

# Hebron Historical Society Gazette

Hebron, NH

Volume 8, No. 1, January 2010

www.HebronHistSoc.org

\$1.00 dollar



## Mary Pillsbury Weston (1817-1894)

by Ron Collins

Mary B. Pillsbury was born on Hobart Hill in Hebron, New Hampshire in 1817. Her father Stephen Pillsbury was a Baptist minister and a fifth generation American. His family members immigrated from England sometime before 1645 when the first American member, Moses Pillsbury, was born in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Mary was the sixth of eight children born to Stephen and his wife Lavina (Hobart) Pillsbury, daughter of Josiah Hobart and Joanna (Hazelton) Hobart.

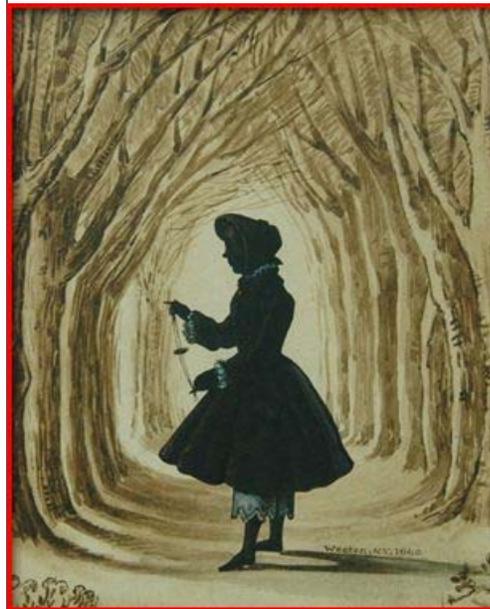
An early biographical sketch of Mary Pillsbury reads: *"The romantic history of the daughter of the poor but rigid minister in the isolated town of Hebron, N.H., is too well known for repetition. After painting flowers and faces in colors manufactured from leaves, beet-juice, &c., and twice running away from home in search of anyone who could teach her something, she reached Hartford with but ten dollars and a bundle of clothes, and was taken into the home of the Rev. Henry Jackson. After several months of study and miniature-painting, that gave her, with the gen-*



Two Women in a Field by Mary Pillsbury



Looking north from Hobart Hill by Mary Pillsbury. Now on loan to the Hebron Historical Society.



A Mary Pillsbury Silhouette

*erosity of her friends, a sufficient income to live upon, she accepted an invitation to go to Willington to paint Squire Rider's family, and, as it transpired, several others for five dollars each, the sitters furnishing the ivory, while she ground her own colors.*

(Continued on page 2)

*The 'Angel Gabriel' and 'Infant Saviour' are her masterpieces, the flesh-tints in which are remarkably fine."*

Now for her full story: Mary acquired a great love for art at an early age. When she gave an account of her life for the 1859 book *Women Artists All Ages and Countries* by Mrs. E.F. Ellet, Mary recollected that she first attempted to draw the face of a beautiful woman who caught her eye when she was merely seven years old. After that, young Mary spent her free time sketching and reading books about artists. She was especially fond of prevailing upon a younger sister to sit for her as she practiced sketching. Once Mary had mastered a sketch of her sister, she turned her drawing talents towards neighboring Indians who often visited Hebron. One day during Mary's childhood, Hebron was visited by an itinerant silhouettist whom Mary watched while at work. From that day forward, Mary practiced cutting silhouettes from leaves and paper until she had mastered the art.

Although Mary wanted to spend all her time with her artwork, her mother was afraid the study of painting would interfere with more important study and refused to allow young Mary to take art lessons. Despite her mother's objections, Mary continued to practice painting. She used beet-juice, and the extract of bean-leaves to prepare paints for herself until a family member finally gifted a box of paints to her. Mary continued to paint and read biographies of artists and as many books about classical times and faraway places as she could find in her father's library to the exclusion of playing with other children her age. Her longing to become a famous artist filled her otherwise lonely life.

