

Mussel Ridge News

*A Free Publication of the Mussel Ridge Historical Society
Owls Head, Maine
Spring 2016 ~ Issue 30*



Selections from the book “The Coastal Town of Owls Head, Maine” by *Edward Wayman Coffin...*

After 1760 it was not unusual for a settler to occupy his choice of land for five or ten years before being financially able to purchase the property. Others claimed ownership by right of occupancy.¹

Cyrus Eaton noted in his history of Thomaston, Maine that probably John Rendell family came to Owls Head about the year 1770, “Probably about the same time William Heard from New Hampshire, with his brother James fixed his residence at Ash Point, next to Nathaniel Crockett....”²

In 1789 Benjamin Webb of Boston came to Thomaston, Maine and set up a dry goods business. Finding the trade rather dull, Webb took up the practice of medicine under the guidance of a local doctor, Ezekiel G. Dodge. In 1806, Webb moved to the Rendell house near Owls Head Point where he kept a store and tavern and sometimes boarded town paupers. In 1813 Eaton writes that Webb departed for Ohio.³

Around 1809, a blacksmith, Joshua Adams, came to Owls Head where he worked in the trade. With a sharp eye for opportunities he rapidly acquired property and ran a tavern and general store. He is said to have built the first vessel in Owls Head. Adams died in 1829. That he prospered in this bleak wilderness is evident by the inventory of his estate, which was listed on three and one half pages and totaled \$25,993.⁴

What I find interesting about this man is that he not only owned shares in the eight vessels along with 218 acres of land with buildings, but he was a trader of some note. We find in his general store at Owls Head Harbor,

77 gal. rum worth \$32.93

30 gal. gin

20 bushels of salt worth \$9.11

64 gal. molasses at \$17.41

96 lbs. candles

14 gal. sperm oil worth \$8.40

140 lbs. tobacco

18 gal. wine

along with 576 yards of cotton shirting, 4 overcoats and 8 vests plus a large assortment of household goods.

The Adams farm was equipped with 2 wagons, one chaise and harness worth \$80 and harness at \$50 with a sleigh and harness \$20, one horse \$70, one yoke of oxen \$40, 4 cows \$40 and 2 shoats.

¹ Alan Taylor, *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors*, page 25

² Cyrus Eaton, *History of Thomaston, Rockland and South Thomaston, Maine*, vol. 1, page 459

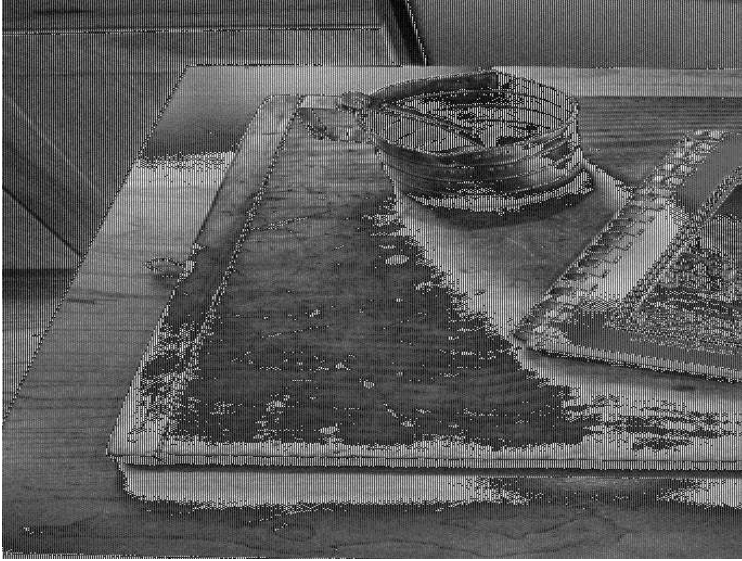
³ *Ibid*, page 182

⁴ *Lincoln County Probate Court*, vol. 31, page 129-133.

See page three of this newsletter to see how you can purchase the newly released reprinting!!

