



Colburn House
582-7080

Arnold Expedition Historical Society

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NEWSLETTER NO. 49

OCTOBER 15 1981

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF AEHS

OUR 13th ANNUAL MEETING

As usual our annual meeting was held at the Colburn House on June 28 1981. With about 30 people present this was presided over by President Arthur Griffiths. It was a perfect day in June and we convened on the second floor of the barn with gentle breezes blowing through the open doors.

The Secretary and Treasurer's reports were read and accepted. Mention was made by the Secretary of a recently published book which guaranteed a complete genealogy of the Colburn family, authored by Beatrice Bayley of Penn. However, upon hearing this, one of our members offered her advice against purchasing this book, saying this same author has professed to do just such complete genealogies on several families and found to be most disappointing to other buyers.

Arthur Griffiths reported on the Bigelow Preservation and Crosby Milliman updated us on the sign project. Arthur also reported on the recent "dig" which was held only a week before our annual meeting at the Chain-of-Ponds. We have a detailed account of this within this newsletter.

A motion was made to elect a third Vice-President. This was seconded, discussed, and voted upon; a unanimous vote was to postpone any action on this matter.

In the absence of the Nominating Committee Chairman, Audrey Hanks read the slate of officers to be presented for voting. This was accepted, voted upon and passed; the Secretary was instructed to cast one vote for the election of the following officers for the ensuing year:

President- Arthur Griffiths

1st Vice-President- Dr. Victor C. Brum

2nd Vice-President- Crosby Milliman

Treasurer- Robert Cunningham

Secretary- Mrs. Jannice Baker

Directors to serve 3 year terms :

John Skillin - Dixfield, Me.

Joe Brown- Sudbury Mass.

Gene Lockyer- Farmingdale, Me.

Dr. Victor Brum- Augusta, Me.

Donald Purdy- Gardiner, Me.

Curator Crosby reported on the activities of the house saying there had been about 150 visitors during the year, prior to the official opening of the house in June. The Applachian Mt. Club from Mass. will be coming for an overnight canoe-camping trip in a few weeks; clearance must be done with the State Dept. allowing them a campsite.

There seems to be some hold up on gaining clearance to remove the old millstone now in the middle of the stream on the nearby Nursing Home property. We understand the property owner had made a verbal agreement with another party (Ted Bradstreet - Dig supervisor) before we approached them.

Crosby's son John and friend will enter a skull in the upcoming July 4th Great Kennebec Whatever Race - Good luck boys may yours be the first.

The meeting was formally adjourned at 2:30 P.M.

CECIL'S CONTRIBUTION

For an interesting article, we can always depend on our good friend and researcher, who brings us the following:

Lt. JOHN MONTRESOR

Son of an eminent engineer of the British Army was born 1736 at Gibraltar. He was at the seige of Louisburg and the capture of Quebec by Wolfe. He was made Chief Engineer of America by King George III at age 39.

Montresor, although seldom mentioned in our Society is very important because he made two trips through the wilderness from Quebec to the lower Kennebec. One in the dead of winter down the Chaudierre and Kennebec valleys to Topsham in 1760. This one, the first, nearly cost him and his party their lives.

