

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



# MILFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE CAREY HOUSE ❖ 6 UNION STREET ❖ PO BOX 609 ❖ MILFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03055-0609

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**MARCH PROGRAM**

Please join us for our public program that assures something interesting for everyone.

**Wednesday March 15<sup>th</sup>**

***WHO KILLED CAROLINE?***

**Banquet Hall at 7:00pm of the Town Hall, 1 Union Square, Milford**

See article inside

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Historical Society has kicked off the New Year with a renewed interest in the Historical House Signs. These are very popular with residents in Milford many of whom have these really old houses. The signs are beautiful, showcasing a date and the name of the person responsible for the house being built. This sounds simple but not in Milford!

We limited our register to houses that have been built 100 years ago or more. If you exclude condos, most are this old. The Historical Society includes a written history of the specific house and best of all; most of the donation helps the Society to continually update the Carey House Museum. We have many interesting people in town; soldiers, musicians, abolitionists, inventors, governors and my favorite, the eccentric. The popularity of Ancestry.com and the local town histories are loaded with heroes, heroines and villains. We have multiple old maps of town that list the names of the owners, so we can track their movements over time. The Town Hall and Wadleigh Library have safes full of old taxpayer records and copies of newspapers and the Carey House Museum has tens of thousands of images, ledgers of businesses, and family genealogies from bibles and research of the DAR. I must say that we have a small army of researchers to go through this stuff. They will tell you how interesting it is to delve into this land of the past: a true Indiana Jones adventure.

Here is where it gets more difficult; Milford is a relatively "new" town being incorporated later than many of the surrounding towns. By 1794 this area we call Milford had many names, was in Massachusetts and New Hampshire and even a colony of the British. Many of the houses we researched are older than the country. Evidence of this is in the deeds where the houses were paid for by British pounds of gold and silver. Because of age of the area and the industry, people have been here a long time. The farm land and the power of the rivers and have made this a place where people stay for generations. The granite industry, the foundries and the manufacturing have sustained us. Many of the buildings in town are not located where they were originally built.

The same skills of lifting and cutting of granite blocks enabled Milford folk to pick up a house and move it around multiple times. The early settlers built modest post and beam houses roughly hewn from the prevalent lumber. The river power made cutting of raw trees into beams, shingles and clapboards easy quick work. The early construction techniques were borrowed heavily from our shipbuilding skills. Post and beam construction is inherently mobile. Ships after all are transportation; they

have to be light, flexible and subjected to the jarring of the waves. These old post and beam houses and barns have been subjected to nor'easters, hurricanes and earthquakes. The joints are hinged to allow movement and like many an early settler; they held up to the attacks of time and just shook it off. I think of our early farmers and the attack of all those granite stones that grew out of the ground with every heaving of the frost. We are a tough bunch and a frugal bunch.

Instead of razing a house when it proved too small for a growing family we simply added on or moved the original to a new foundation. The Conant house on Nashua Street was lifted turned and another house built underneath! This is problematic to researchers. If it weren't for all the old photos of the Milford Oval one would never believe how many times this spot has been rearranged. Eagle Hall is the most evident of this. The building is distinctive so it is easily recognized in the old photos. It was originally built on the Oval. I mean ON the Oval. If you were so brave to tie a string on the front doorknob of the Eagle Hall and tie the other end to the door of the Riverhouse Cafe, the middle of the string is where Eagle Hall sat facing south not west like today. Don't try this by the way, as the traffic these days would mean you would surely be in a string cocoon on the side of Rte. 13 in Mont Vernon! If your house is not on the oval or was not originally on the oval we cannot guarantee that we have a photo. Before Town Hall was built in 1869 the oval was completely re-arranged, just a few buildings remain in the original spot. They are still around, maybe on South Street or Lincoln Street but they are still around. The Oval is just an example of this habit of moving houses. There are a few fabulous references of building techniques available to the old house researcher. Eric Sloane documented many of these old construction tools and made sketches of the marks they left on the wood and stone. James Garvin is a living encyclopedia of NH building techniques. His research and documentation on the construction of so many NH buildings gives us a Rosetta Stone to learn from our earliest builders. He is a wonderful man and not afraid to climb to a loft or crawl under a house. Another reference that has to be mentioned, are the books of George Nash on old house restoration.