When Mary was fourteen, she ran away from home, walking thirty miles in a day with the intent to reach Concord where she hoped to earn a small living through house-keeping or laundry while she worked to establish herself as an artist. Late at night, the tired young girl finally stopped at a small house in the country where she asked to stay long enough to rest. Once Mary had told her story, the home owners asked her to stay the night. After the exhausted young girl had fallen asleep, Mary's host left for Hebron to alert her family. The next morning, Mary awakened to find her uncle waiting to take her home. Mary's family welcomed her home, never said a word about her disobedience and offered a bit more understanding about her wish to spend her time practicing her art instead of doing chores. Mary never quit dreaming about life as a professional artist.

At the age of nineteen, Mary finally set out to become a professional artist. With twelve dollars and a small basket of clothes, Mary left for New York. She spent a week in New York, staying with a lady whom she did not know, but who let her stay because she had previously heard about the strange young lady in Hebron who wanted to be a painter. After a week in New York, Mary took a suggestion from her hostess (and a letter of introduction) and set out for Hartford, Connecticut. There she was received by Rev. Henry Jackson who allowed the young artist to stay in his home. There she set out preparing canvases and grinding paints in preparation for her new profession. Soon after,

Rev. Jackson received visitors from Willington, CT, which is just east of Harford. Mary's paintings pleased the visitors so much, they took her home with them to paint family portraits. Nineteen year old Mary Pillsbury was now a professional artist. In Willington, Mary painted the portraits of her benefactors as well as thirty other people. Homes were opened to her all over the city. Among those she painted in Willington were members of the Jonathan Weston family.

Mary returned to Hartford and spent much of time staying with the Weston family who had a daughter of Mary's age with whom she became fast friends. While Mary was staying with the Westons, Jonathan Weston's brother, Mr. Valentine Weston, paid a visit and was so enthralled with Mary's paintings that he urged her to visit New York to study art. Mary became intent upon raising enough money for a year's study in New York. Soon however, her savings were unnecessary as an invitation came from Valentine Weston's daughter, Sarah, for Mary to come to New York and stay with the Valentine Westons while she studied art. Mary took advantage of the offer, moved in with the Westons, studied her art, and, three months after the move, became the second Mrs. Valentine Wightman Weston.

She bore at least two children: a daughter named Valentine Lavina Weston who was born in September 1843. I have been unable to find the name or birthdate of the second child but I have found evidence that one of Mary's children was a daughter who went by the name of Eva. Whether "Eva" was short for Lavina I cannot tell, but after Mary's husband died in 1863, Mary and Eva lived with relatives in New Hampshire before moving to Lawrence, Kansas in 1874. There Mary lived until her death in 1894.

Mary's paintings were exhibited at the National Academy in 1842. In 1893, she created a painting especially for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago which she called "The Spirit of Kansas." The painting depicts a classical figure of a woman astride a white horse. The woman holds a dove representing peace. Below the horse's feet is a snake representing tyranny being stamped out. Receding storm clouds above the woman's head represent her hope that the violent Indian/settler conflicts upon which Kansas was built were disappearing. This great painting currently resides in the collection of the Kansas Museum of History.

Mary Pillsbury Weston was an accomplished portrait artist, silhouettist, and painter of classically-based paintings and religious paintings. She depicted her figures with great movement and with a special eye towards grace of the human form. Her silhouettes are rarely found and represent some of the most complicated of the already rare American conversation pieces. She cut whole families, embellished them with Chinese white and pale blue and laid them upon watercolor backgrounds. Unlike other artists of the day, she used color in her backgrounds such as subtle shades of green and brown.

Mary's cousin John and second cousin Charles Pillsbury founded the Pillsbury flour milling dynasty, now the Pillsbury Baking Company.

## Old Home Day, continued from July, 2009 Gazette By Barbara Brooks

The following excerpt is from the Hebron Community Triangle newspaper of August 24, 1919. A Mr. A. B. Woodworth wrote a response to the paper after receiving an invitation to attend the first Hebron Old Home Day. Because of its historical interest we wish to share its contents with our membership.

