

the CASTINE VISITOR

CASTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Winter 2008

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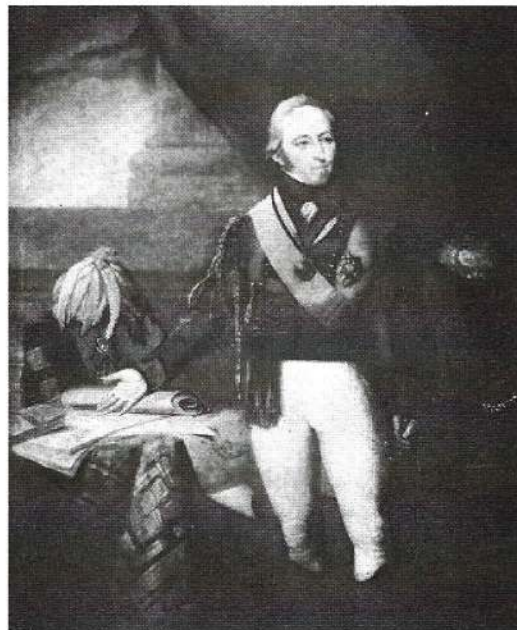
THE MYSTERY OF CASTINE'S SECRET AGENT

Lynn H. Parsons

On December 12, 1814, Lord Henry Bathurst, the British secretary for war and the colonies, opened a letter marked "secret and confidential" from Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, Governor of Nova Scotia and overall commander of the British forces occupying Castine during the War of 1812. Dated at Halifax, November 20, it read in part as follows:

My Lord:

A Gentleman who is a most respectable Inhabitant of the Country lying between the Penobscot and the Boundary Line of New Brunswick And who was a Member of the House of Representatives of the State of Massachusetts having been lately allowed to go from Castine to Boston informed M Gen. Gosselin on his return that He has a Communication of importance to make to me which induced the Majr. General to grant him leave to come to this place. On receiving this Gentleman (who is personally known both to Admiral Griffith & Myself at Castine) He stated that the business which he came here upon was of a very delicate nature And that he felt awkwardly situated from having no credentials to shew, As he did not think it prudent to carry any written documents about him lest they should be discovered. He then said



Sir John Coape Sherbrooke
Governor of Nova Scotia

that He was Commissioned by the Executive of Massachusetts to Communicate with me on some very important points which I desired him to Commit to writing And which I have now the honor to submit to your Lordship's Consideration. . . . From the respectable Character of this Person & other Circumstances, Admiral Griffith & Myself have no doubt of his having been Commissioned to make the enclosed proposals on the part of the Government of Massachusetts: It therefore now rests with Your Lordship to receive them or not as You may think proper under the peculiar Circumstances of the Case.

Sherbrooke went on to describe the state of affairs in New England. Following the declaration of war sought by the Democratic-Republican President James Madison, Massachusetts and other New England states had fallen under the control of the antiwar Federalist Party. As the war dragged on, opposition to the war in some quarters was turning ominously toward more

drastic action, including possible separation of some or all of New England from the Union. Sherbrooke alluded to the upcoming "Hartford Convention" soon to assemble in that Connecticut city. The delegates

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In Memoriam Jane Hodgkins Sweet

The Society mourns the loss of Jane Hodgkins Sweet, a longtime member and supporter, who died on September 26 in Damariscotta. She was eighty-eight years old. Born in Philadelphia, she was an alumna of Bridgewater State Teachers College in Massachusetts. She taught for over thirty-five years in the Andover, Massachusetts, school system. An avid Girl Scout in her youth, she became a life member and advocate for outdoor activities for all girls. She was a world traveler with an interest in non-European nations, particularly the Middle East, Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines. At age sixty she took up canoeing, paddling the rivers and lakes of Maine, as well as the Rio Grande and the Everglades. She was also a skier, traversing the slopes of New England, the Rocky Mountains, Canada, and Europe. She is survived by her daughter Meriby, her son Pedrick and his wife Johanna; and two granddaughters, Emma Sweet and her husband Colin Powell, and Hannah Sweet.

Contributions in her name to the Castine Historical Society are welcomed.