The second one in 1761, with which we are concerned here, was up the chaudiere to it's confluence with the Des Loups. This river he followed to it's head waters which is todays Portage Lake, a half mile from the Maine-Quebec border. Then across height of land border he carried into Penobscot Lake. He was now into Penobscot River drainage which he followed to North West Carry which Carry put him into Moosehead Lake and Kennebec waters. Following the Kennebec down to Fort Halifax. He did not go below here but retraced his route up the Kennebec to the Great Carrying Place and from there back to Quebec via what we know today as Arnold's Route. But actually Arnold was following his route, possessing his Journal and his map both of which were known at that time. Major Goodwin is known to have had them and perhaps even General Washington. Let us follow this 24 year old engineer on his 40 odd day journey to try to determine some of the hardships. We will have to read between the lines for his Journal is so professional and so disciplined in the writing that it is rare indeed when he enters any account of hardship. But hardships there were. His party were all Indians. How many were there of them ? He does not say but he had 4 canoes which indicates 8 people. But htere could have been less. How did this young man learn enough of the Indian language to communicate ? Perhaps it was like this. In a restaurant one evening in Sept Isles, Quebec I and others sat at a table and of course the inevitable first question to the waitress. Do you speak English ? " a little " she replied, to which the scholar in our midst said " well I have a little French ". She said " well you try your French and I'll try my English and I think we will get along ". Maybe that is the way it was with him. The 14th June finds them at Scott having travelled overland from the St. Lawrence. In about one sentence he tells of encountering a forest fire along the way and having their canoes burned up. No mention of how it happened.

One suspects that canoes being carried on mens backs had to be dropped, and left, to save their own lives. Anyway the Journal tells us, again with no detail, that they were prepared to make canoes of bark from the beech or spruce. " till we could find birch proper for the purpose ". Make two sets of canoes ? What did they have for tools to make them with ? Likely only axes. They knew exactly what land falls they were looking for but the details of the trails and route to them was in the hands of the Indian guides. So up the Chaudierre. This gem from the Journal. " The route prescribed us, was the river Des Loups. (coming in on their left), the appearance of both was much the same, rapid, rocky, and shallow; but the Des Loups was much the least considerable ". He uses this last phrase in other places to denote smaller. The King's English ? For seven days " found ourselves obliged to carry our canoes and provisions along the banks of the river " (river too shallow and rocky to float canoes) Provisions ? What were they ? We don't know. I guess flour, cornmeal, salt, salt pork and the Englishmen likely had some tea. They must have had some firearms so throw in some powder and shot. What did they eat ? He never tells us. Fish of course intermixed with such small animals beaver and muskrats as were easy to get.

June 27 finds them crossing Portage Lake and on the same day crossed the height of land to Penobscot Lake. The route now would be all down hill, but the rocky streams would still demand much portaging. Portage Lake and Penobscot Lake are so close together that I am sure that in those days of virgin forest one could stand on the height of land and see both waters at one time. The logging of the area and it's attendant small bushy growth prevents it now. Up to this point the waters they travelled have not changed all that much. But as one comes down off the height of land into Maine, the change is dramatic. One encounters a dammed up Penobscot Lake several times it's original size and there on the opposite shore is one of the best, fly in fishing and get-away-from -it-all facilities in the State. (how did you find this spot Cecil ?) The river below it, clear to North West Carry, is a series of dams and lakes. Even the Carry itself is half inundated.

Several days of hard going finds them in Moosehead and thus Kennebec waters via North West Carry. In one day they paddled the length of Moosehead, Passing by West Outlet. They were knowledgable to the extent that West Outlet is not canoeable. Continuing on to East Outlet and entering upon it immediately. Disaster lurked here. For they were in the turbulent waters where today a considerable rubber raft "pleasure " business is conducted. "All at once we found ourselves engaged in rapids". " One of the canoes was overset " " All the rest filled with water ". "Our provisions being all wet and in danger of being lost " " there was nothing to be seen but rocks ". " Certain marks of a country good for nothing ". We quitted and struck for the woods " " we had all along been muchh annoyed by mosquitoes but never suffered so much from them as here". This is the first and only reference to personal hardship in the whole journal. Late June and early July in this country is just unbearable with the insects. " The Kennebec still continued dangerous ".

In seven days from Moosehead of routine, but not easy travelling they were in Nort Halifax and ready to take the route that we know so well back to Quebec. Little could the Canadians know that in 15 years their journal and map would be used against them.

One cannot do justice to this epic journey in these short lines. To compare with Arnold, it was longer, as fatigueingly demanding but successful - Why ? They were prepared to live off the land. It was warmer weather and they were unhampered by any military equipment.