IN RESPONSE TO INVITATION Dear Mr. Andrew:

Your invitation to join with you in the Hebron Old Home week observance on Tuesday next appealed strongly to my inclination to accept, but I regret to say that it will be impossible to attend.

It would indeed be a great pleasure to renew old acquaintances and to form new ones among the worthy successors of the generation to which I belong. It awakens thoughts of the Hebron I knew in my boyhood days-more than seventy years ago.

In the cemetery behind the church repose the mortal remains of my mother and father. They reared a large family of girls and boys, having nothing much to leave them except a start along the rugged pathway of right living.

At that time, back in the "40's", the old meeting house had undergone an extensive alteration, leaving it practically as it is now. The sounding board over the high pulpit was removed, the square, high back pews replaced with those now in use. The palmy days of the academy were in the past. Numerous farms, then occupied by thrifty people, in different sections of the town, are now deserted, but I am not a pessimist-the new days may be better than the old ones.

Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, and Universalists all worshipped together, under an equitable agreement for dividing the time, so that each denomination could be served by a minister of their own faith. A Sunday School was held during the summer season.

The little red school-house for the village district stood on the edge of the common by the road leading to Hobart Hill where I attended, under a dozen or more different teachers-sometimes a man and sometimes a woman. At the winter term there were around fifty scholars, ranging in age from 5 years to 20. I could make a long list of those whose names I recall.

Hebron is distinguished not only as being one of the smallest towns in the state, if not the smallest, remote from the railroad, possessing little to attract and hold a large agricultural community, but it is also renowned for having furnished a number of men for the public service, scarcely matched by any other town in the state. Back in the "40's", a resident of Hebron, a physician was, or had been a representative of the District in the Congress of the United States. A young man reared on Hobart Hill at a later period became editor of a daily paper and a representative in Congress from another District of the state. Another, brought up on one of

the back roads and a lawyer by profession, then residing in another town, represented New Hampshire for a term in the Senate of the United States, all of them performing their public duties with credit to themselves and honor to the state.

Many of those who will join with you in observing this Old Home occasion, will remember "The Honest Tanner" - a man of stalwart frame and upright character, whose home was in this village, who as Governor in '61 and '62, raised and equipped all the regiments except two, provided by New Hampshire for the Federal Army in the Civil War. The claim of being the War Governor unquestionably belonged to him. It was a well known fact at the time, that he had the confidence of President Lincoln and was one of his strong supporters. [Editor's note: this was Hebron resident Governor Nathaniel Berry.]

I deeply regret to say that I was too much of a weakling to get by the Surgeon and into the army, but I now hold in high honor the memory of the schoolmates who were volunteers. I cannot refrain from mentioning them now by name:

M.K. Hazelton - Edward Pratt - Horace Hobart - Thompson Merrill - Nathan Randlett - Edwin Pike

Hoping that your first Old Home Day Celebration will be a success in every particular, and with congratulations, greetings and best wishes to all, I beg to remain

Sincerely yours,

A. B.  
Woodworth

---

### A Hebron Tid-Bit

Taxes in 1801 show the amount of taxes assessed for the year, resident and non-resident were a total of \$334.67. The largest tax was Reuben Hobart for \$14.12!

---

### The Settlement of Hebron

For the early settlement of what is today Hebron we have to go back to the history of the parent towns. The old township of Cockermouth was first granted to 64 "proprietors" in 1761. In 1766 it was regranted to another group of proprietors, because the original grantees had not fulfilled the terms of the grant, which required "that every grantee, his heirs or assigns shall plant and cultivate five acres of land within the term of five years for every fifty acres contained in his share or proportion... and continue to improve and settle the same." The other terms of the grants were also simple. The Proprietors could convey only the soil, while the political rights and powers of government came from the province. Provision was made that no land should be subject to taxation or assessment until improved by those holding the titles. Rights were reserved for the layout of roads, churches and schools, to be built within a definite period of time, for the use of ministers and in many cases for mill-rights. Fees were nominal, often only a shilling or an ear of corn a year. All tall pines should be saved for the King's navy.

