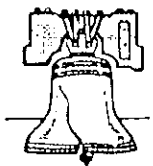


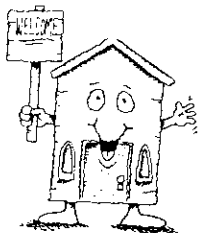
The Groton Historical Society



NEWSLETTER

GROTON, VERMONT

FALL 1993



Welcome, Visitors!

Fall Foliage Day Open House at the Historic House was a huge success. Over 400 people signed the Guest Book and there were others who did not sign. Many favorable comments were heard about

the interior decorating and furnishing of the House and many people enjoyed looking over the old photographs of Groton's past.

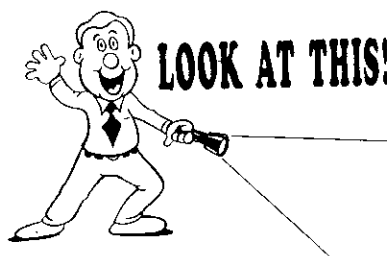
Many thanks to those volunteers who "maned their stations" as hosts and hostesses during the day. The Groton Historical Society has much to be proud of in this old house!

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As of January 1, 1994 the annual dues for membership in the Society will be \$5.00. New members are always welcomed. WE meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 9:00 AM, at the House.

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We are starting to see street and road signs springing up here and there around town. This is of special interest to the Society because last year a committee of the Society, consisting of Peggy Smith, Dale Brown, Norma Hosmer, Alice Goodine, Raymond Page and Deane Page met with the Postmaster, Tom Page and provided names for all our streets and roads.

There are 84 roads in town and 19 at Lake Groton.

We expect to see more signs in place before winter.

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(Excerpts from Mr. Glover's Groton)

DAIRYING INDUSTRY

In the beginning of the dairy industry the family with one to three cows saved the butter not needed for family consumption until an amount was accumulated sufficient to be taken to the nearest store, there to be bartered for family necessities which could not be home produced.

It is obvious that all those who had only one cow, or even two cows if there were several children in the family, would have little surplus butter and cheese to exchange for some of the extra comforts of life that could not be produced by home industry. Such things would have to come from the barter of other products of the farm, principally grain or from potash and pearl ash made from the abundance of ashes then produced on every farm in the process of land clearing.

The farmer with a larger dairy generally followed the pattern outlined above, especially during the lean season; but in the lush season from June to October he stored his butter in firkins, generally called butter tubs, made by himself or by the neighborhood cooper. The butter was covered by a cloth kept continually wet with brine, and stored in the cleanest, coolest place in the cellar. In the late fall when a sizable quantity of preserved butter had accumulated, the farmer would take the lot to a local buyer, usually the local merchant who acted as agent for buyers in Boston or other cities.

As time went on a very few of the more prosperous farmers may have loaded their accumulated butter, cheese, and

perhaps wool or other products on a "pung" and taken it to Boston or Portsmouth in the late fall or early winter to sell directly to dealers and thus save the middleman's profit. Moreover in these places they could buy household necessities cheaper than at home. Roberts Darling, who lived on the Carruth place by the Darling Fourcorners is said by his great-granddaughter, the late Delia Darling Honey, to have handled his products in this way, going yearly to Portsmouth. With the advent of two railroad lines to Wells River in the fifties, these long overland trips were discontinued.

The practice of storing butter made during the most productive season and selling it in the fall continued to some extent as late as the eighties, but with the coming of the railroad to Groton, and the gradual increase in the amount of butter produced, most farmers began to abandon the local buyers by making weekly shipments of their butter, still packed in firkins (which were not returnable), to commission merchants in Lowell, Boston or Manchester, N. H. The manufacture of print butter began in the eighties and to the end of the century this was the form in which most Groton butter found its way to market. The usual procedure was to make individual pound or half-pound prints with a butter mold on which were carved various devices, the most common being a sheaf of wheat and an ear of corn. Each print was wrapped in special paper and placed on a shelf holding six pounds of butter. These filled shelves were placed in butter boxes, generally called trunks, which held four, five or six shelves each. Rarely was a trunk made which held more than six shelves, or thirty-six pounds, this weight being about the limit for easy handling. These solidly made trunks were returned to the farmer and used again and again until damaged beyond repair. The period of years around the turn of the century saw more butter made and shipped than in any other period in the town's history, and most of it was prepared for the market in this way.