The Castine Historical Society gratefully acknowledges contributions received

In Honor of
Margaret Wheeler Hall
on her 100th Birthday
and

In Memory of
Carleton Ashley
Frances Cooke
Jane Fisher

Our thanks and recognition are extended to the following who have recently added to the Castine Society collections:

Adams School

David Adams

Russell Bourne

Stan and Virginia Bourne

Castine Scientific Society

Robert Dick

Douglas and Judy Fitzsimmons

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past six months have been busy ones for the Castine Historical Society, and the upcoming year promises to be full of many and varied activities, too.

Since June we have opened and closed a new well-received exhibit titled "On the Waterfront: Castine's Art from the Past." Our thanks go to exhibit committee members Sally Foote, Marcia Mason and Michael Coughlin. Special thanks are extended to those Society members and other individuals and organizations that loaned works of art for the exhibit. We are grateful, too, for the professional advice provided by Ben Fuller, Curator of the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport.

In June the Society took possession of the former Nelson house, the property located between the Abbott School and the Unitarian Universalist Church. The consensus of those who have seen the house seems to be that it is in good shape and its purchase by the Society a good move. The next major step regarding the property is to have a Historic Structure Report prepared. Three candidate firms that prepare such reports have been identified, one of which will be selected to do the work. The Board has decided to defer any significant projects on the house, including drainage improvements, insulation, and electrical work, until the Historic Structure Report is received. While the exact timing of the report is still to be determined, it is hoped the report will be available to help guide actions on the new property by the middle of next year.

In July the Board of Directors met for a day-long session to update the Society's Long Range Plan. John Bird, the same professional who had facilitated the last such session twelve years ago, led the process. No changes were recommended to the CHS Mission or Vision Statements. The process did result in new goals for the next two to three years. The new goals are to:

- (1) Restructure staffing and enhance governance procedures and practices.
- (2) Expand educational activities.
- (3) Broaden and deepen relationships with individuals and other organizations in the region.
- (4) Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for the efficient utilization of the Society's physical and financial infrastructure in prudent service to the other goals contained in this strategic plan.

The first actions regarding goal (1) have been a realignment of the Society's committees and offering the position of part-time Curator to a well-qualified individual. Following discussion, we offered the position to Ms. Paige Lilly, currently the archivist at the William S. Cohen Papers at the Fogler Library in Orono. She has accepted our offer and will begin work in December. (See next page.) The next step in this regard will be a search for a part-time Administrator, which we plan to start soon.

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The mission of the Castine Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is to collect, preserve, protect, and make available a variety of materials that illuminate the historical development of the Castine-Bagaduce River Area from its beginnings to the present.

The Castine Visitor is published three times a year by the Society for its members and friends.

Lynn H. Parsons &
Anne H. Parsons.....Editors

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**Castine
Historical Society**

At the annual meeting in August, members had the opportunity to tour the former Nelson house. They also thanked the outgoing Assistant Secretary and Honorary Director Robert C. Dick for his years of devoted service to the Castine Historical Society. For many years, Bob has prepared the minutes of all Board and Annual Meetings. The conscientious and thorough approach he brought to preparing the minutes has been very much appreciated and provides a detailed record of the Board's, and the Society's activities. Thank you, Bob, for all you did for the Society for so long.

Two events in the coming year bear special mention. In June, the CHS will cosponsor a tour of Castine and a dinner for a conference titled "Loyalism and the Revolutionary Atlantic World." Professor Liam Riordan of the University of Maine is the force behind this conference. Scholars from Harvard, Brown, Johns Hopkins and Canadian universities have already agreed to participate. Next November, a traveling exhibit developed by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum to commemorate the bicentennial of the birth of the 16th president will stop in Castine. Many community organizations, including the Wilson Museum, Friends of Witherle Memorial Library, and the Castine Historical Society will participate in and host events related to the exhibit. Only about forty communities in the country have been selected to host the exhibit; Castine is honored to be one of them.

Our Membership Chair, Ann Miller, was pleased to be able to report at a recent Board of Directors meeting that the number of members and amount of membership dues for 2008 are very close to the numbers for 2007. The extraordinary generosity of Deborah Pulliam has made possible some actions previously out of reach. The goals and events mentioned above will require the continued active participation and financial support of our members. Please keep this in mind and contribute whatever you can when you receive the Society's Annual Appeal letter later this year.

