



## *Pawlet Area Soldiers of the 14th Vermont Infantry Regiment In the Civil War*

### OFFICERS

Stephen Williams  
*President*

Rose Smith  
*Treasurer*

Marcia Russo  
*Secretary*

### TRUSTEES

Dorothy Carey  
Judy Coolidge  
Sue DiChiara  
John Malcolm  
Gerald Mason  
Barry Meinerth  
Barbara O'Connor  
Sarah Rath

a presentation by  
**Steve Leach**

Thursday, April 20th at 7pm  
at the Pawlet Town Hall

Pawlet resident Steve Leach is a Civil War expert who for many years has participated in Civil War reenactments. He is also an active veteran, VFW commander and he and his restored military Jeep are a constant presence in local parades. Please join us for his program "The Pawlet Area Soldiers of the 14th Vt. Infantry Regiment" where he will share his research and knowledge about our town's participants in this conflict. This is a free event. Bring your friends! Refreshments served!



*Steve Leach cooking venison stew somewhere  
in Virginia, Spring 1863*

***Save the date for this upcoming event in May!***

## **The Marble Industry in Southern Vermont**

by Shawn Harrington

Thursday, May 18th at 7pm at the Chriss Monroe Chapel

Please join us in May for our program about the marble industry in our area. Shawn Harrington, curator of the Manchester Historical Society, will present his photos and knowledge about this topic. Harrington is also a trustee of the Dellwood Cemetery, associate and board member for the Wilson House in East Dorset, and gives tours of the Gettysburg Quarry, part of the Owl's Head town forest in Dorset. Join us at the Chapel for this free event. Refreshments served!

## President's Message

The first item is to welcome two new Society officers, Marcia Russo as Secretary and Rose Smith as Treasurer. Thank you Marcia and Rose for taking on these vital positions. Also big thanks to those retiring from the positions, John Malcolm as Secretary and Barbara O'Connor as Treasurer, for their many pages of minutes and financial records, respectively.

We are currently working on programs of interest to members and the community at large. Whenever temperatures permit we will make use of the Chriss Munroe Chapel, otherwise programs will be held at the Town Hall. Now that we have our website up and running we plan to have events listed there along with other items on the Society's activities.

[www.pawlethistoricalsociety.org](http://www.pawlethistoricalsociety.org)

The Vermont Historical Society's ("VHS") now has a link to our website which we believe will help with overall publicity. Their website ([vermonthistory.org](http://vermonthistory.org)) provides a wealth of information about programs around the state which may be of interest to our membership. Sarah Rath, Rose Smith and I had the pleasure of meeting Kristen Dodge and Tori Hart of the VHS as part of its outreach efforts to local societies and believe that this could lead to useful cooperation with the VHS on such items as the archiving of our collection, exhibitions, events and other matters. So, please read on, take note of upcoming events and come and participate.

*Steve Williams*

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## Look what we "found in collection"

by Sarah Rath

The North Pawlet School has been a teaching and learning center once again. Under the tutelage of Martha Schoenemann, students Sarah Rath, Rose Smith, and Judy Coolidge have been learning how to use archiving software and the proper storage of items as diverse as tools, clothing, books, pamphlets, art, and photographs. So what happens when Martha goes to Florida for a few weeks? Her students soldier on, hoping they are making the right decisions. Every once in a while we come up with an item with no number and no information, and it stops our forward progress. We file these under "found in collection", a category we assume all small volunteer museums have for their mystery items. One Friday we were

## Look what we "found in collection"

(continued)

poking around in a pile of items not earmarked for our work and found a bird's-eye view lithograph of West Pawlet dated 1891. This hand engraved panoramic map was made by Lucian Burleigh (1853-1923), a civil engineer from Ct. who became known for his lithographs of New York and New England towns. Excited by our discovery we gathered around the map and noticed it was in fair condition, with a tear through one side and some water damage. The streets are labeled and the public buildings are identified numerically via a key in the lower margin. There are four churches, numerous stores and businesses, a school (The Academy), the railroad station, complete with a train leaving town. Did you know there was a Furniture and Undertaking business as well as a Manufacturer of Wagons and Potato Starch in West Pawlet? The detail of the houses is really impressive! There are few trees so this gives us a good view of the slate quarries, which are labeled too.

Lucian Burleigh was a talented lithographer who eventually started his own press in Troy, NY. Preparing a bird's-eye map wasn't easy. The artist had to walk down every street sketching each building and geographical feature. The drawings were transferred to limestone slabs, three inches thick by about three feet wide. The map was meticulously engraved onto the limestone using wax crayons, pens, and brushes. They inked the stone with a substance which had a lot of wax or grease, so the pressman (who chewed tobacco) would spit on the stone when the wax had built up too much. The natural detergent in the tobacco would clear the blurs, then he threw that sheet away and continued the run. The Library of Congress has 163 Burleigh panoramic city views, but West Pawlet is not listed. We even asked Martha, who now knows we occasionally stray from our given tasks, and she can shed no new light on this treasure. We have searched online (ebay, etc.) for other originals, but have found none. We would be interested in reprinting this map from a better copy, so let us know if you have one hanging in your parlor!