Proprietors or grantees were essentially promoters who undertook to settle and develop new townships with the expectation that they could sell their lands at a profit as settlement progressed. Initially, each proprietor had an undivided right in the township. Some sold their undivided rights to others, and some sold land after it had been surveyed and divided into ranges and lots. Only a few of the proprietors became actual settlers. A certain number of shares in every township were allotted to the Governor of the province and his friends, whom we may call inactive proprietors. The majority of the active proprietors of both Plymouth and Cockermouth were residents from Hollis, NH.

By 1768, at least one settler came to Cockermouth, namely James Gould (Goold). "The first settler in what is now Hebron was James Gould, who came on with his wife, from Hollis... His log cabin stood just north of the site now occupied by Enock P. Pierce's house, at Hebron Village. The first land cleared was a patch on the flat just back of the house, between it and Jewel bridge. The first crop raised thereon was a crop of turnips. The first six months of their residence here Mrs. Gould saw no woman's face, until she was paid a visit by one of her 'near' neighbors, a Mrs. Snow, of Plymouth. This lady came through the woods to call on the new comer, a distance of six miles, on snow-shoes. Mrs. Gould had also another neighbor, a Mrs. Rice, of Dorchester. This lady would occasionally make her an afternoon visit, returning home alone after sunset, a walk of seven miles. In due course of time a new settler came into the wilderness, an infant son of Mrs. Gould, the first child born within the present limits of the township. There was then no physician in the vicinity, so Mrs. Samuel Emerson was sent for, who made her way from Plymouth on snow-shoes, to welcome the little stranger. His cradle was made from a hollow ash log, and was five feet ten inches long and two feet wide."

Sam Hazelton was probably in Cockermouth by 1770, but the required state of development had not been reached, in terms of cleared land and the number of residents, when the five year term of the Grant expired in 1771. The population grew quickly over the next year and in 1772, upon petition to the Governor, a three year extension to the Grant was given.

Of the 64 proprietors named in the 1766 Cockermouth grant, three became settlers: Stephen Ames, James Gould, and Samuel Hazelton. Many of the other settlers, however, were relatives or neighbors of the proprietors, and by 1772 a fair number of families were living in Cockermouth. Among the early settlers in the part of Cockermouth that became Hebron, the following families were from Hollis: Ball, Colburn, Cummings, Farley, Goodhue, Gould, Hardy, Hazelton, Hobart, Kemp, Kendall, Lovejoy, Melven, Nevens, Noyes, Phelps, Powers, and Pratt.

There is a copy of the Plymouth proprietors' records in the New Hampshire State Library. Unfortunately, the Cockermouth proprietors' records are apparently lost, but it is assumed that the system for dividing the land was essentially the same in both towns. The first division of lots was surveyed and laid out so that each proprietor should receive "his proportion for quantity and quality, or near as may be." A committee then prepared "the lots in order for drawing" and

two men were designated to draw the lots which would belong to each proprietor. Later another committee was designated to lay out the remainder of the township.

Part of Cockermouth was surveyed and divided into ranges and lots in November 1772. Matthew Patten of Bedford, N.H. was hired to do the surveying. His published diary contains a brief account of his work in Cockermouth, as well as the journey from his home and return, then a long and tedious trip.

An ancient lot plan of Hebron and Groton, on calfskin, still exists, and there is a copy of it in county land records. .

## Word Jumble by Kathy Begor

### Hebron Points of Interest.

Unscramble these 5 jumbled words to form 5 points of interest in Hebron.

O	R	E	S	T					
		○			○				
C	B	A	E	H					
		○							
M	O	O	C	N	M				
		○							○
Y	E	S	T	A	E				
	○		○		○				
F	N	N	D	O	W	E	U		
			○		○				

Now arrange the circled letters to form another special point of interest as suggested by the picture.



Ans. 

--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

The answers to our Word Jumble are given at the end of this page.

