



# THE HISTORIAN



VOLUME FOUR, ISSUE TWO

FALL 2017



Jacob Thompson House 1811



Fuller House 1869

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Greetings:

Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, turned out to be a lucky day for Monson and the Historical Society. About a week before, I happened to be in the office at Green Street when the phone rang and the man at the other end of the phone said, "Greetings, I'm Lord Monson". After a bit of a discussion, Nicholas volunteered to come and speak to the people of Monson about his Monson family history, especially the first Lord Monson, whom we think the town of Monson was named after.

It took a lot of arranging,

but we got it done with the help of the Board of Directors, especially Tamara Cabey (our chauffeur for the tour around Monson for Lord Monson and his wife Silvana), Denis Duquette (for his advertising and spreading the word) and Monson Town Administrator, Evan Brassard (for use of Memorial Hall, lecture props, arrangements with M-Pact to film the event and cutting through red tape). If you were not able to attend the lecture, it can be seen on the M-Pact TV (Palmer, MA) website and click on the YouTube link.

In the meantime, the painting of Fuller House is going

well. Check out the back porch. We reproduced the original trim and railings from early photographs.

Also, at Thompson House, we are replacing the furnace and air-conditioning and switching over to natural gas. A thank you to the Grace Makepeace Trust for Historic Preservation for a grant for this project. We have applied for a grant to the Community Preservation Committee for the balance and hope to receive it at November's Town Meeting. **(Please try to attend and vote for this grant.)**

Dennis

### Officers:

President – Dennis Swierad  
Vice President – Tamara Cabey  
Secretary – Leona Brahen  
Treasurer – Kevin McNabb

### Board Members:

William Dominick (2018)  
Denis Duquette (2018)

### Board Member Emeritus:

William Hatton  
Emma Ladd Shepherd

### Voting Positions:

Accessions Manager – Mary Swierad  
Annual Meeting – Denis Duquette  
Building Restoration – Dennis Swierad  
Collections Manager – Mary Swierad  
Editor/Technology – Leona Brahen  
Historian – Dennis Swierad  
Membership – Denis Duquette  
Rental Manager – Tamara Cabey

Visit us on the web at [www.monsonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.monsonhistoricalsociety.org)

Email us on the web at  
[info@monsonhistoricalsociety.comcast.biz.net](mailto:info@monsonhistoricalsociety.comcast.biz.net)

Do you need information about the history of Monson?  
Write, call or email us. We may be able to help.

### Mission Statement

To obtain and preserve historical data and articles pertaining to the town of Monson, Massachusetts, and to encourage and develop the pursuit and expression of such interests in all suitable ways.

## WHAT USED TO BE THERE?

BY DENNIS SWIERAD

The area we are going to explore in this edition of the newsletter is 64 Main Street, the present site of New England Estate Pickers.

We are not sure of the exact date of the first building on this site, but it is referred to as “the old store” in 1790. This “old store” was run by William Norcross from 1790 to 1810 under the firm of William Norcross & Son, the son being Joel Norcross. In 1810, William erected a new building on this site. This building saw a variety of owners: Norcross & Flynt, Norcross & Company, Flynt & Packard, William Packard & Son., E. B. Miles, E. E. Towne and, later, Charles Fowler.

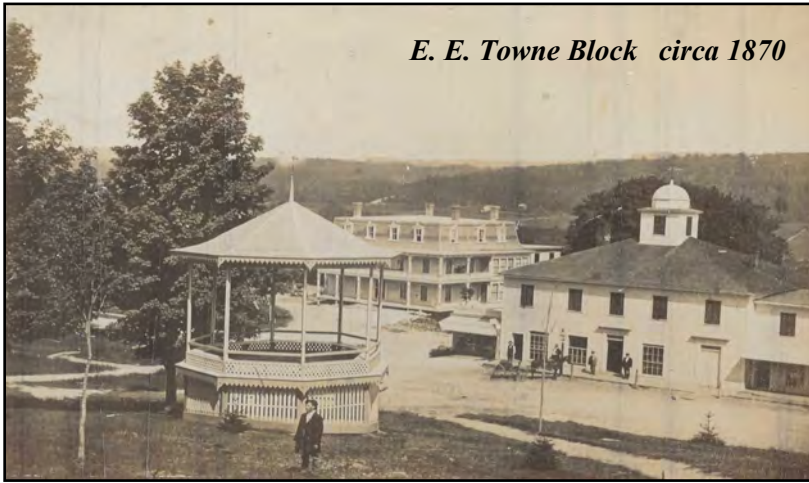
Under the ownership of E. E. Towne, this general store became one of the first to utilize the newspaper as a means of advertisement. In the April 3rd, 1869 edition of The Palmer Journal, Mr. Towne informed the world that he was selling “Paints and Oils cheap enough” and that he had “Goods for Ladies and Gentlemen”, “Goods for Farmers, Mechanics, Physicians and Clergymen”. From this one advertisement, it is learned that he sold “Hats and caps, fertilizers, hardware, farming tools, flour and meal, most kinds of fish, teas, coffee, crockery, glasses and stoneware, paper-hangings, curtains and mattresses”.