Delacroix Davis III

PART-TIME PROFESSIONAL CURATOR TO START AT THE SOCIETY



Photo by Donald Radovich

Paige S. Lilly

The Society is pleased to welcome Ms. Paige S. Lilly, of Blue Hill, as its first paid professional staff member. She holds a Bachelor's degree in American Studies and Spanish from Colby College and a Master's degree in American and New England Studies from the University of Southern Maine. Previously she has worked as an Archivist/Librarian for the United Society of Shakers and for the Penobscot Marine Museum, as Collections Manager for Northeast Historic Film, and more recently as Archivist for the William S. Cohen Papers at the Fogler Library at the University of Maine. In addition to her new duties at the Society beginning in early December, she will also serve as part-time Archivist at the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport.

"Here, in Maine, every stone is a skull . . ."

by Elizabeth Hardwick

From "In Maine," an essay published in the *New York Review of Books*, October 7, 1971. Used by permission.

There is something meditative and faraway about the Maine person – in his movements, in the controlled cadence of the jokes, the reserved cool smiles. From birth the weather has marked him as it has everything around him. The clearest of blue skies, the dazzling sun on the bay, the warm grass, the brilliant summer white of the harbor alive with sails: still, even so, there is always behind the brightness the domain of winter – fog, rain, and snow. It never vanishes; it just seems to step back for a little.

When it is dark or rainy or cool the afternoons are endless; they stop – glooming. The light drops, the day waits. Time seems to hang in the air, thick, motionless. The stillness of the old, small village is complete, the rhythmical flow peculiar, as if repeating moments lived before, perhaps long ago, or by someone else. This sensation is touched with melancholy and sometimes one feels a pang of panic. In the drawer there are old photographs of our square, my house on the left, just as it was a hundred years ago. A sense of continuity oppresses just as much as it reassures. . . .

People speak of worrying about the trees. The great old elms, with their terminal woe, are dying grandly, a real death like that of the old chancellor in Rilke's story. But what about the grand dukes – the cedars, the maples? They wait, reprieved, harboring the winds. On the rooftops, in the gutters, damp, yellowing leaves. From the shore, islands live and die, appear and disappear, depending upon the light, the fog.

A fantastic love of difficult, awkward islands gripped the heart of rich people at the turn of the century. Grandeur and privation, costliness and discomfort. . . . The house on the island in our bay is notable for its uncompromising, flawless memory of those good-sized dwellings in important towns of the Middle West. Cleveland, St. Louis? Strong and solid structure, placed on a broad avenue, fifty years ago, out of style with too many colored panes and redundant porches. Memory built it brick by brick on a Maine island.

Downstream [i.e. Upstream? eds.] a little red wooden farmhouse, local, stands on a rise, its field running down to the shore. It is utterly serene, pure, one of those sentimental bits of landscape, existing by

accident, perhaps not even treasured. It is dazzling, simple, forlorn and yet free of the psychodrama that mars the paintings of Wyeth when he come upon similar scenes. The beauty is that nothing is happening in the red wooden house; it does not mean anything or hide anything.

From one spot on high ground, back from the road leading out of town, you can look down on the Bagaduce [i.e. Penobscot? eds.] River and across to the other bank where small villages with white spires seem to stand, trapped and glistening. All of the whiteness is tipped with sunlight, but it is so small and fixed that it does not seem quite real. Our own language and our own day unfit us for the Maine landscape and even the Maine "experience." There is a bland vacation quality to most Maine literature and it is all, except for Sarah Orne Jewett, a sort of translation. (From her story "The Town Poor": "My good gracious, ain't this a starved-looking place? It makes me ache to think them nice Bray girls has to brook it here.")

From the window, in front of my desk, an old-worn-out apple tree extends a branch with its little, wormy green fruits hanging on it like Christmas ornaments. Swishing through the frayed leaves, a cedar waxwing, two flickers. Here, in Maine, every stone is a skull and you live close to your own death. Where, you ask yourself, where indeed will I be buried? That is the power of these old villages: to remind you of stasis.

There is no place to go! You just stay at home. Then systole (the post office), diastole (the grocery store). Back home again. A trip sometimes to Buckport, and then to Bangor, to meet the airplane. But nothing to do. Claustrophobia and coming to terms with it, that is the Maine theme. You are enclosed in your village, in the whole state, its position, its distance, its weathers.

