



The SHIRETOWN CONSERVER

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society

Volume XVI, Number 4 Winter 2012

Wainwright Cushing

(Aug 12, 1841 – June 19, 1918)



Wainwright Cushing

Recently we were fortunate to receive a wonderful collection of materials from Dawn Ennis. Included were several Civil War era letters from Wainwright Cushing. During this anniversary of the war, we will publish them. No better introduction to Mr. Cushing's life can be found than in the *Personal War Sketches*, a volume of civil war reminiscences presented by Mr. Cushing, Dr. Thompson, and George Downing in 1898 to the C.S. Douty Post No. 23, Department of Maine, Grand Army of the Republic. (Mr. Cushing was a founding member of the Douty Post).

Two entries on Mr. Cushing are in this volume. The first, is a **Personal Sketch**: written by A.M. Warren, Historian

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“Wainwright Cushing was born in Sebec, Piscataquis County, State of Maine, Aug 12th, 1841; son of Joseph and Anna (Morrill) Cushing and a descendant of Mathew Cushing, Hingham Mass., 1838; Educated in public schools and Foxcroft Academy. Married Flora A. McIntyre of Sebec Oct 20, 1866, to whom two children were born – Caleb H. and Annie F. (Mrs. Walter J. Mayo). Enlisted as a private in Co. A 6th Maine Infantry Regt. April 27, 1861 and was mustered into U.S. service July 15th, 1861 at Bangor Maine. Was afterwards promoted to Corporal, Serg't and 2nd lieut.

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The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society

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Dues

Many of you will have recently received a renewal notice for Historical Society Dues for 2013. We are very appreciative of your support. The Society would not be here were it not for your generous support. We are a volunteer 501(c)3 organization, entirely funded by our member contributions. Your tax-deductible dues are \$10 per year (\$7 for those over 65). We send out renewal notices in December of each year. If you have any questions about your dues, contact Mary or Chris at any time.



The Family Cat

I can fold up my claws
in my soft velvet paws
and purr in the sun
till the short day is done –

For I am the family cat
I can doze by the hour
In the vine covered bower,
Winking and blinking
Through the sunshine and shower –
For I am the Family cat

From the gooseberry bush
or where bright currants blush,
I may suddenly spring
for a bird on the wing,
or dart up a tree,
for a brown nest I see
And select a choice morsel
for dinner or tea,
and no one can blame me,
berate me or shame me –
For I am the family cat

In the cold winter night,
When the ground is all white,
and the icicles shine
in a long silver line,
I stay not to shiver
In the moonbeam's pale quiver,
But curl up in the house
As snug as a mouse

And play Jack Horner
In the coziest corner,
breaking nobody's laws
With my chin on my paws
Asleep with one eye and awake with the other,
pats from the children, kind words from the mother –
For I am the family cat

The Piscataquis Observer, May 17, 1866

Civil War Letters

The first in a series of letters from Wainwright Cushing to folks at home

Washington D. C. July 24th, 1861

Dear Cousin,

I presume you would be glad to hear from us after our arrival in the land of Dixie, so I set myself to throw a few words together for your benefit.

I suppose Elbridge has told you all about our journey from Hartland to Washington so I won't say anything about that. There was a great battle fought at Bull Run last Sunday we could hear the roar of the cannon all day.

I saw Chris Robinson of Sebec last night he was in the Battle he said John Jay was safe but a great many were killed. I also saw Steve Millett of the Milo Co, he said when the order was given to retreat there were two killed and five wounded in their Co. Those killed were Ezekial Hager of Sebec and Barker of Milo. I don't remember the names of the wounded only one Allen Munroe, he was wounded in the ankle and taken prisoner.

Fifty of our Co. were detailed Tuesday for Picket guard, about 8 o'clock Tuesday eve we had to cross the river into Virginia, it rained all night, hard and we had to stand twelve hours without being released. We had to stop over there until Wednesday night. Wednesday all day we had nothing to eat, run about found plenty of apples, blackburys, peaches, etc.

