



**THE ANNISQUAM
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

4 Walnut Street
Annisquam, MA 01930

Visit the Museum

The museum will open this spring on Monday and Thursday afternoons from 2 to 5 or by Appointment.
contact:
avhistorical@gmail.com

Admission

Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted.



SPRING 2016

I am sorry to say that slaves seemed to be quite numerous in the early days.

Charlotte (Aunt Tot) Lane, 1833-1925

Slavery in Annisquam

by David McAweeney

In the collection of the Annisquam Historical Society is an unpublished typescript written by Charlotte (Aunt Tot) Lane who lived in Annisquam from 1833 to 1925. Her *Reminiscences of Annisquam* includes anecdotes of everything from early history to a recipe for cake. A history of the Village Church includes this description of the building:

A door on the north (was) for the slaves, one on the western side with the pulpit, with its sounding board. On the eastern side was the gallery with two flights of stairs, one leading to the choir, the other to the slaves and paupers quarters.

The following are births, baptisms and deaths of Negroes that were recorded at the Annisquam Village Church in the 35 years before slavery was abolished in Massachusetts. This list is taken from the Gloucester Massachusetts Book of Vital Records. Negroes had their own page.

Candace, servant to Francis Norwood, July 21, 1745

Cornwell, child belonging to Mary Lane, October 3, 1756 (Baptism)

Dick, servant to Francis Norwood, July 21, 1745

Dill, belonging to Benjamin and Elizabeth Davis, July 16, 1749 (Baptism)

Dill, child, belonging to Ambrose Finson, April 17, 1757 (Baptism)



Charlotte Lane lived in her Arlington Street house for nearly all her ninety two years.

Else, servant of Francis Norwood, June 20, 1744-5
(Baptism)

Flora, servant to Francis Norwood, July 21, 1745

Happy, child of Andrew and Eleanor Haskell, a girl taken from Boston, Sept 16 1744. (Baptism)

Happy, servant child of Jonathan Fellows, June 9, 1754
(Baptism)

Leah, servant to Francis Norwood, July 21. 1745

Phillis, servant of Daniel and Hannah Merchant, May 18, 1755 (Baptism)

Reuben, servant child of Caleb and Anna Woodbury, October 7, 1744 (Baptism)

Ruth, mulatto child of Jedidiah and Martha Davis, September 18, 1743 (Baptism)

Scipio, belonging to Joseph and Jemima Davis, July 16, 1749, (Baptism)

Shela, servant child of Joseph and Joanna Lane, August 25, 1754, (Baptism)

Titus, belonging to Andrew Haskell, July 28, 1751 (Baptism)

Anthony, servant to James Davis, Esq, dropsy, October 22, 1777 age 70

Cuff, formerly servant to Deacon James Lane, dropsy, April 6, 1777 at age 50 as supposed.
(Funeral)

Note: Francis Norwood had baptized five of his servants on the same day.

After 1780 no Negro baptisms, births or deaths are recorded at the Annisquam Village church.

There were undoubtedly many more slaves than this list would indicate. Slaves were property, and were taxed by the town as property.

Soon after the first settler, Andrew Harraden, arrived in Annisquam in 1656 settlers began to acquire slaves. The earliest permanent settlers were farmers rather than fishermen and farming was labor intensive. There were practically no people to hire. Any able-bodied man could get his own land. There were some indentured servants but they tended to be in the trades. If a farmer wanted to get ahead, to be a community leader, he could not work all day on the land.

In Massachusetts as elsewhere, those who had laborers or many children prospered. The first black slaves were sold in Massachusetts in 1638 (18 years before Edward Harraden became the first English settler in Annisquam.)

Andrew Harraden's grandson John was born in 1695. When he died in 1733 among his other effects were a negro called Bristow, valued at £90, and a negro called Ruth valued at £65. (John Babson extracted these items from the probate records he included in "The Notes and Additions" to his *History of Gloucester*.) Babson noted that John Harraden was a deacon in the Annisquam church and that few men in town had acquired so large an estate as he left. He carried on the fishing business until his death.

Slavery came to an end in Massachusetts in 1780. That was the year the Massachusetts constitution was adopted. The Revolutionary War was still not ended. The new constitution said simply that all men are equal. It took three years and Massachusetts Supreme court decisions to make it the law.

After 1780 there are records of very few freed slaves in Gloucester. There were no more negro services in the Village Church. One is left to wonder how did the emancipation go. There was no emancipation proclamation. One suspects that some slaves were kept out of sight. Others possibly were sold to states where slavery was still legal. Some slaves were given their freedom and moved on.

