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# GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter

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Volume 18 Issue 1

Groton, Vermont 05046

Winter 2005

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## GROTON RECORDS ON THE WEB

<http://homepages.together.net/~jdresser/GrotonHistSoc.html>



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### OFFICERS

President	Richard Brooks
Vice President	Deane Page
Secretary	Diane Kreis
Treasurer	Joan Haskell
Web Site Editor	James Dresser

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*The census records from 1790 to 1930 and the burial records for the Groton cemeteries are available on the internet maintained by the Societies web site editor Jim Dresser.*

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Get on your computer and surf the net to find out who was here in Groton for the population censuses of 1790 to 1930, the last year available to the public. You can also find the records of those buried in Groton, in the old village cemetery, West Groton cemetery, Groton/Peacham cemetery, Darling cemetery, and several others. Some lists of those serving in the military during wartime are also posted. If you find omissions or errors, please let us know. Thanks.

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### MEETING SCHEDULE

(second Tuesday)

March through November  
10 AM at the Peter Paul House,  
1203 Scott Hwy.

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## THE GROTON VILLAGE CEMETERY

By N. Dale Brown

In the beginning, a glacial river from the ice age, entered a lake established by the Wells River Valley. It's delta formed a sandy plateau on the land; later to be known as the Groton Village Cemetery. (Research and surveys by a team of geologists from Columbia University confirmed the existence of the glacial phenomena in 1934. I was fortunate to be the rod man on the project and thus obtain this information). Thousands of years later, the delta became consecrated in 1839 when Jesse Heath, a Revolutionary War Soldier, was the first person to be interred in this sandy loam area.

Prior to the 1780's, before Groton was settled, no deaths had been recorded in the town. It is said that Indian Joe's son-in-law, Muxa-Wuxal was buried on the point of land at Ricker's Pond, yet it is not substantiated. French armies and Indian tribes, traveling back and forth across Groton during wars and raids, left no evidence of burials on their sojourns. The diaries of Captains Wells, Wright and

Kelly mention sickness with no record of death during their march in the Groton area.

After the 1780's, Groton's earliest settlers had family grave lots and people in local districts established small graveyards. However, as the town increased in population, a major portion of Groton's inhabitants were interred at the Village Cemetery.

Before the Groton Charter was signed in October 20, 1789, a meeting in Manchester on August 13, 1787 by the town proprietors elected Ira Allen, a brother to Ethan Allen, to be moderator of the assembly and the surveyor to lay out the first division of 86 lots in the northeastern part of town. Mr. Allen was to divide the section into 100 acre lots with 3 acres added for highways. His pay was to be 17 shillings ( or \$4.75 per lot); which included the help of James Whitelaw. (I should point out that with this pay scale, Col. Allen died a pauper in 1814 at Philadelphia and was buried in an unmarked

*(Continued on page 4)*

## GROTON CEMETERY BURIAL RECORDS

A listing of persons buried in the old Groton village cemetery has been compiled by Jim Dresser and posted on the Groton Historical Society web page maintained by Jim. The address for the Web Page is in the box at the bottom of this page for those interested in visiting the site.

Included with the names of those buried in the cemetery are the dates of birth and death, and spouses or parents name when available, as well as the section and row number of the grave.

Also posted on the web page are listings for the Groton/ Peacham cemetery, the West Groton cemetery, and the Darling (Glover) cemetery.

Other family burial grounds in Groton that are listed include: Batchelder, Frost, Gray, Heath, McLaughlin, Renfrew, and Whitcher. The locations of these burial sites are described, but little information is available on the people buried there.

Work is continuing on the new Groton village cemetery and it will be posted on the web page along with the others when it is completed.

The Groton burial records are being used along with the census records to add information to the family records that were collected by Waldo F. Glover and added to by Groton Historical Society members and other family members.

Plans are for the Society to publish the family records.



### GROTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY WEB PAGE

<http://homepages.together.net/~jdresser/GrotonHistSoc.html>

grave.)

The survey started at the northeastern corner of the town, where the Peacham-Ryegate lines intersect. From this point, North-South lines were established at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  degrees east of North; parallel with the western boundary, prior to the annexation of the Harris Gore. The East-West lines of the survey were 21 degrees North of West; parallel to the Groton-Peacham lines.

After Allen and his assistant Whitelaw had completed the survey, a meeting of the charter members was called in Newbury and Lot numbers were drawn. Isaac Andueur drew lot No. 16, a portion of which became the Village Cemetery.