2nd Printing of the Owl's Head Cookbook


In 1994, in order to raise money for the equipping of the kitchen in the new Owl's Head Community Building, the K.A.M.P. committee (a/k/a the Kitchen and Meeting Room People) gathered together all of the old time recipes from "our town's most notable cooks" and put them into a cookbook entitled *A book of Recipes from Owl's Head, Maine*.



In this one cookbook, you could find original recipes for the baked beans and chicken pies which were the main stay of many of our fund raising efforts to support improvements to our school, fire station, and the Grange Hall. Also included in this cookbook were the original old time recipes for home made donuts and biscuits, clam, fish, corn and shrimp chowders, haddock, hake and halibut dinners, lobster stew, newburg, and all sorts of pies, including Maine's famous blueberry pie. Needless to say, the cookbook sold "like hotcakes" and soon afterwards, it was out of print.

Now, the Mussel Ridge Historical Society is proud to announce that it is making arrangements with some of the original K.A.M.P. Members to have the original cookbook reprinted. We hope to have the books available for sale soon.

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“The Coastal Town of Owls Head, Maine”

By

Edward Wayman Coffin

The Coastal Town
of
OWLS HEAD, MAINE



In 2004 Edward W. Coffin, a long time resident of Owls Head, Maine, published his history book, *The Coastal Town of Owl's Head, Maine*. It took him over four years to research his book and put together all of the old pictures and stories he thought were important to preserve.

The Mussel Ridge Historical Society is proud to announce that it has 100 copies of Mr. Coffin's book for sale. This is your chance to own a brand new improved edition of his book. It will make a perfect gift for any occasion for a family or friend who is interested in the history of our area.

All proceeds from the sale of this book will go to the Mussel Ridge Historical Society to help preserve our Town's history, including the renovation and maintenance of the Grange Hall, the one room Village school house on N. Shore Drive and the Old Homestead on Ash Point Drive.

Books will be available at all of our summer events and on Wednesday afternoons when the Old homestead is open for visitors. Or you may order your book(s) by filling in the order form below and sending it along with your check made payable to: The Mussel Ridge Historical Society.

c/o Mr. Rodney B. Weeks
43 Lucia Beach Road
Owls Head, ME 04854

ORDER FORM

I would like to order _____ copies of *The Coastal Town of Owls Head, Maine* at \$32.00 each (tax included but not mailing costs) Total of check _____

Name: _____

Mail Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone Number: _____

MUSSEL RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUNTEER - MEMBERSHIP - DONATION FORM

DATE _____

Name _____ Phone 1 _____ Phone 2 _____

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Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

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Our newsletter is sent to everyone on our email list and we don't share addresses with anyone.

___ *I WOULD LIKE TO HELP PRESERVE THE HISTORY OF OWL'S HEAD IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS*

- ___ Develop programs ___ Help with fundraisin ___ Help on restoring the Homestead
___ Help save the one room schoolhouses (Grange Hall & Village School Across from the Fire Station)
___ Bring food for events or sales ___ Help with events ___ Have lawn sale
___ Staff the Homestead ___ Have truck ___ I have pictures that could be scanned
___ Research. I am particularly interested in the following areas _____
___ Have talent/service I could donate _____
___ I would like to help in another way. (Please tell us how) _____
___ I have historical items I might like to donate or loan

___ *I AM JOINING THE MRHS AT THE FOLLOWING LEVEL & MY CHECK IS ATTACHED*

___ 1 Year Regular (\$5) ___ 1 Year Sustaining (\$25) ___ Lifetime (\$100)

___ *I AM MAKING A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO THE MRHS FOR _____ & MY CHECK IS ATTACHED*

I WOULD LIKE THE FUNDS TO GO TO THE FOLLOWING AREA

- ___ General Operations ___ One-Room Schoolhouses (Grange Hall & Village School)
___ Old Homestead ___ As the MRHS thinks is best ___ MRHS Endowment Fund