Cecil E. Pierce

LOST POND ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG

Although Saturday, June 20th 1981 was a threatening weather day, with heavy showers developing, an eager group of ' lucky ' 13 members of an Archaeological team of the AEHS, bravely faced the elements to ascend the Lost Pond section of the Arnold Trail in the upper Chain-of-Ponds area of Franklin County.

They were well fortified with six metal detectors of various types to search for any metal artifacts that may have been left by members of the Arnold Army that passed along this section of the Trail.

At one potential site, around a cluster of white birch, there appeared to have been a campfire at some distant time as evidenced by particles of charcoal under the forest ground cover.

It was here that Cecil Pierce and Duluth Wing had previously recovered several lead balls such as were used in old-time muskets and rifles.

The metal detectors attacked like a swarm of angry bees and soon located several more of these relics as well as a short length of iron chain and an iron ferrule.

Knowledgable members of the party stated that the lead balls were used in 55 calibre rifles. (Riflemen in the Arnold Army came from Pennsylvania and Virginia).

A final search of the site, by the use of a natural dowsing rod, produced one more lead ball (estimated to be of 45 calibre, and used in a pistol) and a firing flint of pistol use size of probable English origin.

It is of significant interest that the flint piece could not have been discovered by the metal detectors, but the dowsing rod easily located it; Apparently its effectiveness is not restricted to certain elements in exposing the location of hidden objects. It is a very effective instrument fast becoming very popular in archaeological use.

In the party was Cecil Pierce, Duluth Wing, Arthur and Lois Griffiths and daughter Linda, Taisto Maki, Ron Gamage, Florence and Norman Elliott, Gene Lockyer, Ken Taylor, Hank Dillenbeck and White Nichols.

White Nichols,
Chr. Trail Committee

SPEAKING OF DIGS ----

The following item was spied by our Colburn House neighbor, Tom Fielder, in The Bangor Daily Commercial September 10, 1937 :

Hyde Park, N.Y., Sept. 10 (AP) J. Ruppert Schalk of nearby Rhinebeck, came to the Summer White House today to discuss with President Roosevelt how to preserve for posterity Benedict Arnold's sloop " Philadelphia ". Schalk had written the President that he and his partner, Capt. F.H. Hagglund, recovered the Revolutionary War vessel two years ago from Lake Champlain where it was sunk in a battle with the British on October 11, 1776. Schalk also said in his letter that he had raised to the surface a portion of another boat in Arnold's fleet and would try soon to recover the rest of it.

Has anyone ever heard any more about this ?

FROM THE CURATORS PEN -

The Millimans say -- The Colburn House has enjoyed a fairly busy summer. Approximately 100 visitors in addition to 4 planned groups. One of the highlights was a tour by 28 members of the Appalachian Mountain Club of Mass. These were canoeists of all ages ! Arriving on a Saturday afternoon they set up camp in back of the barn rather than down by the river as previously planned; since the State had been unable to provide men or equipment for mowing the over grown grass, all worked out well to have them near the road and the house. Their trip was to be by canoe on Sunday from Augusta to Richmond with a stop at the Pownalborough Court House; however, rough water caused them to change those plans and pull out at the Court House. Docking at the Colburn House was graciously permitted by our next door neighbors, Joe and Judy Metz. Saturday afternoon afforded them time for not only a Happy Hour and outdoor cook-out on our Maine clams and lobsters in the Colburn House triangle but some sharing of these with the Colburn House family and friends. It was a fun week-end.

Our member, Director, and State D.A.R. Regent was responsible for bringing a second group of those ladies for a meeting held in the East parlor. Gene Lockyer contacted and carried out all plans for this affair. We thank both Gene and the Mary Kelton Dummer Chapter of the D.A.R. for their contribution to us.