---

## ***A REMINDER***

### ***MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE EACH JANUARY***

A membership gift to a family member  
or friend is a wonderful  
way to help preserve our history and archives.

Membership forms are included on the back page  
of this newsletter for your use.

**Thank you for your support,  
Barbara Brooks, Membership Chair.**

---

## **Cockermouth-Hebron in the Revolutionary War**

At the time of the American Revolution, Hebron was still part of Cockermouth and West Plymouth. It wasn't organized as Hebron until 1792. As Cockermouth, and West Plymouth citizens, the original settlers that later formed Hebron supported the Revolution wholeheartedly. There is no evidence of any loyalist or Tory sentiment. At one of the first meetings held in Cockermouth on July 19, 1775 a group of settlers met to create a Committee of Inspection *"to inspect and take up any person that shall be suspected to be Enemies to the Contrey and to Deal with them accordingly."* Samuel Hazelton, James Gould and Edmund Shattuck were chosen as members of this committee. The purpose of this meeting was to establish Cockermouth in support of the American Revolution which had started just three months prior. All towns were requested to make a report to the Congress on population, firearms and powder. On Oct. 28, 1775 Cockermouth reported a total population of 118, of whom 23 were males aged 16 to 50 not in the army, and five were men *"gone in the army."* The *"number of arms fit for youse"* was reported as 18. There were three pounds of powder in town.

In January 1776 the New Hampshire Congress adopted a provisional constitution. On June 15, three weeks before the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress, the legislature established by the provisional constitution declared New Hampshire independent of Great Britain. Although no battles of the revolution were fought on New Hampshire soil, the state played a key role in the struggle for independence. Samuel Hazelton went as the delegate from Cockermouth to the Fourth Provincial Congress, which first met in Exeter on May 17, 1776 and was in session from time to time until November 17. He received mileage payments

from the new Revolutionary government of New Hampshire for two round trips from Cockermouth to Exeter. This Congress planned and supported New Hampshire's revolutionary effort in the first year of the war.

In March 1777, a Committee of Safety was formed at Town Meeting that included Ebenezer Kendall, Thomas Nevens, Ebenezer Melvin, Stephen Hazelton, and Edmund Shattuck. In March of 1778 the following men were added to this Committee: Samuel Hazelton, William Powers and Solomon Blood.

New Hampshire Minutemen rushed to support the rebels of Massachusetts after the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775. New Hampshire provided three regiments for the Continental Army, and also contributed such prominent military leaders as John Stark and John Sullivan. In August 1777 General Stark commanded an American force that defeated the British at the Battle of Bennington in Vermont. Years after the war Stark wrote a toast for a reunion of soldiers from the Battle of Bennington that became the state's motto: *"Live Free or Die."*

After the war there was a great influx of people to Cockermouth and West Plymouth. Many were men who had fought in the Revolution and were now looking for a place to settle.

Following the Revolution, New Hampshire was confronted with heavy debts and the Legislature refused to issue paper currency to reduce the state's indebtedness. Many towns, like Cockermouth, used a combination of British Pounds Sterling and Continental Dollars as currency. This continued through the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The currency problem had little effect on Cockermouth and West Plymouth as almost everyone was a self sufficient farmer. Farm families grew and produced nearly everything needed in the way of food and clothes. Houses were simple then. There are no surviving houses in Hebron that date from before the Revolutionary War.

---

### **An Early Flood**

Before the 1860's there were no dams regulating flow out of the lake, and the lake was several feet lower than it is today. Floods were common. In October of 1785 Hebron was inundated with a major storm. *"More rain than usual had fallen in Sept., so with the ground well saturated, the immense rainfall that came ran into the lakes and streams, producing the greatest freshet ever known to that date on the Pemigewasset River. Nine inches of rain fell, doing much damage to the low lands and drowning many cattle. The water was about 30 ft. above the bed of the river."*

