

CAMBRIDGE HARKENER

CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE OF CAMBRIDGE, VERMONT

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The 19th Amendment and Cambridge

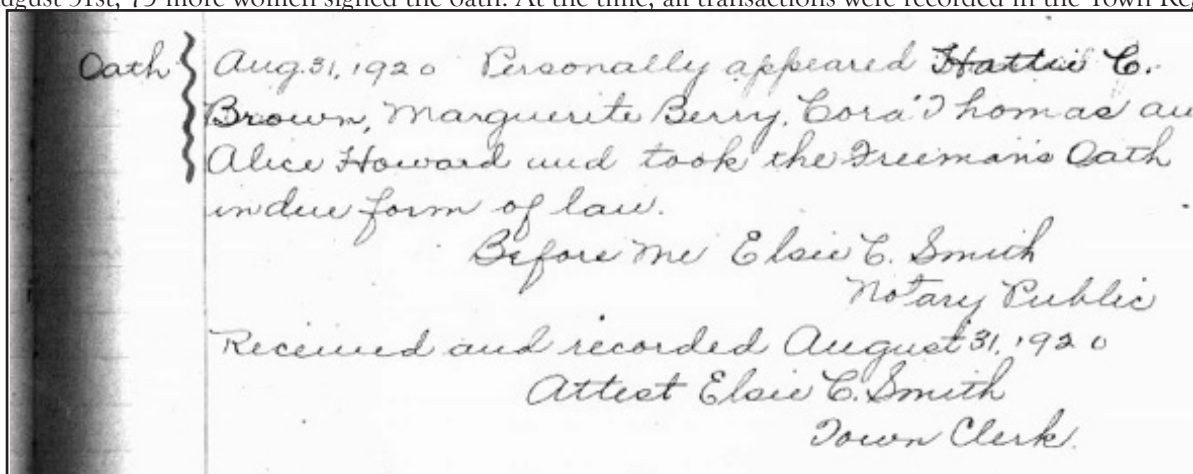
On August 18, 1920, Tennessee ratified the 19th Amendment to the Constitution giving women the right to vote - FINALLY. The Amendment reads:

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

On Thursday, August 26th, the amendment was ratified by the US Secretary of State. 5 days later, on Tuesday, August 31st, 4 women from Cambridge walked into the Town Clerk's Office and took the Freeman's Oath, becoming the first women in Cambridge who could vote in national elections.

On August 31st, 75 more women signed the oath. At the time, all transactions were recorded in the Town Registers



by hand, and looking at the writing, you can see the writer's hand getting tired. Some of the final entries are hard to read. Many of the names are familiar today - Putnam, Safford, Chase, Weston, Hitchcock. It would appear that the women of Cambridge were just waiting for the opportunity, and I'm sure they used their vote in the election of 1920 to help elect Calvin Coolidge Vice President (Warren G. Harding was elected President, but that's best ignored).

Since 1917, women in Vermont had been allowed to vote in Municipal elections. But, sadly, Vermont did not ratify the 19th Amendment until February 8, 1921 long after it was the law of the land. We think of Vermont as a progressive state, but it was not always so. However, we should be proud that the women of Cambridge did not wait for the state to catch up, but marched in to take the oath as soon as they could.

If you would like to know if your ancestress was among those first, the Cambridge Historical Society has those names as recorded in the Town Register.

Early History of Cambridge

by Ida Morgan Anderson

Beginning in 1935, Ida Morgan Anderson began serializing a column on the History of Cambridge in the *Cambridge Town Crier*. Many of our readers may remember the series of 27 Installments. With this issue of the Harkener we begin publishing those installments for a new audience on the assumption that the copyright (if it ever existed) has long since expired. We hope you will enjoy this "blast from the past."

Installment Three

John Safford and his wife Elizabeth Montague Safford came here from Bennington in 1792. He taught the first school in town, in a log house and had a class of twenty-four scholars. Later, a school-house was built on the old road between the harbor and the Boro just above where the orchard on the Merritt Morgan farm now stands. He used to tell with much pride how at the battle of Bennington some British prisoners were tied up with ropes which the women took from their bedsteads, and he, than a lad of twelve years, was set to guard them.