Christ Church Episcopal was hosted to a Sunday evening at the Colburn House through the courtesy of the Millimans; we are spreading our wings to reach all interested groups to use our facilities and find more and more those who are willing to accept.

Being an Ecumenical Society, we were also happy to have the Pittston Congregational Church next door again use our buildings for their annual Bible School during the summer, providing an historical element to their sessions.

On several occasions, descendants of the Colburn family have arrived to seek out information and sights on subjects which they are particularly eager to know more about. Sharing what knowledge we have and supplying our quite extensive genealogy with them has been rewarding. They have afforded a lot of encouragement to the Curators by showing their appreciation of the Society's care and interest in the property.

We are still hoping for a few dollars to come in designated for the new sign and promise to have something installed for the opening of the house in '82.

Cros & Karen

THE SECRETARY SAYS -

People are so generous ! While most of us wonder where our money goes, this Secretary wonders where it comes from. Trips to the bank tell me we have many loyal supporters who continue to contribute beyond their required dues. It has been our pleasure this past summer to give somewhat limited help to a friend who happens to be Irving Colburns sister in Manchester, Mass. Mrs. Snyder writes that she has finally been accepted into the Colonial Dames. While we did so little to help her with this, she has done so much by contributing most generously to our Society.

71 Year Old Mayor wants another term

We WONDER HOW HE MADE OUT ?

Albany N.Y. June 12 1981 Mayor Erastus Corning II says he's ready to start a fifth decade in office. Mayor Corning, the longest tenured big city Mayor in the United States announced Thursday he will seek an 11th four year term. The 71 year old Democrat made the announcement on the steps of City Hall, where he first took office in 1941. He faces a challenge from Independent Charles Touhey, 32 the son of the man who has come closest to unseating the Mayor. In 1973 Carl Touhey lost to Mayor Corning by 3000v votes. Why do we tell you all this ?? Mayor Erastus Corning II has been a member and contributed much to AEHS since November of 1969 !

PART II of "BETRAYAL AT WEST POINT; THE BENEDICT ARNOLD
CONSPIRACY, 1780 "

From the lecture and slide program given by Richard J. Koke at the U.S. Military Academy, September 6, 1980 ; Mr. Koke is currently Curator of the New York Historical Society and very graciously gave the AEHS Curator permission to use his talk in our Society newsletters.

Seeds of Treason

First Correspondence with the Enemy

As Miss Martia Leonard wrote in the " Quarterly Bulletin " of the Westchester Co. Historical Society -

" It was perhaps the rankling resentment of his (treatment by) Congress that caused Arnold, perhaps unconsciously at first, to turn to another allegiance and then to treachery "

His motives appear to have been fourfold:

1. Anger at the slights of Congress
2. Resentment of the Pennsylvania politicians
3. A distrust of the French alliance
4. A need for ready money

You may wonder why he was against the French alliance, because it was with French help that the war ultimately swung in favor of the Americans and brought about the great victory at Yorktown. For the American Colonists France had always been the old enemy in America - from the 1600's until she was driven out of Canada in 1763. Many Americans believed that once America was free of England the French monarchy would exercise a stronger control over the colonies than was ever exercised by England. Such were arguments Arnold must have heard, and which he may have shared - though it was not until after he joined the enemy in 1780 that he first professed a dislike for the alliance with France.

But whatever the case, any rationalization on Arnold's part was a cover-up for his desire for money. In April, 1777 one of the officers who served under him - a Major John Brown remarked " Money is the man's God and to get enough of it he would sacrifice his country " (Van Doren, p. 159).

In May 1779, without even waiting for court-martial to start, Arnold sent an emissary (Stansburg) to the British Commander-in-Chief in New York with an offer of his services to the British. Using an assumed name (" Monk "), he represented himself as a high-ranking American officer (as was later reported by Stansburg) who loathed the separation between England and America.