Our Regt is stationed at the Chain Bridge, it is rumored that we are to (be) stationed here for some length of time to protect the Bridge. Leuit. Buck said last night that we should have to throw up entrenchments in a day or two.

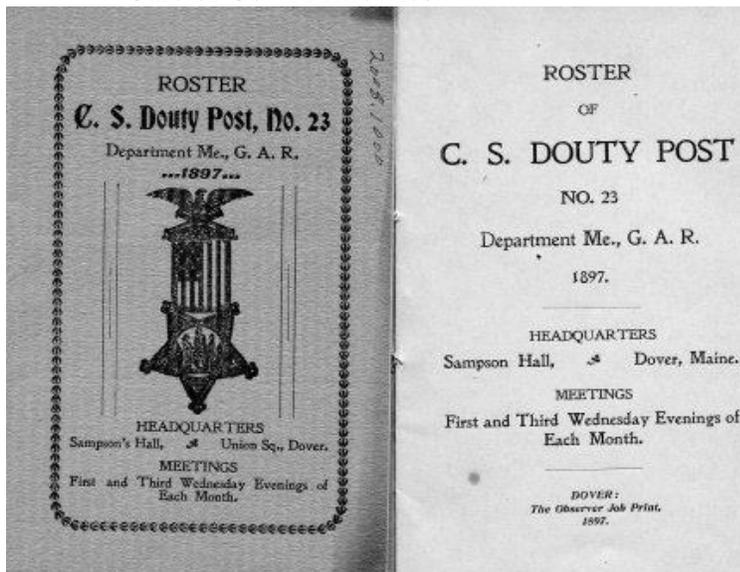
The boys are all enjoying themselves as well as could be expected under the circumstances. Elb is Chief Cook and I am Bottle Washer to day. I wish you could board with us we have such a variety yesterday, we had Bread & Pork for Breakfast, Pork and Bread for Dinner and what was left of the Dinner hashed up for Supper. When we want a change we dispence with the Pork.

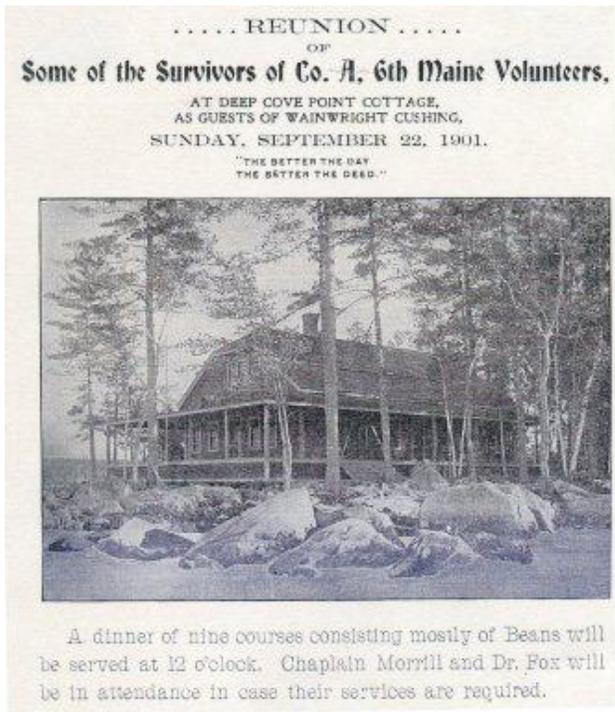
I must proceed to close, my time is short give my respects to all enquiring friends. If you see any of my folks tell them I am well and in good spirits, direct letters to me same as to Elbridge.

Your affectionate Cousin,
Wainwright Cushing

Sent to Washington D.C. Co. A, 6th Reg's Maine Vol.