The southeast corner of Lot 16 started at the Groton-Ryegate line, near the north side of the Wells River. The boundary proceeded westerly on the 21 degree line for 4,653 ft. to terminate near the center of the river, south of Gerald Morse's home. Thence it turned North  $7\frac{1}{2}$  degrees a distance of 1,221 ft. to the southwest corner of Lot 17. Thence East, parallel to the southern boundary, to the

Groton-Ryegate line.

In 1798 the Vermont legislature voted a three cent per acre tax on land owners for the construction of a County road, joining the County Seats of the State. Unable to, or disinterested, Isaac Andueur's Lot 16, along with Lots 17 and 18, were sold for taxes to Ephraim Garey in 1801. Even though the land was purchased for speculation, Garey built a small cabin on the northwest corner of Lot 18. To this day old timers refer to this area as Garey Hill.

By 1802 Garey had sold the eastern half of Lot 16 to John Taisey and in 1806 the western quarter of Lot 16, that eventually included the cemetery, was deeded to Obadiah Low. His eastern border was near the Clark Hatch Brook and as mentioned previously, the western border was near the Gerald Morse Home.

Obadiah had three sons, Hosea, Ira and Henry, who lived on the farm.

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During the next 18 years, Hosea Low had purchased land on Lot 15, which later became the eastern portion of Groton Village. In this period, he was also deeded the remaining western quarter of Lot 16 and the western half of Lot 17, north of the cemetery.

The western half of Lot 17 had been sold to Jacob Hatch around 1802 by Ephraim Garey and with other contiguous land Hatch had cleared and established a hundred acre farm.

I mention the Jacob Hatch farm because Sally Morrison, a sister to Bradley Morrison was married to Jacob Hatch and Bradley was an uncle to Clark Hatch. In later years the cemetery was closely associated with this family relationship.

Sometime in April of 1830, all the land owned by Hosea Low, including his father's, was deeded to the brother Ira Low. Then in 1837 the entire estate of Ira Low was deeded to Samuel G. Clark, who established the Village Cemetery and provided the burial plot for Jesse Heath esq.. two years later.

Jesse Heath should be noted because of his association with Groton. Born in Chatham Mass. on Cape Cod, He and his father served under Benedict Arnold and Gen. Gates in the Battle of Saratoga. With his father's death and the end of his enlistment, Jesse returned home and with wife Phoebe, headed north and homesteaded by the Gloucester County Road just west of the George Ricker farm in 1781.

Three children were born in Groton: John, born in 1782; Susanna, born in June 1784 and Thomas in 1785. It is claimed that Sarah Abbot, daughter of James Abbot was the first child born in Groton in August 1784, yet two children were already living in the town. Zelpha Abbot, Sarah's mother, died six days later from child birth and became the first recorded death in Groton.

Jesse and family left the homestead in 1786 and purchased a 100 acres of the Vermont Republic Governor's land in Ryegate; later the Willis Brown farm; and raised 12 more children, all born in

*(Continued on page 6)*

Ryegate. The lot containing the Heath's homestead was repurchased during the tax venues in 1801 and in 1806 and the unused cabin was donated to the town for the first school. The farm in Ryegate, where the 12 children were born, was sold in 1820; however, he had built a home in 1807 where the George Ricker farm was located. When Jesse lived there is not known.

He held town offices, was Captain of the Militia and owned 100's of acres of land in the town after 1800. His farm in Ryegate adjoined land in Groton and the town line went through the middle of his home and it is assumed he claimed Groton as his residency.

Samuel G. Clark, the first owner of the Village Cemetery, came from Acworth, N. H. in 1822 at the age of 27, with little money. He built a tannery on Tannery Brook, near the location of the Square Front Garage, making harnesses and leather goods for the farming community. By 1824 he had purchased a carding and fulling mill from Tim walker and in 1826 Clark bought the dam, sawmill, and gristmill in back of the Baptist Church. In

1831 Clark owned the Inn, later known as Henry Goodine's Barber Shop.

In time, he was deeded Lot 55 of the Third Division along with the sawmill and dam at the outlet of Groton Pond. No record exists that claim this was a success. In addition he eventually owned a store, a potash works, several houses and thousands of acres of land.

His home for years, now owned by Ruth Putnam, sets on the brow of the hill, next to the Baptist Church. Clark was a dealer in livestock and was the first drover in town to drive flocks of poultry and livestock to the Boston market stockyards in Waltham.

