

the CASTINE VISITOR

CASTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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SAMUEL P. GRINDLE AND HIS FAMILY

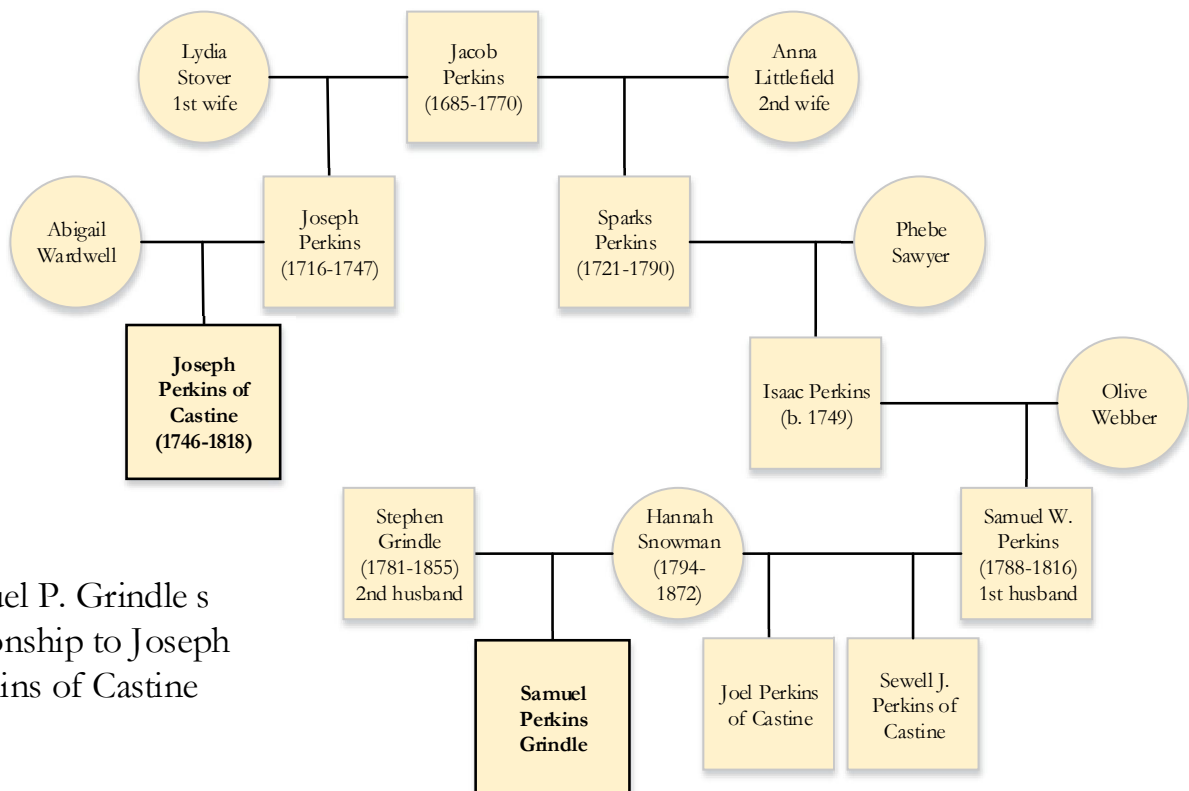
Wendy Knickerbocker

Samuel Perkins Grindle was born in Penobscot on February 1, 1823, the first child of Stephen and Hannah Grindle. Both of Samuel's parents had been married before, and both had children from their first marriages.

Samuel's mother, Hannah (Snowman) Perkins Grindle, was born in Penobscot in 1794. Her parents, John Snowman, Jr., and Comfort (Horne) Snowman, had both moved to Penobscot from York, Maine (then Massachusetts). Hannah Snowman married Samuel Webber Perkins in 1811. Samuel Perkins was born in Penobscot in 1788, the son of Isaac and Olive (Webber) Perkins, also both originally from York. Isaac Perkins was a relative of Joseph Perkins, shipping merchant of Castine. (To be precise, Isaac and Joseph were half-first cousins.)