Care of Col. A Knowles





Honorably discharged July 5th 1865, after which he commence work as a dyer in woolen mill at Sebec. He was afterwards in charge of dye-house of Brown woolen Co. Dover, Me. 13 years. Established on his own account in sale of dyes 1880, now known as Cushing's Perfection Dyes and sent to all principal countries of the world. Is a member of the G.A.R. (Commander of the Dept. of Maine 1893). Is also a member of the Loyal Legion, Union Veteran Union. A Mason, 32 degree. Member of the A.O.U.W. and N.E.O. P. in politics a staunch Republican and is a Christian Scientist.

In the *Personal War Sketches*, veterans were invited to share their experiences in the war. Mr. Cushing's read: "Enlisted for United States service at Brownville, Maine April 27th, 1861 and was mustered in July 15, 1861 at Bangor Maine as a private in Co. A, 6th Me. Vol. Inf. Was afterwards promoted to Corporal, Sergeant and Second Lieutenant, and held the later rank at his final discharge. Was discharged from the 6th Regt at Brandy Station Va. January 1st, 1864 and re-enlisted in the 1st Maine Veteran Volunteers, Aug 16, 1864 and was finally discharged at Portland, Maine, July 5th, 1865 on account of the close of the war.

Was twice wounded during his service. The first time at Mary's Heights [Fredericksburg, Va.] May 3rd 1863, and the second time at Spottsylvania Court House, May 10th 1864. The first battle in which he shared was at Williamsburg, May, 1862, Afterwards was in engagements at Goldings Farm, White Oak Swamp, Second Bull Run, Antietam, First Fredericksburg, Mary's Heights, Wilderness, Cedar Creek, Petersburg, Spottsylvania Court House, Opequan Creek and Fisher's Hill.

After receiving wounds was in hospital at Washington, Philadelphia and Augusta, Me...

As to the most important event in his service he says he cannot do the subject justice in the short space allowed."



Private Cushing

Unusual Events made the news in the Piscataquis Observer

Compiled by Louis Stevens

While reading copies of The Piscataquis Observer from years past, I've often found interesting items of news about events that might not get space in any papers today, just as folks years from now will be reading papers of today and find them equally eccentric. Here are some that I hope will be sometimes sad and other times humorous:

June 22, 1865: Our villages have been greatly improved this summer by plank sidewalks."

1909: The recent death of Laddie, the fine Scotch collie owned by Geo. Fox , is much regretted by residents in the vicinity of Green Street who were attracted to the dog by his many intelligent qualities."

Some business notes from 1899: In May, the creamery had an order for 1 1/2 tons of butter for the Kineo House for the summer. May: The East Dover brickyard started to make many of the 3,000,000 bricks needed for the new pulp mill in Millinocket;

April, 1868: "In Dover there is a little strip of sidewalk that in wet weather is completely submerged. If town authorities cannot have repaired, let a boat be placed there after a rainstorm for the accommodation of passers."

August, 1880: "There are six regular meat carts in Dover and Foxcroft who were selling steak for 4-7 ¢ per pound on Wednesday."

May, 1914:" Oscar Gray opened a new cemetery in Foxcroft on a knoll between the railroad crossing and the Stanhope farm, as the Rural Grove cemetery was nearly filled."

July 16, 1896: "The tax, or something equally effective has greatly decreased the number of dogs in town. A few years ago it was nothing unusual to see a dozen or more dogs in the street at one time, but now three for four is quite a crowd."

May 26, 1870: "We had a vast amount of smoke in the air last week, so much so that the sun was obscured for nearly two days. We understand the fires were set in the vicinity of Granite Mt. [note: at the head of Sebec Lake] and that the entire blueberry grounds were burnt over." [note: for many years each fall steamers took pickers to the grounds]

November 11, 1869: This is certainly another sight we will never see on the streets here: "Flocks of nearly 1000 sheep have passed through here within the past two weeks as have several droves of cattle bound for the markets in Massachusetts." [note: They would be herded to Waterville and put on the train there as the train had not yet come to Dexter and then to Foxcroft , and would not until December 20, 1889]

(Continued on page 6)

Unusual Events from the *Observer* (continued from page 5)

January 19, 1922: "A large crowd was on the river for harness racing Saturday afternoon with 100 bushels of oats being the prizes."