What affects me so deeply about Maine is the sense of loss. Lost people, lost mills, lost fish in the sea, lost berries and livestock, unpredictable potatoes, bereft farms, stony and slighted fields, patchy pastures. Maine lost 25,000 farms between 1880 and 1940. More than half the improved land had reverted to forest over thirty years ago. And yet so romantic and nobly unreal are the residents here that they live with a sort of nightmare peopling their emptiness. They are always predicting hordes of one kind or another, tourists, summer-house buyers, marinas, dense develop-

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ments from the icy tip to the barely warm south. They are coming, watch out!

We all say that constantly. But nothing comes and nothing lost returns. Shrinkage continues, developments pour the foundation and that is the end of it. "Poor drainage!" the local people say triumphantly. The movie house went before I came to Maine and the shoemaker has been a memory for longer than I've been alive. Our only lobster restaurant burned to the ground last year. The gap, the leveled ground has melted into the landscape, as though it had been waiting, this emptiness, for its natural turn. They goeth and they do not return, ever. The agitation of July and August always subsides. The roads are soon empty, the hamburger stands close, the postal clerk's load is lifted. The wistful, sweet torpor returns.

I am sure I don't understand Maine. I have been here for three months a year for sixteen years. But is this a long or a short time? I have, however, *worked* on this place, as one speaks of working on some new language. I have studied it a bit, driven about alone, inland, looking, wondering. Is the quiet a true tranquility and peacefulness? I sometimes think it is and

then again – perhaps it is something else. There is about the region a curious and fascinating softness that seems to spread like a blanket over the hardness of rock and woods and icy turf. This is a perturbation, this ambiguous softness in the drifting fogs, the thick greens of the trees, the dampness, the swampy meadows. It is in the people too, in the men as well as in the women. Not a tropical softness, of course, but the odd snowy lassitude of isolation. Whole countries and people formed by these long, huddling winters. "Well," he told me, "November is the suicide season. Summer is over, winter's ahead. Long months of closing in." Pregnancies, breakdowns.

"Oh, when I think of winter I just think of poverty spreading over everything. The cold makes everything poor. They are always saying they like it, like it the best of all, calling it better than summer. But I don't think they are telling the truth. . . . I think winter does something to your head, your feeling, something not even the summer's heat can undo." And he looked with a soft melancholy toward the waving sea. "Well, anyway, this is a handsome place."

Visitors Welcomed to Castine



Madeline Duboé and her daughter Céline, with an unidentified friend, at the historical marker on the grounds of the Church Of Our Lady of Holy Hope. Photo by Todd Nelson

The Society was honored in August with a visit from Madeline Duboé and her daughter Céline, both of Pau, France, near St. Castin, the site of the visit by the Adams School students last year. Ms. Duboé is a native of Lewiston, Maine, and is Vice President of the BANF Association (Béarn Acadie Nouvelle France). She will be co-ordinating the visit to Castine by the French students from St. Castin, tentatively scheduled for June, 2009. She and Céline have both U.S. and French citizenship. Céline is currently a law student at the University of Pau.

The Duboés were accompanied by Charles Norman Shay, a direct descendent of Baron St. Castin and Penobscot chief Madockawando's daughter, and Matthew Sappier, former tribal governor of the Penobscot nation. Mr. Shay, who served in the Second World War and participated in the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, is a member of the French Legion d'Honneur and was recently honored along with other Indian veterans by Maine Governor John Baldacci. He plans to return to Normandy next June, to observe the 65th anniversary of the landings, and visit Pau, in the land of his French forebears.



Pictured left to right are Céline Duboé, Todd Nelson, Leslie Nelson, Madeline Duboé, Charles Norman Shay, and Matthew Sappier. Photo by Del Davis

were expected to take up the question of a separate peace with Great Britain should the war continue, which in turn might lead to New England's secession:

It appears that the Federal Party wishes to ascertain at this early period whether Great Britain would under these Circumstances afford them [i.e., the New England states] Military assistance to effect their purpose should they stand in need of it. . . .

Like any good general, Sherbrooke then asked for more troops to be sent to Castine:

In this state of things the importance of Our having taken possession of Castine & the territory Contiguous to it will I doubt not strike Your Lordship forcibly. As from thence Whenever the necessary arrangements are made We can supply the Federalists with everything they can require Should it be the policy of Britain to assist them in seperating from the Union, Or if Affairs take a contrary turn We have at the Penobscot a Frontier much more easy to be defended than the Old One was, When ever a sufficient Force arrives for that purpose.