Samuel Perkins was a mariner, and he and Hannah lived in Penobscot. They had four children: Joel (1812-1887, buried in Castine Cemetery); Abigail (1814-1886, buried in Bowden-Devereaux Cemetery in Castine); her twin Sewell Jotham (1814-1870, buried in Castine Cemetery); and Olive (1816-1906, buried in Veazie Cemetery in Penobscot). In November of 1816, Samuel Perkins died of yellow fever while at sea.

Samuel P. Grindle's
Relationship to Joseph
Perkins of Castine



(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

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**The Castine Historical
Society welcomes these
new members:**

Margaret Beckman
Christy Stout

**CHS Appreciates Your
Support**

We would like to thank all of our members for your generous support of the Castine Historical Society. Including life members, our membership numbers around 650. Each new, renewed, or gift membership conveys all the privileges of being a CHS member, including a subscription to *The Castine Visitor*, published three times a year.

If you have a change of address, either winter or summer, please let us know. It is important that we keep our records accurate, to insure that all members will receive all CHS mailings. Your support is what makes the CHS and its members, near and far, an active part of the Castine community.

For more history and CHS news,
visit our website:
castinehistoricalsociety.org

Editor's Note: Please feel free to pass along your ideas or requests for articles, along with your comments and suggestions. Contact Wendy Knickerbocker by phone at 326-8205 or email: newsletter@castinehistoricalsociety.org



We seek to invigorate our community through collaborative exploration and stewardship of our region's rich history, engaging residents and visitors of all ages in Castine's extraordinary past and, through it, that of New England and North America.

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

Wendy Knickerbocker.....Editor

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**Castine
Historical Society**

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

On page seven of this edition of the *Visitor* you will find information specific to the recently completed 2017 Castine Historical Society Strategic Plan. It is no surprise that the plan proposes changes. Is not that what we, a historical society, are all about—chronicling change over time, what happened between then and now?

Many events, both small and momentous, have impacted the Castine Historical Society. I think it is important to acknowledge some of the people who have been a part of those events of change at CHS. I asked the following retiring members of the Board of Directors to share their recollections of change at CHS: Jim Day (Board Member 1989-2017, President 1990-1996 and 2000-2002); Ann Miller (Board Member 1994-2017, President 2003-2006); John Parish (Board Member 1995-2017, President 1996-2000); and David Adams (Board Member 2002-2017).

Jim Day has been on the CHS board since 1989. He told me that Laura Hatch and Betty Duff approached him to join the Society to be president. "There is not too much to do," they said. He was very involved in fund-raisers such as selling flowers, organizing baked bean suppers and managing the Brick Project for the purchase of the Abbott School. Jim remembers asking Deborah Pulliam to edit the *Visitor*; she said she would have to be paid. When told there was no money to pay her, she agreed to edit the *Visitor* if it were produced on recycled paper.

Ann Miller remembers the planning and installation of the "1779 Penobscot Expedition" permanent exhibit. Frank Hatch was the benefactor for this marvelous exhibit, staged in a replica of the day cabin of the frigate *Warren*. Ann also was instrumental in the planning of the first long-range planning meetings at CHS.

John Parish writes that "the change (at CHS) has been more evolutionary rather than revolutionary." He reflects on the role of the professional curator, which evolved from the role established by our volunteer *de facto* curator, Sally Foote, "who long labored over the Society's growing collection—and still does."

David Adams learned in 2003 that a replica of the frigate *l'Hermione*, famous for carrying Lafayette to America in 1780, was being built in Rochefort, France, and would commemorate the 1780 voyage in 2015 by sailing to U.S. east coast ports. A remarkable map in our files showed that *l'Hermione* had sailed to Penobscot Bay on reconnaissance and stayed to fight in our Revolutionary War. This find initiated a campaign to attract *l'Hermione* to include a stop in Castine. On July 14, Bastille Day 2015, the marvelous ship sailed into Castine Harbor to great acclaim and a huge international crowd.