June 5, 1872: "Dog poisoning /in order at this place last week and five died from its effects. We never did esteem the canine species highly, but must say that we have as much sympathy for them as we don't have for the person who is guilty of their extermination by cold poison."

...February, 1866: "A woods road has been made, commencing on Grove Street, and running south to Dover South Mills. It is almost a direct route, easy to travel, and wood haulers and travelers find it cuts off the long and tedious hills [note: Woodbury and Bear Hill] on the town road from this village to that place."

...June, 1888: "Two fellows were in town selling spruce gum in boxes and doing a thriving trade. They go into the woods along the Penobscot in late fall to get the gum. They sell it at \$1 a pound and thus far have sold 1300 pounds to druggists."

February 8, 1894: "The two largest taxpayers in the town continue to be Mayo & Son's mill in Foxcroft at \$1,268, and Brown's mill in Dover at \$1,681."

April 1895: "While the circus was in town one day in July, Fred Palmer made 200 loaves of bread for it at his bakery in Foxcroft."

August, 1904: "The swimming hole about the cove is a great resort these days for the small boy and everyday, rain or shine, finds him there with an army of followers. On hot days the place fairly swarms with them."

November 23, 1905: "For five days the skating upon the river has been perfect --something that hasn't happened for seven or eight years. Way to the railroad bridge is as smooth as a mirror. Nearly everybody in town who skates has been enjoying it, and even the used-to-be's have hunted up their skates and joined the others. Evenings as well as during the day the crowds of young people are to be found upon the ice."

May 31, 1906: "Eugene Day's only cow died recently and his friends at Mayo's mill and outsiders contributed \$34 to enable him to buy a new one."

January 11, 1912: "An ad said,"B. C. Bubar of Danforth speaks to men only, boys under 12 not admitted. Central Hall, Sunday, January 14, at 3:45. B. C. Bubar represents "Masculine Christianity".

August, 1919: "Stripes of green and white were painted upon the poles in town to designate the Moosehead Trail, the auto route between Bangor and Greenville."

(Continued on page 7)

(Unusual Events from the *Observer*, from page 6)

April, 1920: "The barbers of towns published a notice saying their prices would now be 40\$ for a haircut, 20\$ for a shave, 25\$ for a beard trimmed, and 35\$ for a shampoo."

July 7, 1919: "A new state law states that date that said every vehicle on wheels, (with the exception of those used for transportation of hay, lumber, wood, and stone) needed at least one light visible one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset."

October, 1912: "On Centennial Day in October, the Davis bakery made 600 loaves of bread, 300 pies, 100 dozen donuts, 110 dozen rolls for hot dogs, and 50 dozen turnovers for the thousands who filled the town for the celebration."

Summer of 1931: "Two downtown businesses changed hands in the summer of 1931. Arthur McKusick of Milo purchased the SHELL gas and oil operation in the county that included the station in Union Square (now the site of a travel agency)." And in Monument Square, Paul Perin of Guilford opened his drug store in the Buck building [note: later demolished to enlarge a parking lot for a supermarket] Mr. Perin had worked at Andy Hoyt's drug store before the purchase. There had been drug stores at this location for 100 years."

February 4, 1869: This headline, A TOWN CLOCK, was above this story: "We are glad to learn that some of our- citizens are making a move for the purchase of a town clock to be placed at some central point of the two villages. They plan to give three entertainments to raise money. This is an enterprise which each and every citizen ought to be interested in, and we hope every person in our midst will contribute in some way to carry on such a noble enterprise for the public good." [note: no mention of the clock is made again, but seven years later in Foxcroft, the Mayo family paid for the clock in the steeple.]

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Full size Biltmore tires \$25 extra. On open cars transportation time and motor are \$65 extra. All prices F. O. B. Detroit

MAKE SAFETY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Strawberry Time.