He was a member of the first Congregational church, a surveyor, and a man of great energy and force of character. Mr. and Mrs. Safford lived to a good old age, Mr. Safford dying at the age of ninety-two.

Madison Safford, the eighth of their ten children, married his cousin, Charlotte Montague and lived on the home farm all their lives. He followed his father's profession as a surveyor. He was a member of the Congregational church for over seventy years and was a power for good in the community. Of their five children Samuel W. remained with them on the home farm and was deacon of the Congregational church for many years. He married Ellen Hopkins. For three generations the Saffords were active in every good work, giving freely to the poor, and ardent and loyal members of their church.

Solomon Montague, son of Samuel Montague, was the fourth child born in Cambridge and lived to be ninety-one years old. When the Congregational church was raised in 1805, old settlers recalled that he stood upon the top-most timber of the belfry and sang "Sparrows Moan," of which two lines are remembered:

"When on some lonely building top,
I sit and grieve alone,"

The remainder seems to have been forgotten by everyone. He was a devout member of the church for over seventy years and for many years a deacon. He married Clara Safford. They had several children.

The first deed on record is dated April 2, 1785, Cambridge then being a part of Rutland county. In 1791 the town was set to Chittenden county, and in 1796 to Franklin county. Lamoille county was incorporated October 26, 1835.

Truman Powell, from Manchester, Vt., came to

Cambridge in 1787. The farm was given to him by his father, Martin Powell. The deed drawn up by Gideon Ormsby, justice of the peace in 1787 reads as follows: "For, and in consideration of the natural love and good will I have and bear unto my son, Truman Powell, I deed etc." Truman was a pensioner of the Revolution, and his son, Egbert, the oldest of nine children was present at the battle of Plattsburg and lived to be over ninety-six years old.

John Wires came to this town from Leicester, Mass. in 1790. In 1797 he married Anna Walbridge and bought a farm on which he passed the remainder of his life. In the war of 1812 the town sent a company of sixty men under Captain (afterwards Colonel) John Wires to Plattsburg, among them were John Warner, Deacon Solomon Montague, Hiram Hopkins and other leading citizens. He also held office in the home militia, was high sheriff of Franklin county for twenty years and held other positions of trust. Of fourteen children, the youngest, Harlow, remained on the homestead.

Abner Brush from Huntington, Long Island, came here about 1790 and first located at the north part of the town. Later he moved to Cambridge Boro where he worked at the tailors trade till 1802 and built the house where his fifth son, Salmon, was born. From 1802 till 1805 he kept a small store, but tiring of that he turned his large house into a hotel to which it was well adapted. It is one of the oldest houses in town. Salmon Brush began the practice of medicine in 1833 and married Seviah Lovegrove in 1835. Of their five children, Edwin R. studied medicine and had a large practice.

Jonah Brewster of Bennington was one of the early settlers and is said to have cleared the first land where the village of Jeffersonville now stands. Here, near Brewster river named in his honor, he lived until his death in 1833. Five of his eight children settled in town.

Robert Cochran, from Bennington, settled in the eastern part of the town and reared a family of thirteen children. Robert, his second son, born in 1790 served in the war of 1812, resided here till 1840 and then went west.

Levi Atwood came from Massachusetts in 1794 and located in the northern part of the town. A grandson, Oscar Atwood graduated from the University of Vermont and became superintendent of public education at Plattsburg, N.Y.



Three brothers, William, Ezra and Ebenezer Mudgett came from Ware, N.H., in 1785 and settled in the western part of the town. The fifth generation is still living on the farm William settled.

Nathaniel Read from Massachusetts came here in 1800 and settled on a farm later owned by his grandson, Silas Read. He held many town offices and reared a family of eleven children.

Ira Morgan, from Pownal, Vt., came here in 1800 and settled near Jeffersonville. He married Mary Barber and after her death in 1813 he married Mary Phillips. He had four grandchildren. A grandson, Dr. James B. Morgan, was a well known physician. A great-grandson, Dr. Rollo G. Reynolds, is principal of the Horace Mann School, of Teachers College, of Columbia University.