As the Castine Historical Society has changed in small and large ways over the years, it is important that two things remain unchanged. It is my hope that the volunteer Board will continue to be made up of people with a wide variety of skill sets and passion for history. Also, I am sure CHS will continue to grow through the work of volunteers with interest and energy for ongoing and new projects. These volunteer efforts are vital to keeping the seasonal exhibit hall open seven days a week, creating the CHS newsletter and preserving our historical collections. New opportunities may include collaborating to organize community history programs, assisting with research at the Grindle House or hosting a "friend-raising" event.

Thank you to Jim, Ann, John and David for your many contributions to CHS. Also, thank you to the many others who continue to bring your passion, creativity and time to 13 & 17 School Street. You are the "village" of the Castine Historical Society.

Brooke Tenney

“GRINDLE” (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

Stephen Grindle, Samuel P. Grindle’s father, was born in 1781, in a part of Sedgwick that was later incorporated into Brooksville. Stephen’s parents were Joshua and Ann (Lowell); Joshua was a brickmaker in Sedgwick/Brooksville. In 1806, Stephen Grindle married Betsy Johnson. Betsy Johnson’s parents, Giles and Elizabeth, had a farm on Johnson’s Point in Penobscot, at the Second Narrows.

Stephen and Betsy Grindle lived on her parents’ farm. They had three children who lived beyond infancy: Harriet Elisabeth (1807-1854, buried in Johnson’s Point Cemetery in Penobscot); Jonathan Brooks (1815-1847, stone in Johnson’s Point Cemetery); and Giles Johnson (1818-1897, buried in Forest Home Cemetery in Sargentville). In 1819, Stephen Grindle’s wife Betsy and both of his parents all died within a few months of each other.

Stephen Grindle and Hannah Perkins married in 1821. They lived on Johnson’s Point, on the farm that Stephen Grindle had worked with his first father-in-law. The couple’s first child together was born in 1823, and they named him Samuel Perkins Grindle, after Hannah’s first husband. They had four more children: Betsy Johnson, named for Stephen’s first wife (1824-1904, buried in Rockport, Maine); Eveline (1828-1878, buried in Settlers Rest Cemetery in Sargentville); Joseph (1835-1863, marker in Johnson’s Point Cemetery); and Lucy A. (1838-1903, buried in Johnson’s Point Cemetery).

Like many local men of his time, Stephen Grindle was both a mariner and a farmer. His headstone identifies him as “Capt. Grindle,” and Joseph L. Stevens referred to him as “a respectable farmer, Captain Stephen Grindle, of Penobscot.” He was the master of the schooner *Echo* out of Castine, built there in 1824 and owned by four Castine men. However, an 1835 newspaper report listed another captain for the *Echo*, and it’s unclear exactly when or for how long Stephen Grindle went to sea.

In November of 1840, Stephen Grindle and his son Samuel were hauling wood on their Johnson’s Point farm when they found an old French coin. According to Dr. Stevens, by the following spring they had accumulated some 2000 17th-century coins, mostly in fragments. The majority of them were French, but there were also Spanish, Portuguese, Belgian, English, and Massachusetts coins. Dr. Stevens speculated that they had been left behind accidentally either by the Baron de St.-Castin when he was fleeing an attacker or by other members of his family when they left the area. Dr. Stevens and some

friends purchased quite a few of those coins, and Stephen Grindle used the rest to pay his creditors.

By that time, Samuel Grindle was the oldest of Stephen and Hannah’s children still living on the Johnson’s Point farm. Hannah’s son Joel may have gone to Castine soon after she remarried. George A. Wheeler said of Joel Perkins that he “was forced by the death of his father to earn his living at a very early age.” It is possible that he was apprenticed as a child to one of his many Perkins cousins in Castine. However he took up the trade, Joel Perkins was first a carpenter and then a master shipwright, a partner in the shipbuilding firm of Perkins & Noyes and the builder and/or part owner of several Castine vessels. He married Sarah Dunbar of Penobscot in 1840.