### **Word Jumble Answers**

TOWN FOREST  
SAFETY, NEW FOUND  
STORE, BEACH, COMMON



44 Main Street, Plymouth  
603-536-2410 • Fax: 603-536-2419

30 Lake Street, Bristol ~ At the Lights  
603-744-2600 • Fax: 603-744-5245  
www.printunlimited.com

*Our Service is Unlimited!*

**Bill White Realty**

Office: 744-2400

Cell: 387-1415

Fax: 744-5237

billwhiterealty@yahoo.com



**This space sponsored by**

**Betsy & Phil Twombly**

**This space sponsored by**

**Janice & Ronald Collins**

**This space sponsored by**

**Carol & Roger LaFontaine**

PROPERTY LINES · SUBDIVISION PLANNING  
TOPOGRAPHY · DEED RESEARCH  
CONSULTING · STATE PERMITS

**BARNARD SURVEY ASSOC., INC.**

Alan M. Barnard; L.L.S.  
86 Hobart Hill Road  
Hebron, NH 03241-9700  
(603) 744-5495

**This space sponsored by**

**Howard Oedel**

SEPTIC SYSTEM DESIGN, DESIGNER #37  
SUBDIVISION PLANNING  
TEST PIT SERVICE & TAX MAPPING

**B. A. Barnard Enterprises, Inc.**  
Hobart Hill Road  
Hebron, NH 03241  
603-744-2696

**Donald Merrill  
Landscaping & Painting**

Over 20 yrs Experience

PO Box 36  
Hebron, NH 03241  
603-744-7846  
Email: NOCAB@prodigy.net

**This space sponsored by**

**Nancy & Hugh Sycamore**

**This space sponsored by**

**Kathy & Everett Begor**

**Garden Rototilling &  
Custom Brush Hog Mowing  
744-3335**

## Hebron Historical Society Program Events Calendar

**Pot Luck Supper: there will be a Pot Luck Supper in February. Please watch for the date in the Record Enterprise.**

*What we do not preserve someday will be gone.*

**John Dunklee Electrician**  
*Dunklee Electric Company*  
 603-744-2792  
 Toll free 800-660-2792

**This space sponsored by**  
 Doug and "Ralph" McQuilkin

**This space sponsored by**  
 The Hillier Family

**This space sponsored by**  
 Willa and William Lucarelli

### Membership Update DUES DUE EACH JANUARY

A membership gift to a family member or friend is a wonderful way to help preserve our history and archives. Membership forms are included on the back page of this newsletter for your use.

**Thank you for your support,  
 Barbara Brooks, Membership Chair.**

### Become a Hebron Historical Society Gazette sponsor

**for only \$10.00 per issue  
 for a 2 inch by 2 inch ad.**

Contact Ron Collins at 744-1048 to place an ad in the Gazette.

*Hebron Historical Society Gazette*  
 is published twice a year

**Donations of money and historical items  
 are gladly accepted.**

## Books and Publications from the Hebron Historical Society Hebron Videos on DVD:

- (1) Three videos on one DVD:  
**Merrill's Campground 1930's,  
 Historical Hebron and  
 The Beauty of Hebron, \$15.**
- (2) Two videos on one DVD:  
**The Beauty of Hebron 2 and  
 Birds of Newfound. \$10.**

**Sergeant John Ordway, A History with his Genealogy.** The story of Hebron resident John Ordway who became the third in command of the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Price \$10.00 for members, and \$12.00 for non-members.

**The Genealogies of Hebron, NH**  
 A new 347 page book, completely indexed, of genealogies of the families living in Hebron for the first two hundred years of the Town.. Price \$25.00 for non-members, \$22.00 for members.

**The History of Hebron, NH  
 The First Two Hundred Years**  
 A new 247 page book with 75 color and Black & White photos, and 11 maps.. This new history of Hebron gives the story of the founding of the town, its growth and major citizens set in the historical context of what was happening in the world around them. Price \$29.00 for non-members, \$25.00 for members.

**These books and DVD may be  
 purchased directly from the  
 Hebron Historical Society  
 PO Box 89  
 Hebron, NH 03241**

**The books are also available on  
 www.Amazon.com**