In April 1880, William N. Flynt & Co. leased the store and traded under that name until January 1, 1884, when the name of the firm was changed to W. N. Flynt & Sons. In the earlier part of the 19th century, this was the center of a very large trade, customers coming from Greenwich, Belchertown, Stafford and all the surrounding towns.

The building burned to the ground on a very cold day, January 13, 1914. Soon after, W. N. Flynt & Sons rebuilt a brand new granite building and carried on the business until the 1920's. It was run for a time after that as a General Store by Willard Wilcox. It went vacant for a time. Somewhere around the early 1940's it was bought and run as the Monson Bowling Alley which lasted into the early 1980's. It is now home of an antique store called the New England Estate Pickers.

The Monson Historical Society is very fortunate to have a vast collection of the Norcross papers as far back as the 1790's, which we have amassed from different sources over the years. This includes various day books, counter books, ledgers, account books and personal correspondence. It is a great resource in the workings of an early store in Monson and all of the different people that were customers of the store and what they purchased or bartered for. This store must have been a buzz with activity from opening 'til closing with every type and cast of people.

Under the ownership of the Flynt's, it was also run as a “Company Store” enabling the employees of the Flynt's to charge their purchases and settle their accounts on pay day.

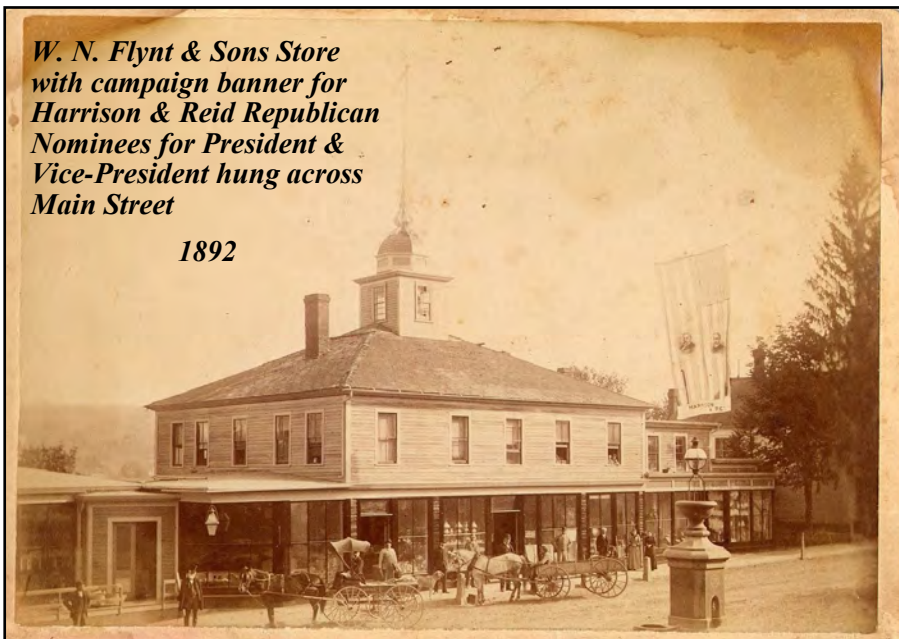


*E. E. Towne Block circa 1870*



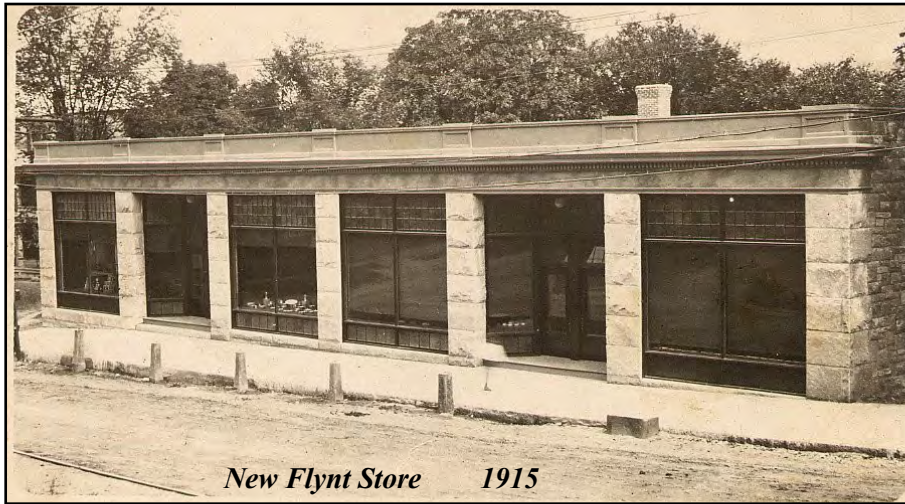
**Norcross Ledger  
Books  
1820 and 1835**