Stephen Grindle’s daughter from his first marriage, Harriet, married Samuel Wescott of Penobscot in 1834, and they lived in Brooksville. That same year, Hannah Grindle’s daughter Abigail Perkins married Samuel T. Bowden; they had a farm in North Castine. Two years later, in 1836, Abigail’s twin brother Sewell married Sarah Stockbridge of Castine. Like his older brother Joel, Sewell Perkins was a carpenter; perhaps he too had been a young apprentice in Castine. Sewell did not go into shipbuilding, however; he became a cabinetmaker and a painter.

Hannah Grindle’s youngest child from her first marriage, Olive, married Wooster Veazie in 1839; they lived in Penobscot. Stephen Grindle’s two sons from his first marriage were both mariners and probably began their sailing careers as young men. Jonathan B. was known as Brooks Grindle, and Giles J. went by Johnson Grindle. Brooks Grindle married Mary Ann Billings of Sedgwick in 1843; Johnson Grindle married Phebe P. Billings of Sedgwick in 1844.

On November 6, 1845, five years after finding the “Castine coins” with his father, Samuel Grindle married Eliza S. Moore (b. 1820). Eliza was from Brooksville, and the couple lived either there or in Penobscot. Samuel worked as a carpenter.

Two years later, in December of 1847, Capt. Brooks Grindle, Samuel Grindle’s half-brother, was lost at sea. When Samuel’s first child was born on June 19, 1849, he and his wife named their son Brooks Grindle. In later years he became a mariner like his namesake, and he lived in Brooksville with his first and second wives, Ada Blodgett and Annie Blake. In a sad twist of fate, Capt. Brooks Grindle the younger died at sea in 1914.

In 1849 Samuel and Eliza Grindle were living in Castine. It is possible that his half-brother Joel Perkins found work for him, but whether or not family connections were involved, Samuel Grindle was a ship's carpenter by then. A few days after his son was born, he purchased a piece of property on the Town Common in Castine. The lot, owned then by Charles A. Cate, had on it an old tannery and a house built by William Freeman. In June of 1850, Samuel Grindle bought an adjoining lot from the widow of David Coffin. During that year and the next Grindle built a house in the Greek Revival style that was popular in Maine at the time.

Samuel and Eliza Grindle's second child, George Wentworth (d. 1927, buried in Mount Rest Cemetery in Brooksville), was born on February 16, 1852. In the spring of that year, Grindle sold his Castine property to Samuel Wescott. Grindle identified the sale as including "my dwelling house," and he retained the right of way, a well, and a "woodhouse."

Although there is no clear indication where Samuel and Eliza lived over the next few years, it is

possible that they still lived in Castine, in the house that Samuel built; they may have rented or leased it from Wescott. The house sale may even have been a loan of some kind. "Samuel Wescott" was a common name in the Castine-Penobscot-Brooksville area, and it is unclear which Samuel Wescott purchased the house. Samuel Grindle had two relatives named Samuel Wescott: one (1804-1866) was married to Grindle's half-sister Harriet and, coincidentally, was the nephew of Samuel W. Perkins; the other (1826-1886) was Grindle's first cousin, the son of Hannah Grindle's sister Sarah, and a mariner.

Stephen Grindle, Samuel's father, died in October of 1855, and he was buried in Johnson's Point Cemetery. Samuel's mother stayed on in Penobscot, living with her son Joseph and daughter Lucy; Lucy never married and lived with her mother for the rest of Hannah's life. Samuel's sister Betsy had married Samuel N. Southard in 1848, and they lived in Camden. Sister Eveline had married Calvin Billings in 1849; they lived in Sedgwick. Hannah Grindle died in March of 1872, and she was buried in Johnson's Point Cemetery.



The Grindle House on the Castine Common, center right
(detail of a stereoview c.1870)

On June 30, 1856, Samuel and Eliza Grindle had a third son, Sewall Perkins (d. 9/4/1894, buried in Castine Cemetery). Two years later, the owner of their Castine property, Samuel Wescott, sold the lot and house to George N. Rogers. Samuel Grindle bought his house and property back from George Rogers in late April of 1859. A week later, Grindle divided off a forty-four- by seventy-foot lot and sold it to the Castine School District. That same year Samuel and Eliza welcomed their fourth child, Alice M. (d. 1936, buried in Melrose Cemetery, Brockton, Mass.).