Sherbrooke recognized he was not a diplomat, especially should he have to deal with Yankees:

I feel it my duty to state to Your Lordship candidly that I am unacquainted with & quite a stranger to diplomatic business – And as the subtlety of the New Englanders will require a most able Negociator to treat with them I presume to recommend that Your Lordship should under some feigned pretence send a person out here who is in Your Confidence, Well skilled in the finesse of diplomacy & thoroughly acquainted with the British Interests in this part of the World to be in readiness to take advantage of Circumstances as they occur, & taking care to conceal for the present the real purpose for which such person has been sent out.

In the meantime:

. . . . I mean not to interfere with the Politics of the New England States in any way until I am honoured with further instructions unless Circumstances should produce an open rupture

between them & the Government of the United States sooner than expected, in which Case I shall think it my duty to afford all assistance I am able to the former As We are actually at War with the latter.

#

In 1938, a Canadian historian, J. S. Martell, came across and published the relevant documents in the *American Historical Review*. Like everyone since, Martell was curious to know who the unnamed "Gentleman" was. Sherbrooke's letter tells us that he resided between the Penobscot and the New Brunswick border and that he was a member of the Massachusetts legislature (always remembering that Maine was part of Massachusetts at the time). The agent was a Federalist sent by the Federalist governor of Massachusetts, Caleb Strong. Martell examined the list of Maine representatives to the Massachusetts legislature in 1814, but confessed in a footnote that he was "left in the dark as to the likely man." Now, seventy years later, it is possible to make an educated guess as to his identity. But before doing so, one needs to have a clear picture of the state of affairs in the summer and fall of 1814 regarding the War of 1812.

In occupying Castine, the British had chosen well. Not only had the town acquired a reputation for pro-British sympathies dating back to the American Revolution, but its location commanded the entrance to the Penobscot River, which many in London hoped would become the new boundary between the United States and British North America (as Canada was then called) should the War of 1812 turn out favorably for the British.

And indeed, that appeared to be the case in the late summer of 1814. A British force had landed in Maryland that summer, burning the city of Washington, and chasing President Madison and his wife into Virginia. A fleet carrying some 16,000 men was thought to be headed from Jamaica to New Orleans, where the loyalty of the French-speaking Creole population was in doubt. In Europe, Napoleon Bonaparte had been defeated and sent into exile, and the Congress of Vienna was sitting down to discuss the nature of a postwar settlement. The British were now free to turn their attention to the Americans. At the city of Ghent, in what is now

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Belgium, five American delegates faced three Britishers in an attempt to negotiate an end to the War, but the head of the delegation, John Quincy Adams, told his wife that summer that he did not think "that the negotiation will be of long continuance."

In his 1938 essay, Martell also published the contents of the unnamed agent's "Communication of importance." The document reveals much about the thinking of antiwar Federalists in the summer of 1814. They were aware that at Ghent the British had proposed a settlement that would have drawn a new US-Canada boundary at the Penobscot. They were not necessarily opposed to it. The mission was an attempt to determine to what extent the British would come to the defense of a separate New England, whether as the result of a treaty or of a secessionist movement coming out of the Hartford Convention. Whoever wrote the "Communication of importance" demonstrated a close knowledge of politics and diplomacy that could only come from long experience. The author was neither a neophyte nor a dilettante:

The State of Massachusetts has been actuated by a strong desire not only to prevent a declaration of War by the United States against Great Britain, but since that declaration has been made to embrace the earliest opportunity to bring the War to a close. Such circumstances have hitherto existed as have rendered inexpedient a direct & decisive effort to accomplish that desirable object. If however the British Government does in fact entertain such Sentiments and Views as the Governments of New England have attributed to it, the period is now probably near, when the War may be brought to a Conclusion mutually advantageous to Great Britain, and those who may concur in producing that Event.