Date	Description	Amount
1820	Balance on hand	22.30
Oct 1	To 16 lbs Beef @ 4	64
" 3	" 6 lbs Beef @ 5	30
" 17	" 7 lbs Beef @ 6	42
" 20	" 4 lbs Beef @ 6	24
" 27	" 12 lbs Beef @ 4 1/2	54
Nov 9	Beef 1 lb @ 2 1/2	2 1/2
" 14	4 1/2 lbs Lard @ 1 1/2	6 3/4
Nov 7	1 lb meat per 1 lb	25
" 10	Cash for 1/4 Boston Lard	1 1/4
" 14	5 1/2 lbs Lard	8 1/4
" 17	1 lb meat per 1 lb	25
" 18	1 lb 6 oz Salt Pork @ 1 1/2	1 1/2
" 2	2 1/2 lbs Beef	15
" 4	Cash for 1/4 Lard	1 1/4
" 25	1 lb meat per 1 lb	25
" 28	6 1/2 lbs Beef	39
" 30	6 1/2 lbs Beef	39
Dec 1	1 lb meat per 1 lb	25
" 5	5 lbs Beef @ 6	30
" 2	1 lb 6 oz Salt Pork @ 1 1/2	1 1/2
" 4	1 lb 6 oz Salt Pork @ 1 1/2	1 1/2
" 7	Cash paid for 1/4 Lard	1 1/4
" 10	1 lb 6 oz Salt Pork @ 1 1/2	1 1/2
" 11	1 lb 6 oz Salt Pork @ 1 1/2	1 1/2



*The Great Fire of January 13, 1914*





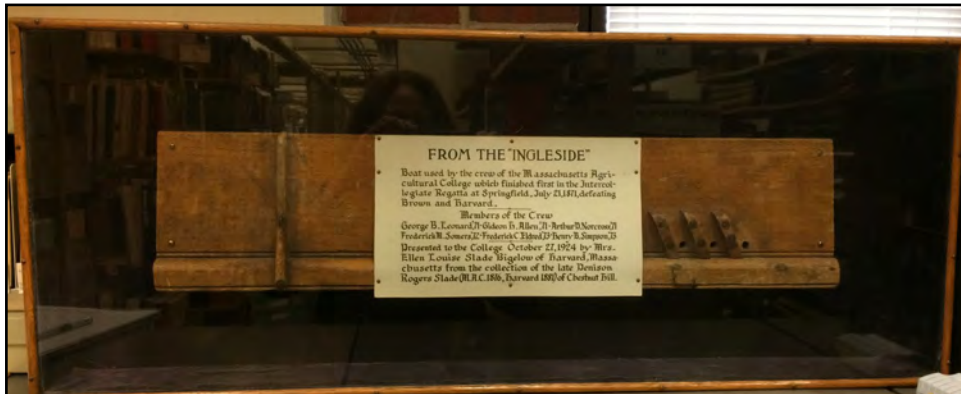
*New Flynt Store 1915*



*Bicentennial Parade passing by Monson Bowling Alley 1960*

## UPDATE ON LAST QUARTER'S STORY

Since our last newsletter, the Archivist at UMass discovered this piece of the original 1871 shell used by the Crew during that famous Regatta.



*University Photograph Collection. Special Collections and University Archives, UMass Amherst Libraries*

**FROM THE "INGLESIDE"**

Boat used by the crew of the Massachusetts Agricultural College which finished first in the Intercollegiate Regatta at Springfield, July 21, 1871, defeating Brown and Harvard.

Members of the Crew

George B. Leonard,<sup>71</sup> Gideon H. Allen,<sup>71</sup> Arthur D. Norcross,<sup>71</sup>  
 Frederick M. Somers,<sup>72</sup> Frederick C. Eldred,<sup>73</sup> Henry B. Simpson,<sup>73</sup>  
 Presented to the College October 27, 1924 by Mrs.  
 Ellen Louise Slade Bigelow of Harvard, Massachusetts from the collection of the late Denison Rogers Slade (M.A.C. 1876, Harvard 1881) of Chestnut Hill.