Along with most Mainers, Samuel Grindle lost some family members in the Civil War. His younger brother Joseph was a member of Company I, 28th Maine Regiment, and he died of disease in Baton Rouge on June 26, 1863. Samuel also lost two nephews, sons of his half-sister Abigail: Sewell P. Bowden, with Co. H, 2nd Maine Regiment, died at the First Battle of Bull Run on July 21, 1861, and Frank M. Bowden, with Co. K, 16th Maine Regiment, died on July 20, 1863.

Grindle himself was drafted in October of 1864. He was called from Brooksville, although it is unclear why he wasn't drafted in Castine. He did have Brooksville connections, perhaps through his wife; he may have owned property or a house there. Whatever the reason, in Brooksville Grindle paid Isaac P. March, of Scotland, to take his place in the Union Army. On October 27th, Grindle sold his house and most of his property in Castine to John Dresser. Once again he may have rented or leased the house, since the family apparently stayed in Castine.

Eliza (Moore) Grindle died on June 29, 1866, and she was buried in the Castine Cemetery. The following year, Samuel Grindle married Mary J. Moore (b. 1839). Mary Moore was listed in Samuel Grindle's household in the 1860 Census, but she does not seem to have been a close relative of Eliza Moore; she may have been a domestic helper. In December of 1867, in Castine, Mary Grindle bore Samuel another son, Frank Vail (d. 1908, buried in Castine Cemetery).

By the Civil War years, Samuel Grindle had achieved some moderate success. He was listed as one of the owners of the schooner *RS Warren*, built in Essex, Mass., in 1860. Some of the other owners were Castine men, but at least two of them and the ship's master were from Deer Isle. The *RS Warren* was lost at sea in 1875, and it is unknown whether Samuel Grindle still owned a share in her at the time.

In October of 1870, Grindle purchased his Castine property and house from John Dresser.

Dresser was a rope-maker and ship outfitter, and it is possible that his purchase of Grindle's house had been something like a secured loan for an investment.

Samuel Grindle was elected Street Commissioner for the Town of Castine in 1876. At some point he joined the Masons. Grindle's headstone bears a Masonic insignia, indicating that he was a Freemason when he died. He probably belonged to the Hancock Lodge in Castine.

Samuel Perkins Grindle died in Castine on February 3, 1885, and he was buried in the Castine Cemetery. His son George had married Ella M. Jones in 1873 and was living in Brooksville; the couple later moved to Brockton, Mass. Sewall Grindle seems to have stayed in Castine and never married. His sister Alice was also unmarried, and she also lived in Castine; later she moved with her brother George to Brockton. Samuel Grindle's youngest son Frank remained in Castine and was single until 1901, when he married Helen Norton of Castine. He was a Mason, like his father.

In 1889 Samuel Grindle's widow Mary married George L. Weeks of Castine. Grindle's son Sewall died in 1894. That same year, the remaining heirs of Samuel P. Grindle sold the house and property on the Castine Common to David W. Wescott. Mary and George Weeks both died two years later and were buried in the Castine Cemetery.



(Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress)

Samuel P. Grindle House, 2010

A Challenging Blueprint for the Future

Brooke Tenney

Summer 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of the Castine Historical Society's incorporation. Fifty years ago, there was no Abbott School, summer exhibit, or Grindle House. Also, *l'Hermione* had not paid its memorable Bastille Day visit to Castine. As I understand it, artifacts were stored in cardboard boxes in Gardiner Gregory's house. There was no staff. All projects were accomplished at various locations in Castine by dedicated, hard-working volunteers.

During the last fifty years, the Castine Historical Society has purchased real estate and added

fall of 2015, questions were asked about the future direction of the Castine Historical Society. What will be the focus of CHS going forward? How will we continue to carry out our mission? Should staff numbers and roles change? Does the Abbott School need interior and exterior improvements? Does the exhibit space need to be enlarged? Should there be a permanent "Castine History" exhibit?

