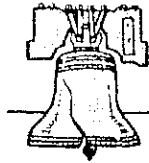


The Groton Historical Society



NEWSLETTER

GROTON, VERMONT

SPRING 1989

NO. 4



GROTON'S BICENTENNIAL: 1789 - 1989

On October 20, 1789 Governor Thomas Chittenden affixed his signature to the Groton Charter and the Town of Groton, Vt. officially came into being. Of the 75 names on the petition for the Grant only 13 appeared on the Charter. They are as follows: Thomas Butterfield, Jonathan Child, Thomas Chittenden, John Fasset, Jr., Benjamin Fay, Robert Johnson, Nehemiah Lovewell, Sr., Nehemiah Lovewell, Jr., John Page, Jr., Joshua Stanton, Eliakim Stoddard, John Strong, and John Taplin.

Of the well-known names on the Charter and not on the Grant were those of Ethan Allen and Moses Robinson, later Governor and United States Senator.

We are now in the midst of our "200th Birthday"!

The Board of Selectmen have appointed a committee to plan our celebration; consisting of: Dale Brown, Raymond Page and Marilyn Ruiter. Other interested people are invited to join with them in the planning. Some of the things mentioned so far are: having the Bicentennial as the theme of the Fall Foliage celebration, having an enlarged historical display on Fall Foliage Day, having a banner made to hang across Main St., having an essay writing contest among the students at Blue Mountain School.

Your ideas are welcome...contact any of the above committee members!

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Back in 1955 Waldo Glover wrote a letter to Earl Welch regarding some aspect of the town history that Glover was working on. The letter-head listed the names of the "History Commission" at that time: George Ricker, Chm., W.H. Jeffrey, Sec., Mrs. Harry Hosmer, Trea., B.L. Brown, Mrs. J.K. White, Mrs. George Dimock, C.E. Ricker, Rita McAllister, Mrs. Hazen White, John French, S.N. Welch, Mrs. Henry Goodine, *Charles C. F. 1989*



WHERE DID GROTON GET
IT'S NAME?

* * *

Excerpts from "Mr.
Glover's Groton."

"Among the papers of H. N. Welch appears the following statement: 'The most plausible reason (for the name of the town) is, that Governor Chittenden gave it that name in honor of Thomas Butterfield, the first grantee of the town, whose grandfather was taken prisoner by the Indians at Groton, Mass., and held captive by them for some time.' The grandfather to whom Welch refers was Samuel Butterfield of Chelmsford, Mass., who with others was sent to the defense of Groton, Mass. against the Indians in 1704, where he was captured, held more than fourteen months, and cruelly treated. As a boy, Thomas Butterfield would have often heard the story of his grandfather's captivity and heroism at Groton. Over and over again the name Groton would have been stamped on his memory. Hence it is reasonable to suppose that he, the principal of the grant, by the consent of his fellow grantees, if not by the desire of Governor Chittenden himself, would have been given the honor of naming the new town. Why not give it the name which had been so much a part of the family heritage?

This of course cannot be proven, but as yet no other reason for the name seems as probable."

* * * * *

As we plan Groton's Bicentennial Program, remember that the Vermont Bicentennial is coming right along behind it. We should be thinking about this also.

Your ideas for this "Home Coming" celebration are requested!



AN INTERESTING FOOTNOTE TO THE
HISTORY OF THE "GROTON CHARTER"!

Mrs. Ardell Vance had hired Clarence Welch to clean out some old boxes and papers from the upstairs rooms in her house (now the Lauzon house). She wanted everything up there taken to the dump. An old trunk full of "old looking" papers caught Clarence's eye and he set it aside to look over later. He never got around to looking at everything in the trunk, & when he moved to Florida he left the trunk with his sister, Josephine Bailey. She examined some of the papers and came across what looked like an important document. She called her sister, Peggy Smith, who came over to see it. Peggy realized that it was the original Town Charter. She reported this to the Board of Selectman, which authorized her to have it restored and preserved.

The Charter, which is now hanging on the wall of the town clerks office, came "within inches" of being hauled to the dump and burned up.

The people in Jericho who did the restoration said that very few Towns in Vermont have their original charters....most were lost or destroyed, as our's almost was.

Thanks to Clarence, Josephine & Peggy!

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