They faced great difficulties. They were prohibited by law from practicing most trades. They faced few opportunities as house servants, farm workers, and some small businesses. In later years Massachusetts was in the forefront of the struggle for emancipation in the rest of America.

Museum News by Mary Ellen Lepionka

Mass. Humanities Grants

"Squam: An Intimate History" is winding down. This is a project funded by a Mass. Humanities grant to inventory and describe thirty-nine 19th and early 20th century scrapbooks and albums that have been stored in the Firehouse over the generations. The professional Inventory Taker is Anne Britton, who has catalogued and described the albums and scrapbooks, working in the Cape Ann Museum with Mary Ellen Lepionka, who has been photographing the pages.

Anne is looking for volunteers to help with biographical research in connection with the scrapbooks. Also, Anne will be offering a workshop in the Library during May to train volunteers in what she does so that we can carry on the work of cataloguing our collections going forward. To sign up for a research assignment or for a volunteer training session, contact Mary Ellen at me.lepionka@verizon.net.

We have now received a new Mass. Humanities grant for **"Squam: Lasting More Than a Day"**, to catalogue and describe our large collection of ephemera. *Ephemera* are artifacts from daily life that are expected to last only a day or are incidental and often discarded. Examples of ephemera include tickets, calling cards, sympathy cards, dance cards, programs, greeting cards, business receipts, postcards, doodles, notes, advertisements, playbills, and the like. These humble items are often the most valuable in reconstructing the social history of a community.

SHRAB Grants

In the fall of 2015 we received a grant from the Massachusetts Archives to have a **Category 1 Roving Archivist** come to assess our organization and advise us on our collections. That was Rachel Onuf, who came for a day, toured the Firehouse, and met with the AHS steering committee. We have been following up on her directives and leads ever since and have just received another SHRAB grant for a **Category 3 Roving Archivist**. We get Rachel back for more help.

This time Rachel will conduct a stewardship workshop to train volunteers from the community how to care for the historically significant documents and artifacts in our collections. We are looking for volunteers to sign up for the spring workshops (Contact me. lepionka@verizon.net).

Rachel will also help supervise a **summer intern** from Simmons College, which will initiate new relationships with other cultural institutions in the area and may lead to an ongoing program of summer internships.

