias being detained on board of one of the ships of war as prisoner, his friends hearing of it, determined to get him clear, so two of them boarded the vessel with fresh provisions for sale. Morse improving his opportunity slipped unobserved into the boat and made his escape. The commander was so incensed at the turn things had taken he held the two men as prisoners, threatening to carry them to England. The men not easily frightened told him that was just where they wanted to go, as they had a great desire to visit England. Through the influence of some of the leading men of St. Andrews they were finally allowed to go free.

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ST. CROIX.

Jan. 26, 1876.

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Never try to file off the edges of a sharp flight of steps by sliding down them on your back.

The weather in France is so unreasonable as to alarm the agricultural interests.

Philadelphia commerce has suffered largely from the severity of the winter, which has caused great interruption to the shipping interests.

A French woman has sailed from New York to Marseilles for a