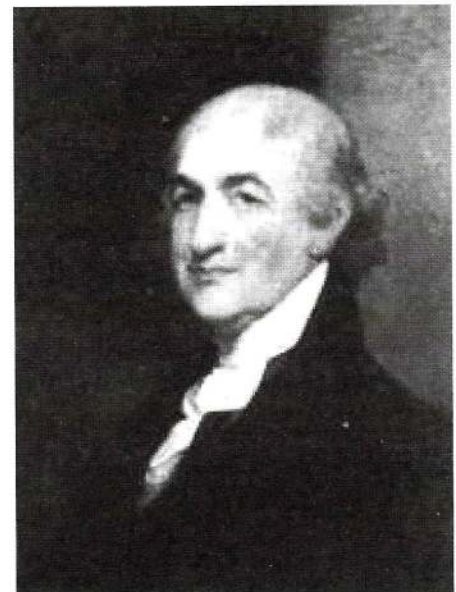
The agent then proceeded to call London's attention to the impending convention at Hartford, whose object, he said, was to take measures that would deny revenues to the federal government:

It will require no great degree of prescience to foresee that this measure, forced upon those states by the general Government and the law of self preservation, will necessarily lead to collision between that Government and these States, and that also the credit of that Government already

greatly impaired, and always founded principally upon Northern revenue, must entirely fail.

But there was more:

One other great subject for consideration will probably be, the establishment in due time of a government . . . calculated to insure the pursuit of such regular an legitimate policy, as may afford security to foreign as well as domestic relations, and prevent as far as may be, a recurrence of that vacillating policy, as almost necessarily results from a Government entirely and immediately directed and controuled by popular caprice.



Governor Caleb Strong of Massachusetts

The Massachusetts legislature had authorized the governor to raise an army of 10,000 men to deal with what contingencies might arise. Then the agent got to the point:

The object of this communication is to ascertain whether Negotiation will under existing circumstances be agreeable to the British Government. If so, to pave the way to it, and to prepare as expeditiously as is consistent for its conclusion.

But the agent also was concerned that even if the Hartford Convention was successful, the people might not want to go along:

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It is not to be concealed, that possibly, though not probably, the democracy of some one, perhaps more of the State governments, influenced and countenanced, by the Executive of the United States [i.e., the Madison administration], may overcome, in an Election, the best exertions of a well-disposed people. It will be necessary to know whether in an event of that kind, any competent Military force, can certainly be relied on, to be provided by Great Britain . . .



Lord Henry Bathurst

The agent concluded with a peroration:

There is, it is to be believed little room to doubt, that if these States be left unmolested, they will soon be able to establish a system of order and power, that will paralyze the Authority of the United States, and crush the baneful Democracy of the Country. The measures now ripening by means of the Convention, will soon afford a more decisive and important view of the ultimate measures to be taken by the British Government.

A close reading of the document reveals that the author, in addition to being a Federalist, was an extremely conservative one, not only committed in opposition to the War, as most Federalists were, but having no truck with a system that allowed government to be “controuled by popular caprice,” nor was he bashful about the possible use of military force to overcome election results that went contrary to the wishes of “well-disposed people” like himself. The same reading also suggests that the document was written by someone who had recently been to Boston (as Sherbrooke suggests in his cover letter), as well as someone who was comfortable with words and argumentation.

It took six weeks for Sherbrooke’s letter to reach London, during which time the negotiations at Ghent suddenly took a turn for the better. Both sides dropped their initial demands and were inching toward an eventual settlement based on the *status quo ante bellum*. But Bathurst and the others were not sure President Madison would accept such a treaty. In that event, Bathurst told Sherbrooke, he was given the authority “to sign such Armistice on the part of Massachusetts and any of the other States referred to in your dispatch.”

While Bathurst’s note was on the high seas, the Treaty of Ghent was signed on Christmas Eve, John Quincy Adams expressing the hope that it would be the last treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States. Three weeks later, before news of the Treaty reached these shores, Andrew Jackson rallied the citizens of New Orleans and threw back the British invaders. President Madison eagerly signed the Treaty of Ghent. And the Hartford Convention, no doubt to the dismay of the secret agent, adjourned without seriously considering the secession of New England from the Union.

#

Martell tells us that after examining a list of Maine representatives, he was still in the dark as to the agent’s identity. A close reading of the list will show that there were nine representatives from the area between the Penobscot and the New Brunswick border elected in 1814, including, perhaps significantly, Thomas Adams of Castine.

Initially, the early betting was on Adams as the secret agent. He was the older brother of Samuel Adams, both New Hampshire natives, who came to Castine in the first decade of the nineteenth century and became successful businessmen. Thomas Adams at one time or another was owner or part owner of some fourteen commercial sailing vessels. (The existing Cate-Adams house at the corner of Pleasant and Court Streets was built by him in 1815.) The fact that he married the daughter of a Nova Scotian would raise questions, for some at least, as to his commitment to the American cause during the War of 1812.