Quite a little ways off, but I have the choice ripe fruit put in pound cans, preserved, and every can warranted.

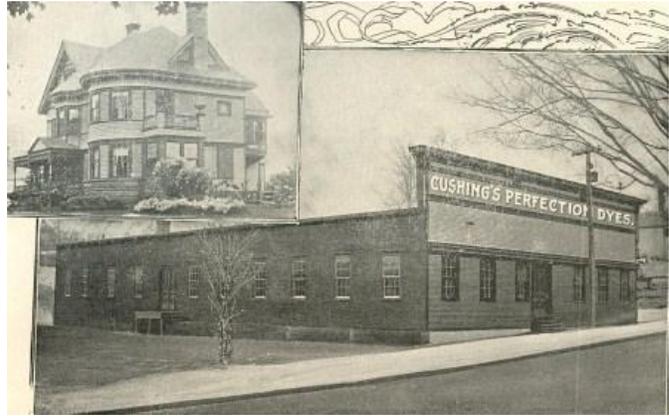
12C.

Per Can.

A. J. McNAUGHTON,
7 North Street. Foxcroft.

(Wainwright Cushing, from page 4)

Mr. Cushing built the dye factory, still standing, on Lincoln Street. Next door is the Christian Science church that he built in 1908. The house that he built is down the street at 103 Lincoln Street. He lived in the house until his death in 1918. His daughter Annie married Walter Mayo (a veteran of the 1st World War) and they lived in the house until his death. Mr. Cushing's son lived in the house at the corner of Lincoln and Essex streets.



Happy Birthday Foxcroft!

On Sunday afternoon, October 14th, the Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society hosted a birthday party for the Town of Foxcroft. It's a special occasion to be 200 years old! We served cake and ice cream to the many visitors. The cake had a picture of Col. Foxcroft on it – pretty impressive. We shared a program on Monument Square – telling about the important people who lived there and the many stores open for business over the years. Several visitors even stayed to enjoy the program a second time! It was a nice day and we congratulate Foxcroft on reaching this milestone birthday.

Some Early Foxcroft History

(From The 1912 Centennial)

The story begins over 200 years ago, when in 1794, the Massachusetts Assembly granted Bowdoin College an endowment – six townships in the district of Maine. The Town of Foxcroft was one of the six – being number five in the seventh range. At the time it contained 17,915 acres.

The earliest history has one figure standing out prominently above all others. He was Col. Joseph Ellery Foxcroft, the explorer and original proprietor, for whom the town is named. He was the son of Rev. Samuel Foxcroft, who was a graduate of Harvard College and the first settled minister of New Gloucester. Col. Foxcroft was a business man of considerable prominence and was active in military and political affairs. He was a member of the Maine Constitutional Convention of 1819, a member of the Maine Senate of 1820-1821, and an Overseer of Bowdoin College from 1821 to 1834. In October of the year 1800, Col. Foxcroft, with friends, set out on an expedition of the wilds of the North. The party proceeded on horseback as far as Cornville, leaving their horses, they pushed onward on foot, camping when night overtook them. Arriving at the southwest border of the township they were seeking, they followed the river down to the falls. In a letter, Col. Foxcroft remembers: "We crossed the river a little above the falls. This was a pleasant spot, many names marked upon trees, but all a wilderness, no sign that anyone ever intended to dwell there. We went down the river to the southeast corner of the township, and near it, upon the intervale, we found an opening occupied by Abel Blood and, I think, a hired man with him, but there was no family. They had corn growing, and garden roots. I well remember the large turnips and beets which they had raised, and thus the virgin soil and vigorous nature greeted these first efforts of husbandry with liberal productions."

Joseph Ellery Foxcroft was born on March 10, 1773 in New Gloucester, Cumberland County, Maine. He married Hannah Stone in 1800 and to them were born three children – Samuel, Hannah and Joseph E. Jr., who died in infancy. His wife, Hannah, died in 1806. Col. Foxcroft then took as his wife Abigail Hammond on November 9, 1809 in Boston. They had one daughter – Abigail Catherine. Col. Foxcroft died on September 1, 1852 in New Gloucester and is buried there.