Thereafter, throughout 1779 and into 1780 Arnold played a dual role: on the one part, a maligned American hero who remained faithful to an ungrateful Congress only because of his loyalty to Washington; and on the other part a sly traitor who secretly transmitted information about Washington's plans to the enemy. The British officer who handled the correspondence in New York was Major John Andre, and it was Andre who lured the disgruntled Arnold deeper into the web of discontent.

At first nothing seems to have been thought of beyond Arnold's possible desertion to the enemy. The betrayal of West Point was a later development. For the time being Arnold was merely playing with fire while awaiting his court-martial.

The court finally sat in December, 1779. The testimony against him by the Pennsylvanians was not strong. But Arnold's defence was elaborate, and laid greater stress on his patriotism and services, his wrongs and wounds, than in refuting the charges against him. charges which stemmed from his use of army wagons and his permit for the ship to leave Philadelphia.

Arnold's utter hypocrisy in boasting of his patriotism, though may be better appreciated when it is realized that already for eight months he had been in correspondence with the British.

The court finally acquitted him of the charges, vaguely censured him for two others, and directed that his punishment be a reprimand from the Commander-in-Chief. This in turn did not come for another two months and was contained in one of Washington's general orders received in April 1780.

" The Commander-in-Chief would have been happier in bestowing

commendations on an officer who has rendered such distinguished services as..... Major General Arnold; but in the present case a sense of duty..... obliges him to declare that he considers his conduct.....was.....reprehensible....., imprudent and improper".

And now we come to the story of the treason. For a man as proud as Arnold, the damage has been done. Bitterly resentful of the slights he had received, and stung by what he considered the ingratitude of his countrymen, Arnold was ready to betray the newborn republic.

For nearly a year Arnold had dallied with temptation of treason. Now the poison was working in his veins. The sense of public duty was utterly distorted by his sense of private injury. Arnold resolved that he would not be an ordinary deserter, but would play the villain on a grand scale. He would overwhelm Congress and carry the country back to its old allegiance to the King. To do this he had to have an important command. And the place which obviously suggested itself was the American Fortress of West Point, on the Hudson River, sixty miles north of New York City and the British headquarters base in North America.

In July, 1780 Arnold sought command from Washington who, through it all, never lost confidence in Arnold's integrity. Washington wanted to give Arnold a command in the Field, but Arnold wanted West Point. So Washington gave it to him.

Determined to gain as high a price as possible for his betrayal, Arnold wrote to the British in July (even before he was given command) that he wanted 20,000 pounds for the surrender of West Point. He expected to retain his equivalent rank in the British army. And if failure forced him to go to the British camp empty handed, Arnold wanted 10,000 pounds as a pension.

Sir Henry Clinton did not think 20,000 pounds too high a price for West Point. But as for Arnold's counter offer of 10,000 pounds merely for his personal realignment, Clinton implied that Arnold was not worth it. After some further haggling it was arranged that Major John Andre should go up the Hudson in September under a flag of truce to talk to Arnold.

And with this the stage was set for the last dramatic days on the Hudson when Arnold and Andre met for the first time and the plot raced to an almost unbelievable end.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE-

" TREASON: THE FINAL EPISODE: ARNOLD THIRSTS FOR REVENGE "

CAN YOU SEND US A LITTLE ITEM ?

Since losing our able editor of the newsletter Audrey Hanks, we are all pooling items for compiling our quarterly letter. While we have had some good intentions mentioned, we have received but little. Are you there Mrs. Brownlow Thompson ? We know you have much to offer. Duluth Wing is our strong Public Relations man and contributes members; our northern Maine members contribute generously of their finances - now all we need (until Crosby gets back from the Yorktown Reenactment) is bits of history for this our attempt at our publication.

WE INCLUDE THIS EVERY TIME

A.E.H.S MEMBERSHIPS :

STUDENT.....	\$3.00
Regular Individual.....	\$5.00
Regular Joint.....	\$7.00
Contributing.....	\$25.00
Life.....	\$100.00