Daniel Blaisdell, wife and little son, and brother Jonathan, from Ware, N.H came to Cambridge on horseback, by way of marked trees, in the fall of 1796. They settled in the northern part of the town. Daniel raised a family of eleven children and died at the age of ninety. Jonathon had a family of seven children and died at seventy. Monroe, his fifth son is said to have been the first one to introduce pure bred Jersey cattle into the town of Fletcher.

Ephraim Fullington from Raymond N.H., came

to this town in 1796, and located on the farm later owned by his sons, Bradbury and John T., where he lived until his death at the age of seventy-four years. Ten of his twelve children reached middle age.

Joseph Gallup came here in 1796 from Rhode Island and purchased thirty acres of land. This small farm he gradually increased until at his death he owned seven hundred acres. He raised a family of eleven children.

These are a few of the earliest settlers. In a booklet written by Rev. Edwin Wheelock he says:

"These men of heroic memory constituted a noble community. Their long lives and general prosperity can be traced to their industrious and sober habits, to their Christian character and to their virtuous and exemplary methods of personal and social life. No litigation or angry law-suits disturbed the harmony of their neighborhood or interrupted their friendship. Such was the general character of the men who laid the foundation of this town, and to them and their influence for good, this town is indebted for this large prosperity. They and others like them bore the burdens of the early days of this community, erected our churches, built the schoolhouses and supported the ministers and school teachers with remarkable liberality.

Church Union - A Story

The village was used to divisions. Although most of it lay along a half mile of street, one end had always fought the other. It had been years before they had a town hall because each end insisted it be located in their section. For years they had maintained two schools, until someone left money to endow an academy located somewhere near the dividing line. The Methodists had headquarters in the north end and the Congregationalists held sway in the south. In the matter of religion, the division was not altogether geographic. Finally, after years of fighting, the town hall had been built in the center of the Town and the academy had settled the school row. The two churches continued active competition. Then, through death and removals, the Methodists found it difficult to keep things going. They had to be helped from the church organization. The Congregationalists were not too flourishing and gradually the idea grew that the two should join forces. After many sessions a plan was agreed on. One of the first things undertaken was a much advertised Union supper. It was to be held at the Congs because they had a better kitchen. That there was an unusual turnout, and even the generous amount of food supplied was hardly more than enough to go around. Uncle Tommy Stevens, who attended neither church, except when supper was to be had at a nominal sum, had eaten all he could gather, and was washing it down with this fourth cup of coffee. As he finished it, and sucked in his mustache, he observed; "Wal, they say, 'In union there is stren'th,' But I can't see it's affected this coffee none."



Upcoming Programs

The CHS is on vacation until March, but we have already lined up several programs for 2020 - The Histories of the 55+ Club, Cambridge High School, the 2nd Congregational Church, and more. We are still planning our August Chicken BBQ, so keep August 12, 2020 open. We'll tell you more in the next issue.

Cambridge Historical Society
PO Box 16
Jeffersonville, VT 05464



It's a new year and time to think about renewing your membership in the Cambridge Historical Society. The renewal notices will be going out soon but you can get a jump on it by filling out the attached membership form and returning it with your dues. The Society relies on its membership for operating costs as well as pies (you'll be hearing from us in August about that). If you are a Life Member, of course, no dues are necessary, but an additional donation would be appreciated and put to good use.

This Newsletter in one of the perks of membership, so to continue receiving The Harkener renew your membership, and THANK YOU.

Membership Application/Renewal

Please complete this form and mail to: Cambridge Historical Society
P.O. Box 16
Jeffersonville, Vt 05464

New

Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

Number

Street

Town

State

Zip

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Membership Category

Individual \$15.00

Family \$25.00

Business \$25.00

Please consider becoming a:

Patron \$500.00

Benefactor \$1,000.00+

If you have suggestions about program topics or have some great ideas for fundraisers,
please let us know by listing your ideas below.