With so many areas to focus upon, it seemed wise and prudent to undertake a formal strategic planning process. A search committee consisting of Helen Miller (Chair), Jack Macdonald, Bill Buchanan,



CHS archives management before long-range planning

personnel. It now owns two buildings. The Abbott School, purchased in 1994, was renovated to include exhibit and office space, plus archival storage. In 2007 a part-time curator joined us. The Grindle House, purchased in 2008, was renovated several years later to include the addition of an archival storage facility. It also contains offices and space for small exhibits. Next, a part-time administrator joined our staff. At present, the curator is full time and the administrative assistant remains part time.

The most recent concentrated efforts, including renovation of the Grindle House and the visit of *l'Hermione*, were proudly accomplished. In the

George Hatch, and Brooke Tenney was formed, and the process of finding a qualified strategic planning consultant began. Four candidates were interviewed and all references checked. In November 2015, Kathy Hunt of Starboard Leadership Consulting LLC in Bangor was hired to help us understand our concerns.

After the consulting firm was hired, an *ad hoc* strategic planning committee was formed, composed of Board of Directors members George Hatch (Chair), Marcia Mason, Roger Moss, Bill Buchanan, and Stefanie Young, along with Paige Lilly (CHS Curator). The strategic planning committee assisted Kathy Hunt and her associate, Deb Claflin, with

understanding the opportunities, challenges, and culture at CHS as well as identifying potential stakeholders to interview.

Kathy and Deb went right to work gathering data and interviewing all Board members. They also interviewed identified stakeholders from Castine, funding sources, and similar organizations. The Board then met with Kathy and Deb for the first of three meetings. The aggregated results of the interviews were explained. Kathy also gave us an “Organization 101” course, explaining where the Castine Historical Society had been organizationally, where we were at that moment, and how often our expectations, wants, and desires outstripped the energy and abilities of the volunteer Board.

At the second meeting, Kathy and Deb helped us obtain a realistic view of how the Board operates. This was accomplished by using the results of the Board’s self-assessment assignment. We learned that we were no different than many boards. There were some things we did very well, some things we could improve upon, and some new things we needed to pay attention to.

The final Board meeting for strategic planning with Kathy and Deb focused on internal and external priorities. We spent time in small groups weighing the opportunities before us.

On October 13, 2016, we met again to review and ultimately accept the new Castine Historical Society Strategic Plan. The Plan begins with a new mission statement: “We seek to invigorate our community through collaborative exploration and stewardship of our region’s rich history, engaging residents and visitors of all ages in Castine’s

extraordinary past and, through it, that of New England and North America.”

The many threads of internal and external priorities were categorized into four areas: community engagement and outreach; effective and unified governance; operational and financial sustainability; and program and campus enhancement.

Now what? As one Board member said, “Now is when the rubber meets the road!” A few changes have already been made. Our by-laws now specify term limits of two three-year terms for Board members, with a year off before an individual has an opportunity to rejoin the Board. Also, the committee structure has been reorganized to align with our priorities.

When the Board voted to accept the Strategic Plan, we also acknowledged that the Plan would require hiring additional staff. We are now searching for an Executive Director who will work with us as we move forward.

One of the goals for the spring of 2017 is to meet with many of the stakeholders. It is our intent that these meetings will be the first of many to focus on community engagement, outreach, and collaboration. Clearly, the collaborative exploration prominently mentioned in the new Castine Historical Society mission statement provides fertile ground for expanding activities and working together with like-minded organizations.

Perhaps your appetite has been whetted. If you would like to see the full Strategic Plan or work with us during the implementation phase, I invite you to contact us by phone (326-4118) or by e-mail: admin@castinehistoricalsociety.org



CHS archives management after long-range planning

Lawrence and Butler Family Papers Return to Castine

Paige Lilly

The following is an excerpt from an essay by Oscar Butler (1906-1985):

The Civil War days were days of sadness and glory. When I feel that the burdens of life are getting unbearable, when the gray mist of loneliness and despair comes rolling over me as it does to all humans, I get out my grandfather's Civil War letters. They tell of battles fought, of long marches on empty stomachs, and bleak days in Confederate prison pens. At Gettysburg, [he and] his close friend and fellow townsman Lorenzo Bowden were fighting side by side when a Confederate shell tore his arm off.