Samuel Clark went on drives to Boston several times a year and on his last trip contracted typhoid fever, which proved fatal. The twenty four years of Sam's life in Groton had it's tragedies. His wife Phoebe died in childbirth three years after his arrival. Their one child, Newton Hall Clark, died 3 1/2 years after his mother's death. During Sam's second marriage to Martha Heath, they had four chil-

dren; Morris, Newton, Phoebe and Martha. Martha Jane at age seven died, three weeks prior to his death.

His estate was divided amongst the wife, Martha and Children, Morris, Phoebe and Newton. The wife's estate included the Low farm and cemetery ( Vol.. 7 pg. 119 to 123).

Morris, at age 24, passed away prior to the mother's death in 1858 and was interred on a single lot, marked with a marble monument near the high point of the village cemetery.

Martha married a second time to Calvin Clark and the remaining children, Newton and Phoebe, being minors, were assigned guardians with power-of-attorney to sell real estate. The guardians were John Roberts and Jonathan Welch.

With the death of Martha Heath Clark on May 23rd 1870, Sam Clark's estate reverted to the two remaining children. Phoebe Clark Bailey of North Haverhill, N.H. and Newton Clark of Janesville, Wisconsin. Shortly after, they deeded their vestment in the

Clark estate to Bradley Morrison of Ryegate; Vol. 9 pg. 615 & 616 dated Oct. and Nov. 1870.

Bradley Morrison was born in Groton, three years before the Morrison house was built in 1806. He built his farm and home in Ryegate around 1829, later known as the Hod James farm. In his life time he owned 100s of acres of land and property in both Groton and Ryegate. He had owned the Jesse Heath farm in Ryegate, which his son Orange G. Morrison purchased and farmed before moving back to the home place. Married to Avis Jones of Topsham, they had three children that lived; Orange G., James and Harriet, who moved to Texas with her husband.

Bradley had envisioned enlarging the burial ground and moved the home and farm buildings from the east end of the proposed new section to an adjacent 3 1/2 acre lot near the brook. This small farm was sold along with a large cemetery lot to his nephew Clark Hatch. Clark had been a caretaker and overseer of the cemetery for some time. Brad-

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ley also had plans to encompass the graveyard with a road, having the exit at the Hatch lot. However, his death preceded this plan and over the years land fill and the selling of lots banned this approach.

Bradley's wife had died 10 months before his departure in Nov. 1879 and the estate including the cemetery reverted to the two sons, Orange G. and James.

Orange G. Morrison, born in 1832, purchased the Jesse Heath Ryegate farm in 1863 and lived there until it was sold in Feb., 1889 to my great grandfather, Isaac Newton Hall Darling, a name that has been carried on for four generations. After a short time in Littleton N. H., he retired to Groton village and lived directly across from the Baptist church. The two brothers shared in estate sales until the death of James in 1889.

James J. Morrison, born in 1834, Married Alice Jennett Latta in 1867 and bought the Howard Hill farm in Groton. Three of his five children were born there; however, with his father's death in 1879, James moved back to the fam-

ily homestead in Ryegate and farmed until he passed away. The son, Orange B. Morrison was deeded the homestead.

Orange G. and Alice Janett, James' wife, continued to sell cemetery lots until Oct. 1899 when Alice gave power-of attorney to Orange G. Morrison. Until his death in July, 1912, he was the consignor of all the cemetery lots in the village.

After Orange G. Morrison's demise, the remaining heirs of Bradley Morrison; Margaret Markham, Bradley's daughter; Alice J. Morrison, James wife; and their children; Orange B. Morrison, Rose (Morrison) Welch, Hattie (Morrison) Randall and Alice (Morrison) Eastman; would sell lots, that required the signatures of all persons. As an example, Vol. 15, page 186, dated Nov. 12, 1912 indicated the complexity of the simple deed.

To alleviate this situation, Frank Page, Groton's Town Clerk at this time, arranged to have his son, Harold Page, Dr. Gordon Page's father, appointed as agent

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for the Morrison heirs in Vol. 15, page 400 and dated April 15, 1915. Harold was an undertaker in partnership with Cleon Whitehill; however, the agency was short lived because Page was a victim of the 1918 flu epidemic, which proved fatal.