Signature of Person Accepting the Form _____

Mussel Ridge Historical Society, PO Box 133, Owl's Head, ME 04854 musselridge@earthlink.net

President, Kay Dodge Telephone 596-6879

VILLAGE KIDS

It's been said, "It takes a village to raise a child". In the 1940s and '50s children of every age played outside, sometimes alone, right up until bedtime. Not unusual for a child to be put out after breakfast and told to come home in time to greet their father when he got in from work. Supper was a time for all the family to be together and the youngsters were expected to help with clean up. Afterwards, they were allowed back outside with never a worry for their personal safety or of them getting into mischief. All the neighbors just naturally helped keep an eye on the kids where ever they were.

MOVIE MAGIC

Way back in 1939 Hollywood studios produced two motion pictures per day. A guy and his gal could easily take in a double-feature every day of the week and not watch the same one twice! By the way, average price for tickets to Gone with the Wind in 1939 was just 23 cents.

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A SIXTY YEAR OLD?

These were submitted by Gene Barron. He says we might remember the phrase but will have difficulty remembering the words to finish it. Our editor, staff reporter and ad. exec. all agree.

"The story you are about to see is true. The names have been changed to _____."

Alka Seltzer used a boy with a tablet on his head as it's Logo. What's the boy's name? _____

What takes a licking and keeps on ticking? _____.

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answers on back page

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Ice Cream Social to Celebrate Owl's Head Schools

The Mussel Ridge Historical Society is holding an Ice Cream Social to celebrate the schools of Owl's Head on Sunday, May 15th from 2-4pm in the downstairs room of the Owl's Head Community Building (224 Ash Point Dr.). Please come and experience the opportunity make your ice cream sundae just the way you like it and visit with your friends and neighbors.

Marsha Bird will give a brief talk about her experience in teaching in local schools and there will be an opportunity for attendees to share stories from their favorite school years.

There will be displays of early Owl's Head Schools and you can help make these displays even more interesting by bringing photos and memorabilia you may have as well. A scanner will be available to make copies of materials.

The event is free and all are welcome. The Mussel Ridge Historical Society is committed to preserving information and artifacts concerning the history of Owl's Head, the Mussel Ridge Islands and their families.

If you would like further information about the MRHS or the Ice Cream Social, please call Kay Dodge at 596-6879. If you have stories or pictures to share but are not able to attend, you may email them to musselridge@earthlink.net.



MAMMA SAID

Everyone remembers Mother reminding us to “Be sure to say please and thank you, Look both ways before crossing the street, Don’t drink from the milk jug, get a cup!, Let your little sister (or brother) win once in a while –Save your money for a rainy day”. We could fill this page with her exhortations. Then, there are those times when she imparted a bit of cock-eyed wisdom that was so unique, we actually treasure those words as fond memories. Well— maybe not fond memories.

Marsha Bird says her grandmother would insist it was about to rain, even if the skies were clear and the sun was shining. When it did finally get around to rain, perhaps several days later, she’d declare, “See! I told you it was going to rain.”

Rick Carafelli’s Grandma had an apple tree that seemed capable of producing only green, inedible fruit. Whenever she saw Rick eyeing the tree as if he was about to sample a couple, she warned him with, “Stay away from them apples. You bloat up like a poison toad!”

Yvonne Blakeslee remembers her Mom had two standard wise cracks that were always dragged out when she was dressing for a date. If Yvonne asked about the time, Mom glanced at the non-existent watch on her wrist and replied, “Two hairs past a freckle”, which was really no help at all. Another remark, that was neither helpful nor funny, was in response to, “How do I look, Mom?” To which her mother would answer, “Good enough to pass in the dark.”

Sonia Furstrand says her Mom always used “My word!” as a universal phrase letting her body language and tone of voice express everything from astonishment to fear to disapproval and disgust. Sonia admits it has become a regular part of her life, too.