Within the last few months, several members have toured some old houses in town as the records at the Registry of Deeds do not go back far enough to tell us the age of the house. Some of the signs we found were; that foundations are newer than the building above, houses were lifted and turned, barns and workshops were re-purposed, and my favorite, hidden spaces. We look at the marks on the stone and the wooden beams. We see

President's message continued

numbering of frames so they can be taken apart and reconstructed. The roofs have purlins and ridge-beams of various sizes, floor joists with the original bark of the tree still intact. The experts tell us how to read the nails and pegs, muntins of the windows and the size of floor boards. These resources are great in that we don't have to write the book, we just read the volumes. I am beginning to think that every home built before 1900 was a mobile home.

My old house was built before electricity and indoor plumbing, good thing! These renovations are hard to decipher when trying to "date" an old house, but they give us clues. Recently, I inspected a house on Osgood Road that may have been built by Major Josiah Osgood's father; Col Josiah Osgood listed as one of Milford's earliest settlers. In my house, I still have remnants of the old "knob and tube" wiring which I have been getting removed bit by bit. This house on Osgood Road showed no signs of knob and tube wiring but the foundation and frame talk of a house built in the 1750's. The deeds to this house show that it was a residence in the early 1800's but the wiring was only added in the 1930's. I can't imagine living in a house without electricity. To my son, this would be the closest thing to hell on earth. The eight days of no power in the December ice storm are proof of this.

The Osgood Road house is loaded with mystery, the barn is newer, parts built after 1830 but the house and the foundation do not fit. The house is very original in so many features but the clues don't add up. As of this writing, I can only conclude that the house was lifted and transported to an existing foundation. The foundation is of the early 1700's vintage on the inside with uncut, round fieldstone but on the outside it is typical of a late 1700's construction with large granite slabs chisel cut. We have replaced old house signs when we find evidence of an older date of construction. Like the Scientific Method we learn in school, you come up with an educated guess and then test the theory for credibility. This happens over and over. The Society initially found better and better evidence after a date was determined. We are getting better at our research and have others to double-check the research. The story just gets better and better even though the truth may be a moving target.

## OBITUARY

### Remembering Ed Carey

When friends meet and smile at the mention of a friend that has recently died, one of the nicest things that can be said is "He was always ready to help when something needed to be done". This is what is said of Ed Carey.

Ed was the Buildings and Grounds man of the Milford Historical Society, and his wife Louie was the Curator. He was always smiling and when he had a twinkle in his eye, you knew he had a story to tell. One of my favorites regarded the building next to the Historical Society. When the land was donated to the town, it was with the stipulation that nothing be built on it. "Well", he said, "they didn't build; they moved a building to that location!" When the McLane Post Office piece came in to the Historical Society, it sat on the floor in the entry room. To display it more effectively, Ed built a stand to place it on. Although it was a tall piece, the stand put the clerk's window and the locked mail boxes at eye level. It now sits in the Crosby Room. A photo has been placed in the clerk's window which gives a note of humorous realism to the display.

Another solution Ed was able to accomplish was the display of the photos of Milford's WW II Veterans. He built five frames to exhibit all the photos. Each side of the frame holds twenty 3" x 5" photos. The five frames only take up a 3' x 5' space and are mounted on pivots that enable the frames to be opened like a book. When visitors are in the War Room, they can be seen turning the frames, looking for their relatives, friends or neighbors.

Ed also built the frames that display the Burns collection in the "Then and Now" room. John Burns was one of the first settlers in Milford and the easy accessibility of the history of the Burns family is easy to view.

**A note to members:** You should see a number on the address label next to your name; this is the last year that we received your membership dues. We regretfully no longer do mailings to those with dues delinquent more than 3 years.

The display of the Emerson bicycle is another of Ed's projects. He designed the stand for the high wheel bicycle that Charles Emerson rode in parades. The large bicycle sits on a free-standing frame and is easily moveable.

The Historical Society came into the possession of a sign for the Hutchinson Tavern. The donor was a relative of the Hutchinson Singers. The large wooden sign presented a problem. It was too heavy to attach to the wall and too bulky to display on the floor. The sign had a metal attachment that allowed it to hang at the Tavern. Ed bolted large hooks to the ceiling, put a metal rod through the frame, which with help from someone holding, allowed Ed to put the rod through the sign and the eye hooks.