William G. Welch, the husband of Rose Morrison, assumed the duties of overseer for the cemetery after Clark Hatch's death in 1912 and for the record, Fred White and his son, John continued the service of caretaker and overseer in the thirties. They became obsessed with graveyards going to local cemeteries and memorized names and dates, over the years.

In July, 1920, William Welch was made the legal attorney and given power of attorney to sell village cemetery lots. During this period when Welch was acting as power of attorney, essentially all lots were sold by 1946. The few lots on the east edge of the cemetery, some developed by fill dirt from grave excavations, were legally owned by Carrie Morrison, wife of Austin Morrison, through Probate

Court in 1927, Book 17, page 618. These lots included those sold to Frosts, Rickers, Legare, Brown and Murray. I should point out that during his short life time, Austin, a half-brother to Bradley, had sold a few lots as shown in Vol. 15 page 40, dated May, 1915.

In June of 1945, Vol 20, page 251, Burton Brown purchased all the property deeded to J.W. and A.N. Morrison from the George and Clark Hatch estate, excepting any portions of the property that had not been deeded away. The estate of Burton Brown was deeded to Newton Dale Brown in book 31, pages 161-162, July 14, 1981 and the remaining interest that Newton Brown and Janice Brown, husband and wife, had in the Village Cemetery was deeded to the Town of Groton on the 6th of July, 1993 in Book 42, pages 139-140.

Today a cemetery lot, not far from Route 302 and near the center of the burial grounds, is a grave site bounded by a granite curb and obelisks. Within these bounds are the remains of the Morri-

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sons associated with the development of the Village Cemetery. Next to this sanctuary are the family plots of his brother Timothy Morrison and sister-in-law Olive Paul. Here are the graves of Jackson, Austin, Carrie and Jane Morrison. In the Paul Lot, William G. and Rose (Morrison) Welch are interred. Alice (Morrison) was buried near her husband in the Eastman Lot.

Although the cemetery was not a municipal property, the town and subscriptions installed water in 1888, built the receiving tomb in 1893., maintained a wooden and wrought iron fence until 1953. The present granite gateway was presented by Herman Gilman, the town miller, who owned the Groton Dam for many years in the late 1800's.

Sources of information are taken from the Groton and Ryegate Land Records. The genealogies from the Groton Historical Society and History of Ryegate. Also included are vital statistic records and the book Mr. Glover's Groton.

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*Dale Brown*  
*Oct-12, 1993*

## ALL CLASS REUNION

Five years have elapsed since the last all class reunion of Groton High School Students. Plans for the quinquennial get-together on June 25th are taking shape, so mark your calendars and start making plans for celebrating with your schoolmates.

This will be a good time to catch up on what has been happening with others and to reminisce about the 'Good ole days' at Groton High. Memories are like cheese and wine, they get better with age.

The Peter Paul House, home of the Groton Historical Society, will be open for visitors on the weekend. Bring your family records with you to check the accuracy of the family history records on file at the Society. The Society is planning to publish the family records soon and it will be helpful to have them as complete and accurate as possible.

All students, teachers and friends of Groton High School are encouraged to attend. Please contact the Groton Historical Society if you have any questions or need more information.



Five years ago the Groton High School all class reunion was a huge success. Lets make 2005 even better. We'll see you there.



A U.S. Census Bureau worker operates a Hollerith Pantograph. These punch-card tabulators were first used in the 1890 census. Workers punched holes with a stylus in 3 1/4 by 6 5/8 inch cards containing 288 punching positions. Today census data is stored in computer files using optical scanning or keyboard entry. (U.S. Census Bureau photo)

## CENSUS INDEX

An alphabetical listing of the heads of families in the 1790 to 1840 censuses of Groton is available at the Peter Paul House. The listing shows the name of the heard of the family and the number of people living with the family at each census. Starting in 1850 the names of all people living with the family were recorded. The alphabetical listing of all people in the 1850 to 1930 censuses has been completed and will be available in the Peter Paul House in the summer of 2005. The age of the individual recorded at each census is given. It is interesting to note how the ages changed from census to census. Apparently people became more honest as they grew older, or maybe the older ages are in error due to aging memories. Although records may be accurately copied there is sometimes a question about the information being correct.

When you find out which census the person you are looking for was enumerated, you can check the census to find out who was living with them and who was living near them. Good luck in your searches.



Home of the Groton Historical Society built in 1840  
Purchased in 1989 and renovated by the Society  
for storing and displaying Historical records and artifacts

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