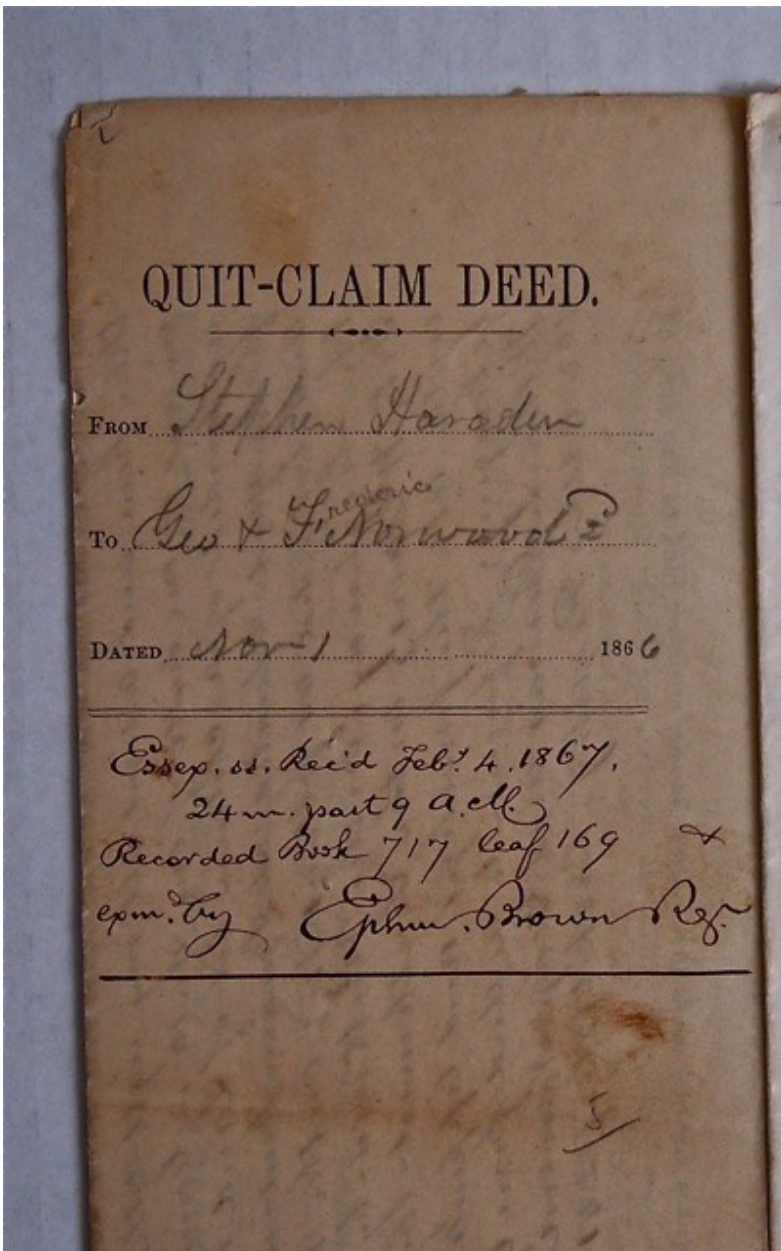
CPA Grant

The AHS steering committee has applied for a Community Preservation Act grant to rehabilitate and preserve the Deluge 8 Firehouse as an archivally safe repository for Annisquam history. This means adding a system for controlling heat and humidity year round, fixing the windows and replacing broken panes, adding attic insulation and UV storm windows, upgrading the electrical system, and other repairs.

Gerry Herbert and Rob Russell, have been cataloguing a collection of old deeds.

The Gloucester Historical Commission and many groups within the Annisquam community have sent letters of support for this proposal. We hope to match any forthcoming CPA funds with work-in-kind and cash contributions from the people of Squam and the wider community. If all goes well, work on the Firehouse will

commence this fall, giving volunteers the spring and summer to catalogue and pack up the contents for off-site storage during the work.



AHS Volunteer News

Hats off to AHS volunteers working on key projects. **Gerry Herbert** and **Rob Russell**, have been cataloguing a collection of old deeds found in the Firehouse. The oldest deeds date to the 1850s before the Civil War and tell a story of the sale of old shares of common land—fractional strips of clam flats, saltmarshes, flake yards, wharves, and rights of way to woodlots and the river—into larger privately owned parcels and village roadways. Most of the deeds relate to the properties of the original Annisquam Yacht club, while later deeds relate to properties of the Annisquam Association Inc. and chronicle purchases made to secure the land for Squam Rock Road. Research on the deeds is ongoing.

Hats off too to **Betsey Horowitz** and **David Teele**, who have been working on the enormous collection of AHS photographs. David scanned the 900 glass plates in the Firehouse before leaving for New Zealand and created a catalogue of them. Betsey has been matching prints to the scans, working with binders of images. She also has been sorting through cartons of loose photographs to organize them topically and catalogue them. David plans to scan some of the loose photographs when he returns, as well as our extensive collection of vintage postcards. We look forward to inviting the Village to special showings of the photo collection in hopes of identifying more of the people, houses, and scenes.

Special thanks to **Pippy Giuliano** and **Annie Storr** for their participation in preparations for the American Antiquarian Society's exhibition on themes in local history at the Cape Ann Museum, planned for 2018. Molly Hardy of the AAS has invited the AHS and other area historical societies to contribute documents to this exhibition. Themes include, for example, women, transportation, religion, education, business, etc. The process of identifying items to submit for consideration is underway, and other volunteers are welcome to participate (Contact me.lepionka@verizon.net).

In addition, whenever she gets a chance, Pippy has been transcribing fragile handwritten letters and accounts. We hope others will join in this mission. These are intimate bits of village history that no one will ever have a chance to read and appreciate if we do not transcribe the writing. An example of one of Pippy's transcriptions is in this issue of the Journal.

Shipbuilding in Annisquam: Transcription of a Letter in the AHS Archives

The letter—an account of the development of shipbuilding in Annisquam--was given to the AHS by Walter Olson. It had been copied by Miss Belle Lane from the Journal of Captain Gideon Lane and was transcribed by Pippy Giuliano in March 2016.

In 1831 concluded to try building vessels as they were in great demand as freights were high. Web [Webb?] had a grand place for a shipyard and plenty of men depending on their labor for employment in the neighborhood, many of them good ships carpenters.

I went to Wells Maine in search of timber, could get none there, returned home and my brother Oliver went to New Salem and Atkinson, N.H. and found he could get timber from there. He took with him a gang of men. Mr. William Hodgkins as their head and soon cut enough for the frame of a ship of about 340 tons. The plank... procured from Wells and Salem.