After reading of these things, I more often than not put away the dish of self pity I was making for myself. These letters I hold very dear. They have pulled me thru many a slump. These letters, so I have been told, have many times been splashed by my grandmother's tears.

Oscar Butler, a self-described bachelor and town character of Castine, was the grandson of Henry B. Butler of Rockland and Mary Lawrence of Castine. Castine historians have long been familiar with Henry Butler's Civil War letters because transcriptions of

them were donated both locally and to the University of Maine.

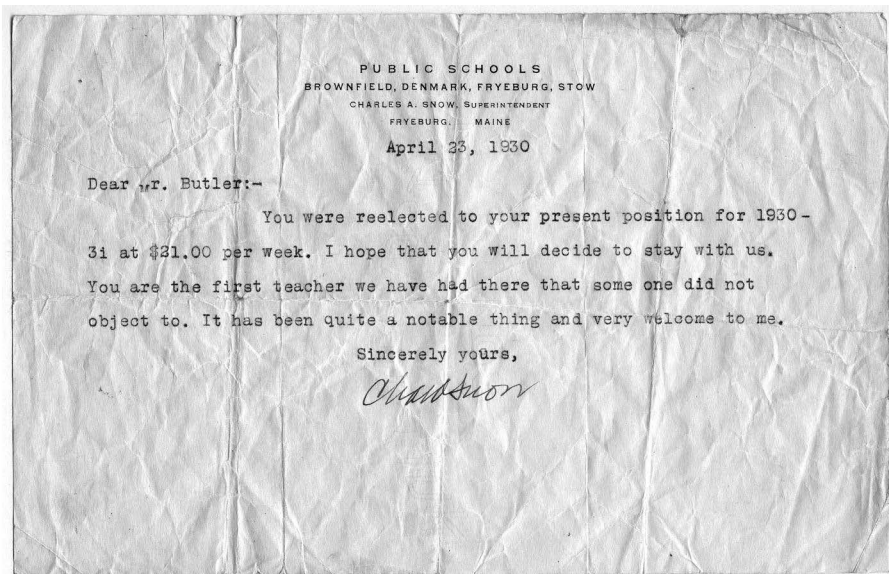
Two more generations of Butler descendents have treasured and preserved Henry's original 1862-1865 letters to Mary, and those letters were recently donated to CHS for safekeeping and public access. The transcripts, along with an historical note by Castine historian Lois Cyr, who lives in Henry and Mary's house, are available online at http://www.resourcehelp.com/front_butler.htm

The donated letters accompany a wide variety of historic papers and objects also passed down in the Butler family, including copies of Oscar's own writings; tintype photographs of Henry in his Civil War uniform and his son Fred as a baby; letters and receipts from Fred Butler's lifetime; Lawrence family deeds and other documents from before Mary's birth; two nineteenth-century laptop desks; a strongbox; and three leather wallets. One of the wallets, made of red and green leather, is identified in gold tool: "Stover Perkins Junr. Castine 1809." Mary Lawrence Butler married George Washington Perkins after Henry's death. Stover would have been George's grandfather.

The collection is not yet fully inventoried, but the documents appear to range in date from the early 1800s through the 1980s and in subject from legal to poetic. Every item contributes to our community effort to preserve the history of this area, and we look forward to sharing each one with researchers and visitors.



Selection of items from the recent donation by Don Reed in honor of his stepfather, Wilbur Bullock, whose mother was a Butler from Castine



“Mr. Butler” was probably Oscar Butler, who graduated from Castine’s Eastern State Normal School in 1929

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A collaborative community project: the 2014 Witherle Woods tour, led by archeologist Peter Morrison as part of a two-day workshop organized by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Penobscot Marine Museum, and CHS