As noted in his obituary, Ed was born in Jefferson, New Hampshire on April 11, 1928. He served in the Army, graduated from St. Anselm's College and retired from Lockheed Sanders in 1990. In his 20's, he worked on the Cog Railroad and loved to tell stories of his time there. He and his wife Louie enjoyed mountain climbing and both attained the 4,000 footer club certificate.

Along with the Historical Society, Ed was involved in many community activities, including the Knights of Columbus, The Boy Scouts and the Hollis Beaver Brook Association.

We have missed Ed and Louie since they moved to Concord and we think of Louie and the children often.



### A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS L. LIVERMORE

By Local Historian: David Nelson, Milford Historical Soc.

In Milford, NH, the most well-known individual associated with the Civil war is without question Colonel O. W. Lull of the 8<sup>th</sup> NH Regiment killed at the Battle of Port Hudson in 1863. His most visible daily reminder in modern times is

### Thomas Livermore author of three books:

*-Numbers and Losses in the Civil War,*  
*-Days and Events* (which is widely used as a reference in many Civil war books down to the present),  
*-History of the Eighteenth NH Volunteers*

the Wadleigh Memorial Library built the on land donated by Mary Lull his widow and the memorial water fountain next to the Library.

There are other men from Milford who achieved prominence in the Civil War but perhaps none as famous as Thomas L. Livermore. Oddly, when his name is mentioned it is often accompanied by quizzical expressions. Ramsdell in his *History of Milford New Hampshire* published in 1901 gives an extensive biography of Livermore.

Perhaps the reason Livermore is not as well-known as Lull is that while there are a significant number of Livermore descendants, none of them now live in the Milford area and that Thomas L. Livermore moved from the town in the pursuit of his career. The last Livermore to reside in Milford was Elizabeth Livermore (1818-1910) and she was the last Livermore to live in what is now the Milford Community House which has since lost the Livermore name associated with its title.

Thomas L. Livermore was descended from an old New England Family. The first Livermore arrived in America in 1638 and settled in Watertown, Mass. His paternal Great-Grandfather was Jonathan Livermore the minister of the Congregational Church in Wilton, NH who eventually had to resign because of his Tory leanings during the Revolutionary War.



Rev. Jonathan  
Livermore  
1729-1809



Solomon K.  
Livermore

His son, Solomon Kidder Livermore (1779-1859), born in Wilton, was an attorney and moved to Milford where he established a law practice.

In 1842 he built the classic Neo-Greek building now known as the Milford Community House. He and his wife Abigail Jarvis Livermore had eight children born in Milford. Among these was Thomas Adkins Livermore the father of Thomas L. Born in Milford February 7, 1814, at age 18 he went to the wild country west of the Mississippi and settled in Galena, Illinois. He taught school, studied medicine and dentistry. Here he married Harriet Elizabeth Smith and it was in Galena, Illinois that Thomas L. Livermore was born on February 7, 1844.



L-R Thomas L. Livermore,  
Thomas Adkins Livermore,  
Elizabeth Smith Livermore



Elizabeth A. Livermore

Thomas Adkins left Illinois in 1849 and like so many at that time went west as a "forty-niner" to California. When his wife died in 1854 he moved back to Galena, Illinois after having first deposited his son Thomas L. and younger brother Charlie and sister, Mary with their grandparents Solomon and Abigail, and Elizabeth his sister and aunt of Thomas L.

Here the ten year old Thomas L. entered into a classic case of generational conflict with his aged grand-parents and aunt. His grand-parents were classic Calvinist Yankees who did not see why even a ten year old boy should not be actively employed instead of "hanging around the oval with vulgar boys". Thomas was very much the student and enjoyed school following which he preferred hanging out with his friends in the streets of Milford. For some period of time he attended Appleton Academy in Mont Vernon.

In 1860, at the age of sixteen having spent almost six years in Milford his father remarried and Thomas L.

returned to Illinois and was enrolled at Lombard University in Galesburg, Illinois at the outbreak of the Civil War. Livermore relates that:

..one day while riding into town with my father He said to me "Leonard, if I were you I should like to go to Washington and join some good regiment", ...and we came to the conclusion that it would be well for me to go out and join some good regiment like the 7<sup>th</sup> New York Shortly, thereafter, Livermore left for the East

Everything ready and goodbye to the family I went into town with my father, and then at his office door he said to me "God Bless You" and left me. I was aware that my enlistment would bring hazards and that I may never get back to see him, but I did not think , as I watched him departing, that **he** would die before the war had closed.