After reading Martell’s article, Harvard’s Samuel Eliot Morison was convinced that Thomas Adams

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was the man, and said so, both in his biography of his ancestor Harrison Gray Otis, and later in an essay. More recently, another historian, Robert Fraser, took up the cry in an article in *Maine History*. After all, if the man was a Castine resident, was a Federalist member of the Massachusetts legislature, a "Gentleman" and "a most respectable Inhabitant," who else could it be?

But Morison and Fraser overlooked two relevant facts. First, Sherbrooke's note to Bathurst does not say the agent was a Castine resident, only that he had been giving permission to travel from Castine to Boston. Second, it seems clear that Thomas Adams was not in Boston during the fall of 1814, when the legislature met. Yet the agent was described as bringing a message from Governor Strong following the legislature's meeting.

In the early 1970's, the Ellsworth historian Herbert Silsby did something that neither Martell, nor Morison nor Fraser took the trouble to do. He examined the proceedings of the Massachusetts legislature for the meeting in the fall of 1814. He discovered that only three of the nine representatives from eastern Maine were at the session, and one of them was a Democratic-Republican. That left two Federalists: Joseph Lee of Buckstown (now Bucksport) and George Herbert of Ellsworth.

Not much is known about Lee. He was born in Worcester County, Massachusetts, in 1773 and died in Bucksport in 1861. He held a number of elective and appointive positions in Orland, Bucksport, and Milo, Maine. He does not seem to have had the elite status described by Sherbrooke that would have made him known to him and to Admiral Griffith. Nor, as a resident of Buckstown, would he have been in need of British permission to travel "from Castine to Boston."

That leaves George Herbert, about which considerably more is known. He was born in Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 1778, and was a graduate of Dartmouth College (1800) where he was a friend of Daniel Webster. He moved to Ellsworth, where he set up his law practice, in 1803. Remembering that in those days Castine was the county seat, Herbert would have spent considerable time there, during which he easily could have met with the occupying forces in the fall of 1814. The language used in the note forwarded to Bathurst by Sherbrooke is that of an attorney, not a merchant. It is also that of a radical Federalist willing call in British forces to overthrow elections, and to contemplate New England's separation from the Union. In a somewhat hysterical letter to his friend Daniel Webster in 1813, Herbert

declared himself ready to march on Washington "if I could get any body to go with me" and would stay there "till Maddison [*sic*] is buried under the ruins of the capitol." As for Boston, "if I knew myself that Boston was bombarded this moment, I could shrug up my shoulders with much complacency when I saw the *smoke of their torment* ascending on high." In case Webster didn't get the point, he concluded his letter by saying again "God send bombardment upon Boston." There is no record of any reply by Webster to his excited friend.

Thanks to Silsby's research, as well as inference, we can safely conclude that it was probably George Herbert, not Thomas Adams, who carried the Governor Strong's message to Sherbrooke in 1814. Unlike Adams, he was in Boston for the crucial legislative session in that fall. Unlike Lee, he had the social status, the education, and the convictions that enabled him to write the document Sherbrooke forwarded to London.

George Herbert went on to be re-elected to the Massachusetts legislature in 1815 and later was appointed County Attorney. He died comparatively young at age forty-two in 1820. Following the death of his first wife, Thomas Adams moved to Roxbury, Massachusetts, where he died in 1847. Sir John Sherbrooke went on to be named Governor General of British North America in 1816, only to be forced to retire for health reasons two years later. He died in England in 1830. Both Sherbrooke, Quebec, and Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia, are named after him. Caleb Strong, whose overtures to the British never became known in his lifetime, was re-elected governor of Massachusetts in 1816, after which he retired. He died in 1819. The town of Strong, Maine, is named after him.

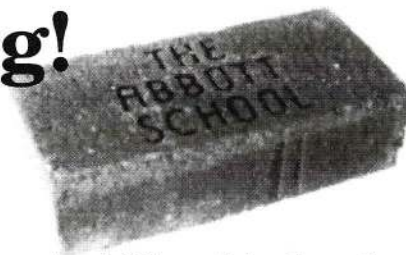
N.B. Text in italics reproduced as written

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