*Information taken from internet article by Don Rittner 1999 "Burleigh and His Lithographs"*

## **Wealth of Different Sorts: A Story of the Early Rural American Experience**

*by Ken Major*

It is the early 1780s and you've just lost all the money you have in the world. This has nothing to do with a bank failing (there are none where you live), your mutual fund tanking (the Philadelphia Stock Exchange is almost a decade from its founding as the first securities exchange in the US), or even theft. It is due instead to the simplest of accidents: you dropped your leather coin purse on your homestead a few miles outside the village of Pawlet, in the Republic of Vermont. In the purse are twelve copper half-pennies minted in London from 1694 to the 1740s. They will not be found for 230 years.

British half-penny coins were the most commonly circulated currency in colonial America and were used long after the Revolution; even until the 1820s most of rural America still reconciled accounts in the British monetary units of pounds (£), shillings (s), and pence (d). Yet there was never enough physical money in America, British or otherwise, until well into the 1800s. The reasons for this go back more a century before Pawlet was founded. As the British colonies stabilized in the 1660s, England passed the Navigation Acts, oppressive laws which controlled the flow of commerce and even coin money itself to ensure the colonies remained a source of raw materials dependent on England for finished products. Since England allowed only its copper coins to journey across the Atlantic and there was no standard paper currency, payment for anything but small transactions within the colonies and with England had to be made through commodities, bills of exchange based on debt, or foreign silver and gold coins. This constricted economic context in part led to the development of social customs of interdependence that would last into 19<sup>th</sup> century. Importantly, these customs might have made the loss of one's entire monetary wealth at the time of our dropped coin purse much less of a disaster than we would experience it today.

While we might be tempted to think of the settlers of rural America as totally independent homesteaders, true self-sufficiency at that time was almost unheard of. This was truer for the northern colonies and particularly in rural New England, where less frequent (though not uncommon) use of slave labor and the presence of geographic and climate-related challenges fostered a reliance on community. Needing goods and services, as well as one another, but facing a dearth of money, these Americans went beyond simple credit and bartering and created complex cultural patterns of exchange and reciprocal obligation in order to ensure mutual survival. One principal form this took was called "changing," a process of accounting for trades of labor, goods, and even things like the borrowing of tools or lending access to pasture, all of which involved written accounts typically settled up between individuals or families each spring. Another important form was communal activity devoted to particular tasks, with "raisings" of barns and houses and "bees" for agrarian work from husking corn to peeling apples.



## Wealth of Different Sorts *(continued from page 3)*

These events allowed incredible amounts of work, often needed to be completed rapidly due to seasonal pressures or the threat of spoilage, to be accomplished without money ever changing hands. All of these activities carried with them a sense of social connectedness and indebtedness...not to repay in kind or otherwise settle these exchanges fairly would likely change one's social standing. Thus, while the loss of that coin purse would no doubt have been devastating, it was a loss very likely buffered by other forms of exchange and support that could readily be called upon in order for life to continue.

By the 1840s, advances in many domains, along with an adequate supply of coined money in circulation from the national mint (the national government would not offer a paper currency from 1780-1861) meant that rural households for the first time in the American experiment had a surplus of physical currency. With this, customs of interdependence waned considerably, with hired work and a host of other demographic shifts from increased migration to falling birthrates significantly altering the social landscape. In 1857, the US finally illegalized all foreign money, effectively signaling an end to an era that, particularly for the rural North, had been defined by a kind of reliance on one another that made for a different sort of wealth than a mere bag of coins.

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- I. This timeframe is drawn from the excavated material and other evidence of a post-colonial home site on private land in Pawlet. The "youngest" artifact recovered thus far is a Royal Provincial Loyalist military button that dates to 1780-83.
  - II. Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790-1840* (New York: Harper, 1988), 38.
  - III. Digital History, Navigation Acts, [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=4102](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=4102)
  - IV. One remarkable illustration of the effect of this comes from a 1680 probate inventory which lists the deceased's bed sheets (imported by law) as being worth more than six times his colony-made bed itself; see: Learn NC, *Grand visions, rough realities: The development of colonial North Carolina*, Digital Textbook <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-colonial/1646>, (2008): 295
  - V. Michael Merrill, "Cash is Good to Eat: Self-sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States." *Radical History Review* 7, (1977): 42-71.
  - VI. Harvey Whitfield, *The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont, 1777-1810* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2014).
  - VII. Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life*, 37.
  - VIII. Ulysses Hedrick, *A History of Agriculture in the State of New York*, (New York: New York State Agricultural Society, 1933), 205.
  - IX. Paul Ziel, "Eighteenth Century Public Humiliation Penalties in Twenty-First Century America: The 'Shameful' Return of 'Scarlet Letter' Punishments in U.S. v. Gementera," *BYU J. Pub. L.* 19 (2005): 499.
  - X. Coinage Act of 1857, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coinage\\_Act\\_of\\_1857](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coinage_Act_of_1857)