"..arrived in Washington and took up quarters at the National Hotel and looked about me for a chance to enlist...and as the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment had left for home the 1<sup>st</sup> NH regiment was my best resort, for some friends from Milford were in it....and New Hampshire was my second birthplace so to speak....Arrived at the old camp, I got my uniform, a blue blouse, gray trousers and gray cap with a red band".

As the 1<sup>st</sup> N. H. was a ninety day regiment its term of service was soon up and returned to New Hampshire without experiencing any combat.

Back in Milford, Livermore says, "The old haunts and old friends engaged my attentions for three or four weeks, but in the meantime I was looking around for another way to leap".

.."so as Mr. Stanyan, of Milford, was enlisting a company for the 5<sup>th</sup>, I put my name down with Blanchard's on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 1861. It was an understanding between Mr. Stanyan and myself that he should use his influence to get me the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenantcy of his company but the companies of the 5<sup>th</sup> were made up before he could get in. "Fearful that I would miss the chance to fight at all I wrote to Col. Cross. He replied that all were appointed (officers) but I was relieved when Lt. J.B. David of Amherst offered me the place of 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt of Co. K. "

John Stanyan built the Gothic Revival home at the top of Myrtle St.

As first Sgt. Livermore (at age 18) was responsible for one hundred men. "The captain at once, made it known that he expected the best discipline and that the first sergeant was his instrument to effect it.

Among his many duties were some not in the manual



**John W. Stanyan**  
1828-1905

**1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Thomas L.  
Livermore**

.. "some of the men would keep dirty until I obviated it by details to scrub dirty faces with soap and sand, and once by taking three men down to the ice-fringed brook in front of the camp and requiring them to strip and go in doing the same myself to show them it was not cruel".

It was at the Battle of Fair Oaks (June 1, 1862) during the Peninsula Campaign that Livermore experienced combat for the first time

"We had eight hundred rifles, and I shall never forget how we made those woods ring with our firing. The rebels opened at once and the bullets flew in myriads around us, humming deadly songs, hitting our men and splintering the trees around us."

Later at Malvern Hill, Livermore is slightly wounded, "how the rebel battery peppered us...I turned my head to the left and saw the battery and the gunners springing To their work amid the smoke. I saw one pull the string (lanyard) and saw the flash of the piece, heard the roar, and the whizz of the shell, heard it burst, heard the humming of the fragments, and wondered if I was to be hit, and quicker than a flash something stung my leg on the calf and I limped out of ranks...I stooped down, opened the ragged hole in my

Trouser leg and saw no blood but the form of a piece of the shell two or three inches long, printed in a cruel bruise on my Leg.

The thought of what I should do when I left the army never stayed in my head long enough to fix a plan there for I presumed it very likely that I would be killed before the war was over. In short my motto was, enjoy life while you may and give no thought to saving money which can be of no use in the hereafter; and the tone of my associates and the recklessness which pervaded me induced me to be rather careless."

Shortly after Fair Oaks Livermore receives the first of many promotions and is appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.

September of 1862 found the 5<sup>th</sup> NH in Maryland where the Army of the Potomac under McClellan was pursuing Lee's incursion into Maryland which resulted in the Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862. Here Livermore experienced the bloodiest day in American military history where in the course of approximately twelve hours both sides suffered 23,000 casualties.

The 5<sup>th</sup> NH was literally at "ground zero" of the most intense fighting on this day and found itself in the "Sunken Road" an innocuous piece of real estate that would become infamous for the carnage that took place there. Livermore describes the scene, "On looking about me I found that we were in the old, sunken road mentioned several times before, and that the bed of it lay from one to three feet below the surface of the crest along which it ran. In this road there lay so many dead rebels that they formed a line which one might have walked upon as far as I could see, many of whom had been killed by the most horrible wounds of shot and shell, and they lay just as they had been killed amid the blood which was soaking the earth. It was on this ghastly flooring that we kneeled for the last struggle."

Livermore recalls later with philosophical recollection his mortality on that day..