Many of our readers confessed to saying to their child, “Someday you’ll thank me for being so mean.” And they were quickly reminded of all the comeback answers to that, often sounding just like their own words a few years earlier.

Ray Stevens, noted song writer, singer, and comedian, mentioned on a recent TV show that his mother told him, “If you fall out of that tree and break both legs, don’t come crawling to me!”

Sometimes **it seemed Mother was intentionally baiting us** by asking questions such as, “Do you know what time it is?” when we came in too late. Or how about the question, “Do I look Stupid?” when we’re trying to put one over on her, like saying the “F” on our report card was a hastily scribbled “A”. Of course, everyone has been subjected to, “Now, give me your honest opinion...”

Editor’s note: Since we first announced the title of this article, we’ve had a lot of responses. We’re still waiting for your Mother’s, (or Grandmother’s) memorable lines to be in the August NEWS.

SIGNS OF LIFE

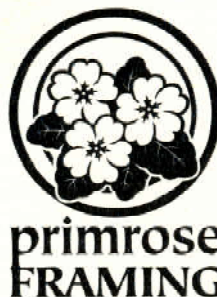
We were saddened to learn of the passing of Donald Chisholm, better known as “Bud”. Those of us who hadn’t gotten to know him, have heard of his devotion to his family, love for his community and his never ending spirit of volunteerism. Owl’s Head is fortunate to have several of his descendants living in our community.

The town also has other signs of his life, literally. The green “Welcome to Owl’s Head” sign at the town line was made by Bud, as was the kiosk and the sign over the door at the Community Building. The “Merle B. Foster” memorial sign at the intersection of Ash Point Drive and South Shore Drive is another product of his artistic skills. There are probably other signs he’s made that we’re unaware of. He will be missed, but certainly not out of our thoughts as we go about our days in the town he loved being a part of.



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SPRING IN MAINE A HUNDRED YEARS AGO (1916)

Every family in the country was nervously keeping an eye on the war in Europe, hoping for an end to the fighting. Unfortunately, within a year the U.S. joined in what would become World War I, sending more than two million young men across the big pond.

Maine women were still struggling to gain the right to vote in the upcoming Presidential election between incumbent Woodrow Wilson and Supreme Court Justice, Charles E. Hughes. The ladies would be required to “sit this one out” but in 1917 they would be successful in securing a referendum vote to amend the state constitution allowing full suffrage for women.

Over the past few years New England apple trees had been infected with apple scab and the orchard managers were trying out new techniques and sprays to bring it under control. One practice was plowing under the old leaves before the end of May. Children and women not already employed were hired, (at 12-15 cents per hour) to rake the leaves away from the tree trunks and into the path of the plow. This proved to be quite successful as it prevented the young blossoms from coming in contact with the previous years’ infection.

The one room schoolmasters were breathing a sigh of relief as their older students, some well beyond their teens, left the class to attend to spring chores on the farms and fishing vessels.

Folks in the hamlets of Ingraham’s Hill, Ash Point, Owl’s Head village and adjacent neighborhoods were quietly considering the idea of seceding from the Town of South Thomaston. School budgets and road maintainance were among the many reasons for such discussions. It will be another five years before the Maine State Legislature grants a charter for the Town of Owl’s Head, Maine.

FROM THE DUSTY GARDENER’S NOTEBOOK

Dusty’s favorite Trail signs - “He who plants a tree plants a hope”. —Lucy Larcom

“A gardener is one for whom the prospect of the future is not threatening, but happy.” —Ann Morrow Lindbergh

“To plant a garden is to believe in Tomorrow”—anonymous

“In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks” —John Muir

“Of all the roads you travel, make sure a few of them are dirt.” Anonymous

“What kind of footprint will you leave?” —(found on the inside of a Timberland Boots box)

“Play in the dirt because life is too short to always have clean fingernails” —(anonymous)

Answers to: Smarter Than a Sixty Year Old— Protect the Inocent, Speedy, Timex watch,
Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobbaco, “Chocolate” dragged out to sound like “Chaawwklet”

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