*Pawlet resident Ken Major is a psychologist whose hobby, metal detecting, has him eager for the return of good weather.*

## Chriss Monroe Chapel News

by Steve Williams

The final report to the Vermont Arts Council was made in August regarding the grant used for the building project, and its acceptance noted shortly thereafter. A big thank you again to Bob Morlino for his handling of both the grant submission and reporting but also his acting as project manager during all stages of the chapel's remodeling. Early in the fall it was decided that before moving any materials from the North Pawlet School to the Chriss Monroe Chapel it would be preferable to properly archive more of the non-archived materials currently in the North Pawlet School. This in turn postponed the need for the installation of a heater in the chapel until the spring. Plans have been made for the purchase of a heater and its installation and the addition of a fuel storage tank. We are now developing plans to relocate a significant part of the collection from the North Pawlet School to the Chapel during the course of the summer. While the Society's April program will be held in the Town Hall, the May program and most others will then be held in the Chapel.

### SAVE THESE DATES



**Thurs, April 20th :**

***“Pawlet Area Soldiers of the 14th Vermont Infantry Regiment In the Civil War”***

*A presentation by Steve Leach*  
Pawlet Town Hall; 7:00 p.m.

**Thurs, May 18<sup>th</sup> :**

***“The Marble Industry in our Local Area”***

*A presentation by Shawn Harrington*  
Chriss Monroe Chapel; 7:00 p.m.

**Fri, June 16<sup>th</sup> :**

***Drop off donations for yard and bake sale***  
*(no electronics or clothing)*

Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept.; 8:30 am - 7:00 p.m.

**Sat, June 17<sup>th</sup> :**

***Bake and Yard Sale***

***Come to the firehouse to treasure hunt!***

Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept.; 9:00 am - 1:00 p.m.

## PHS has joined the modern age – visit our website!

by Sarah Rath



Our fledgling website is up and running thanks to the patience and guidance of Chip Gibson of Collaboration 133. We will be expanding our offerings and look forward to your suggestions and contributions. So click on over to [pawletthistoricalsociety.org](http://pawletthistoricalsociety.org) and rekindle your knowledge of the town:

### History of Pawlet

*John Malcolm has written a concise history detailing the beginnings of Pawlet, starting in 1761. He touches on the Revolutionary War, early inventors and industries, the railway in W. Pawlet, the Civil War, westward expansion, and the slate business. Telephone service came to town in 1900, and electricity in the 1940's.*

### Collections

*A short article about the Society's collection of photographs, vintage clothing, genealogies, books, and other objects.*

### Sixth Grade History Projects

*Collection of winning essays introduced by long-time teacher Ann Hunt. You may find an article about your home or relative! Then brighten your day by listening to sixth graders (in 2015) interviewing some of our most eloquent citizens as they reminisce about their youth, schools, and what the town was like when they were young.*

### Society Facilities

*A rundown on the Society's buildings and their history.*

### Membership

*Renew your membership here!*

### Newsletters and Historic Places

*These areas are in development!*

### Links

*Easy links to area historical society websites as well as the Slate Valley Museum. Don't forget to visit us on our Facebook page, developed by Rhonda Schlangen – Pawlett Historical Society*

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The purpose of the Pawlett Historical Society shall be to bring together those interested in the history of Pawlet and its environs; to maintain its property, i.e., the North Pawlet School and the Braintree School; and to use these buildings for educational exhibits.*

*The Society shall collect, preserve and make available for public exhibit and research archival records, books and artifacts which document the history of Pawlet.*

*The Society shall also educate the public about the needs and uses of its historical collection and cooperate with other groups having a common mission. ☺*

## The Passing of Donald Jones

Earlier this year we heard of the passing of Donald Jones, one time resident of West Pawlet and more recently of Topsham, Maine. Donald was an enthusiastic member of the Society which led to his serving initially as a trustee and later both as President and Vice President. In such interest he followed his parents who donated the Braintree School to the Society. In Donald's obituary his wife Anna suggested that those wishing to memorialize Donald might make a donation to the Society, as a result of which a significant sum has been received.

For those who might like to attend we have just received word from Anna that Donald's burial will take place at 11.00 a.m. on May 20<sup>th</sup> at the Mountain View Cemetery in West Pawlet.