..... "I well recollect, as we opened fire, and I was busying myself with the men, a solid shot or unexploded shell struck the ground close by my feet and tearing a trench sped on like something irresistible and all at once this exhibition of one of the terrible agents which were at

work about me impressed me with a sense of my powerlessness insignificance. It flashed through my mind that the battery would ply us with missiles, and that the next one might tear me in two, and then to cringe or dodge or shrink seemed utterly foolish, and it seemed best to work and to agree to my fate and now I recollect that this conviction was the culmination of a long discourse with myself in which I was convinced I would be killed and had wondered how I should accomplish my transit into the next world.....”

Amazingly, Livermore survived this ordeal and the day itself.

Following Antietam, he is also assigned the position of Regimental Quartermaster. It is this simple act of fate that spared him one of the worst disasters to face the Army of the Potomac and the 5<sup>th</sup> NH Regiment.

Just before Fredericksburg he was ordered to stay with the wagon trains. He went to Cross and asked to be relieved of his duties as QM and return to his company. Cross told him if he could find a replacement he would approve. He did not and thus Livermore was a witness to the disaster that unfolded before his eyes on the slopes of Maryes Heights where he watched the regiment disintegrate in a hail of musketry. Only enlisted men survived to come close to the enemy positions as six company officers were killed and the rest all wounded including Colonel Cross.

Livermore continued on in his service throughout the rest of the war. Through promotions and reassignments he found himself in command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps ambulance train at the Battle of Gettysburg.

Later he serves on the staff of General Hinks commanding the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, 18<sup>th</sup> Army Corps. From June 29, 1864 to August 30, 1864 he is on the staff of Gen. W.F. Smith as acting Inspector General. From August 30, 1864 to April 6, 1865 he is on the staff of General W. S. Hancock as Inspector General.

On January 17, 1865 he was commissioned colonel of the 18<sup>th</sup> NH Infantry at just 21 years old and was Colonel of

18<sup>th</sup> NH from April 8, 1865 to disbandment on June 23, 1865.

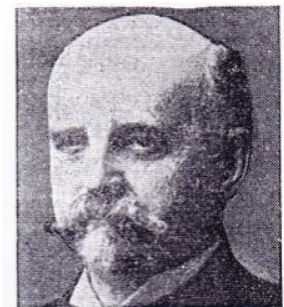
This engraving (below) of Livermore wearing the uniform of a colonel is perhaps the most common image of him. Ironically, his time as colonel was the least of his entire Civil War service.

Returning to Milford after the war, Livermore begins the study of law in the offices of Bainbridge Wadleigh and is admitted to the Bar. It is also at this time that he starts writing *Days and Events*. This account of his experience was begun in 1866 shortly after he returned to Milford and was written entirely while he resided in the town. This text is also one of the most widely quoted references on the Civil War.

On June 1, 1869 he married Sarah Ellen Daniel and together they had four children: Thomas Leonard, b. 1871, Grace Daniels, b. 1873, Robert, b. 1876 and Harris, b. 1879.

His wife died young at age 34 on April 18, 1879 leaving him with four young children. He was one of the Charter members of O.W. Lull Post 11 Grand Army of the Republic. The remainder of Livermore’s life is extensive: He was General Manager of the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company in Manchester. He was Vice-President of the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company In 1879. Then moved to Boston and practiced law. Commander of the Massachusetts Chapter of MOLLUS in 1881 and 1882, Commander of John A. Andrew Post No. 15 GAR in 1870, Commissioner of Parks for City of Boston 1889-1892, On the board of the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1897

He died on January 9, 1918 and is buried in the Daniels Family Plot in the West Street Cemetery, in Milford.



THE LATE COL THOMAS L. LIVERMORE

The author of this article is a popular speaker and researcher of the Civil War since the age of 12, He lives with his wife in Wilton

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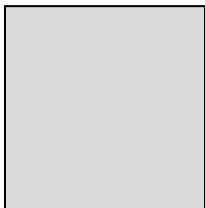
Cover photo with detail shown here are from the Historical Society's school collection. This is the girls combined Basketball Team photo ca 1920.

<http://www.milfordhistory.com> and on Facebook too! <https://www.facebook.com/milfordnhhistory?fref=ts>

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**TO:**

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