**NEW ACQUISITIONS**



**Men's Cap from the E. J. Lyons Store, Monson, Mass.**  
*Local auction purchase*



**Photographs of Welcome Home Day Parade 1946; Bicentennial Parade; Memorial Day & Summerfest Parades; C. F. Church Co.; Dave Grieve Park dedications. Letter from Monson Circle of King's Daughters & Sons.**  
*Donation from Monson resident*





**Fay Family Memorabilia; C. F. Church Co., Springfield Moulders and First Church paperwork; Gaouette photographs. Black and white photograph of early Monson Day Care class on Main Street.**

*Donation from Wilbraham resident*



**Howe Family Diaries & Bible, Monson Academy Books, Annual Town Reports, School Committee Reports, Valuation and Taxes Report, Library Catalogues, Land Deed**

*Private Purchase*

### ITEMS FOR SALE

#### 1960 History of Monson Book CD

The History of Monson, written in 1960 for the Bicentennial of the formation of the town, is now available in PDF format on a CD.

If you are currently a member of the Monson Historical Society, the fee to obtain the CD is \$15.00. For non-members, the fee is \$20.00 which includes 1 year free membership and our quarterly newsletter "The Historian". Shipping costs for the CD are included in the fee.

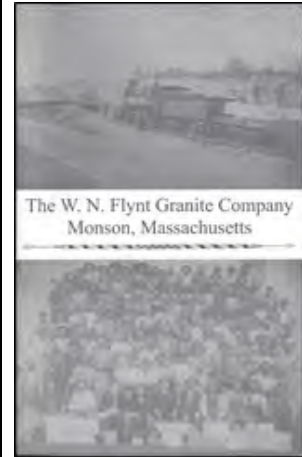


Please indicate whether you are a member or not and mail your request to:

Monson History CD  
Monson Historical Society, Inc.  
1 Green Street, Suite 1  
Monson, MA 01057

Please include your email address to receive newsletter.

Make your check payable to: *Monson Historical Society, Inc.*



Also available is the 12-page booklet about the W.N. Flynt Granite Co. Cost is \$3.00 which includes shipping.

### WHERE IS THIS?

#### Answer to Last Month's "Where Is This?"

The photograph was taken from Green Street looking south. The pond boats were sailing on the pond which was formed behind the horseshoe dam at the corner of Green Street and Main Street. The dam was destroyed in the Flood of 1955 and was never rebuilt and, subsequently, the pond disappeared.



#### This Month's "Where Is This?"

Where was this building in Monson and what was it's purpose?



**\*\* ARE YOU UP TO DATE ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES?? \*\***

Membership renewals occur on May 1st of each year and are good through April 30th of the following year. (For example, a "5/1/2018" membership means you have paid from 5/1/2017 to 4/30/2018). If you receive our newsletter through postal mail, please check the date on your mailing label. If your label reads "5/1/2018 (or later)", your membership is **current**. If your label reads "5/1/2017 or earlier", you need to renew your membership to be up-to-date.

If you receive your newsletter via email, please check the subject matter. If it reads "**Monson Historical Society Newsletter**", your membership is **current**. If it reads "**Monson Historical Society Newsletter/Renewal**", your membership has expired and you will need to update it. Please read the text in your email for renewal instructions.

**Please consider taking the time today to complete the membership form and mail it back, along with your check, to the address listed on the form. Your membership will be updated.**

If you receive the newsletter via email, please be aware that all newsletters will be forwarded from this email address, info@monsonhistoricalsociety.comcastbiz.net, with the subject matter regarding "Monson Historical Society".

**MONSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (for newsletter) \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate a membership category and enclose a check made out to "Monson Historical Society, Inc."  
**(Note: Membership renewal is May 1st of each year)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Individual \$10<sup>00</sup>**                      \_\_\_\_\_ **Family \$20<sup>00</sup>**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Life Membership \$250<sup>00</sup>**

**Return to: Membership, One Green Street— Suite One, Monson, MA 01057**

Any information you provide us will be kept in strict confidence and will never be given out or sold at any time.

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

- Lord Nicholas Monson—Stratford-On-Avon, UK (Honorary)
- Silvana Monson—Stratford-On-Avon, UK (Honorary)
- Mary Gelezunas—Monson, MA

*And as always, we **THANK YOU** for your continued support of the Monson Historical Society!*