While building this ship in the winter of 1832, the proprietors of the Atkinson farm, so called, sold at auction a number of lots of woodland. Oliver attended the sale and bought a number of lots in the summer of 1832 sent a gang onto the grounds and [p.2] got out the frame of

a second ship. We hauled it to Harveral [Haverhill, on the Merrimac just south of Salem NH] with our own crew carried it to Annisquam in our own vessels.

The first ship we called the *Gloucester* and when ready for sea Oliver sailed in her for Charleston, S.C. where he procured a freight of cotton for Liverpool at 5/8 of a penny a pound, freights having gone down one penny. The second ship we advertised for sale and sold to a Newburyport house for \$38 per ton and finished her ready to spar. She was called the *Lenora*.

[According to Belle:] In 1829 he [Gideon] bought the wharf formerly his father's, then owned by David Lane. I can't make out where these vessels were built, there or opposite the River Rd. property. The three brothers Gideon, Oliver and Gustavus seem to be in business together.

Historical Note: *Gideon Lane (1798-1875), Oliver Griffen Lane (1798-1867), and Gustavus Adolphus Lane (1800-1871) were sons of Capt. Gideon Lane (1764-1821). Capt. George Lane (1780-1838) of Gloucester was their uncle. David Lane (1776-1835) was a cousin. Charlotte Augusta Lane was the daughter of Oliver G. Lane. The exact location of the shipyard or boatyard remains to be determined. The AHS has the Lane Genealogy and Oliver Lane's account books relating to voyages on the following sailing vessels: Gloucester, Diamond, Trueman, Griffon, Caroline, Deucalion, Roanoke, and Russell. Other details in this transcription bear further research.*

More Spring 2016 AHS News

Saturday, February 27 was a cold, clear day, but you wouldn't know it from the warmth generated by the band

of hearty souls who gathered in the Annisquam Library for a fabric fest. It began in the early hours with the men—Steve Harris and John Bishop—hefting and hauling heavy steamer trunks and clothes rack to the Library from the second floor of the firehouse, and continued with Sue Harris, Betsey Horowitz, unpacking, photographing, and repacking each article of clothing, while Denise Nichols and I helped visiting experts to assess, sort, record, and label each item.



Sue Harris, Betsey Horowitz unpacking, photographing, and repacking each article of



Visiting expert, Mary-Ellen Smiley, with Capt. Lane's underwear.



Denise Nichols helped visiting experts to assess, sort, record, and label each item.

The visiting experts were Mary-Ellen Smiley, textile conservator, instructor, curator, and exhibit designer from Gordon College and Salem Museum, and Cara White, fabric consultant at the Cape Ann Museum. They generously and cheerfully gave of their time to help us. Also on hand were Suzanne Brown of the Annisquam Sewing Circle, who identified both items to be repaired and salvageable bits from condemned items for possible reuse in a keeping quilt, and Evie Stewart and Anne Williams from the Annisquam Players, who had closets full of vintage clothes in the Village Hall, also to be assessed.

The steamer trunks, clothes racks, and closets were full of cherished but neglected fashions of Squam forebears, many being aired for the first time in decades. Our mission was to sort, identify, catalogue, and properly store the garments for historic preservation, and to distinguish playhouse costumes from 19th century treasures. And treasures there were: whaleboned bodices, bustled skirts, beaded gowns, see-through day dresses, hand-tatted laces, embroidered baby clothes, Downton Abbey waistcoats, and an ingeniously adjustable maternity dress from the 1840s, determined to be the rarest and most valuable garment in the collection.

We worked all day. Late in the afternoon the women wrapped everything in sheets, repacked the trunks, and vacuumed rafts of ancient threads from the rugs. Then the men came again, with the addition of Dow Wieman, to cart everything back to where it belonged. Dave Pearce put in an appearance. He seemed pleased, as did everyone. It had seemed a perfect collaboration of, by, and for the whole community. I felt proud to be part of it and look forward to other community projects on behalf of Squam's treasures. Perhaps we'll get together again with the experts when they come back in May to work on the accessories people wore—their fans, purses, shoes, gloves, hats, canes, parasols....



Cara White, fabric consultant at the Cape Ann Museum

Ed. Note: I dropped by while the clothing assessing was going on. My eye immediately went to a sumptuous purple silk dress hanging on a rack. I asked one of the experts, Mary-Ellen Smiley, who told me she dated old clothing by the buttons used. This one was worn about 1900. She immediately found the label. The dress was made in Paris. I wondered on what grand Annisquam occasions someone would wear this elegant dress. She said ladies would wear their very best any day when calling on their neighbors. This was definitely the very best. It has more volume than the dress Charlotte Lane was wearing in the photo above.

Annisquam artists with their models. Does anyone have an idea about who they might be?