(Continued on Page 10)

Annual Dues

Many thanks to all those who have sent in their Historical Society dues for 2011. We really appreciate having you as a member. If you haven't sent in your dues yet, please do so now so you can continue to enjoy all of the benefits of membership in the Historical Society, including receiving copies of the *Conservator*.

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society – Membership Application Form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street: _____ City/State/Zip _____

E-Mail: _____

Annual dues are \$10 per person and \$7.00 for senior memberships. Please make checks payable to: Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, 874 West Main Street, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426. Dues cover January to December. If you are giving a gift membership, please include the name and address and we'll gladly notify the recipient of your gift.

The Society is on the Web at www.rootsweb.com/~medfhs and on Facebook.



The Cushing House



Early Foxcroft (Continued from Page 8)

Being impressed with his findings, Col. Foxcroft purchased the township for the sum of \$7,940 or about forty-five cents an acre. For the first several years permanent settlers arrived slowly. The very first settler was John Spaulding who arrived in 1806 with his family from Norridgewock and settled in a log house near the falls. His brothers, Eleazer and Seth, followed soon after. Other names of early settlers were: Joseph Morse, Tristram Robinson, John Chandler, Samuel Chamberlain, Ephraim Bacon, John Bigelow, Jesse Washburn, Nathan Carpenter, Nathaniel and William and Moses and Daniel Buck, Gilman Greeley, John Bradbury and Joel Pratt. Most brought with them families and a trade.

The little town began to grow and by 1810 the population was 65. These residents, having made good progress in the town, petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature for an act of incorporation. Two years later, on February 29, 1812, the petition was granted and Foxcroft became a legally incorporated town, being the second in what is now Piscataquis County (the first being Sebec – just one day older). At the time of incorporation, Foxcroft was part of Hancock County – Piscataquis County was not incorporated until 1838.

Foxcroft's first town meeting was held on August 31, 1812. These early town meetings showed that the town was growing. The first town meeting filled the need for a town clerk, selectmen, assessors, a treasurer, a collector and a constable. As there were only 65 residents nearly every voter held an office. The next year the town voted \$150 raised for support of the schools and it was voted to build a townhouse, 20 by 25 feet. A sum of \$100 was voted for this building. In that same year it was voted to accept one-half acre for a burying ground.

The lives of these early settlers were not easy and conveniences few. One family with four daughters had only one needle. A frequent inquiry was "Where is the needle?". Most homes were made of logs and nearly all had dirt floors. It was the lucky woman who had a wooden floor to sweep. In this time "spirituous liquors" were considered a necessity whenever an important job needed to be done. When Samuel Chamberlain was about to raise his first large barn, about 1809, he announced that he would supply no rum. The opinion of the workers was that he would have no raising. But all worked out, a bountiful dinner was prepared and the barn went up without a hitch.

We move ahead 100 years, the town has grown, and many town residents are ready for a celebration. What better way to celebrate than a 100th birthday party. The celebration occurred on October 1, 1912. The day dawned cold and raw and rain fell in the early morning, the afternoon and evening. The sun shone on the parade making it the highlight of the day. The festivities began at 6 am with the ringing of bells and firing of "bombs" on Foxcroft bridge awakening every citizen. A decorator had been hard at work for 10 days prior on the buildings making every business, home and even the bridge gay and festive. It was estimated that over 5,000 people enjoyed the day.

The parade began at 9:00, starting on Main Street in Foxcroft. There were three bands and 65 teams, rigs, farming implements and floats. The prize for the best float went to Josef L. Brockway, florist. The float was drawn by white horses, the harness trimmed in pink. The float represented a bridal party. The "happy couple" stood under an arch from which hung a wedding bell. There were four little flower girls. In the four corners were white posts on which stood palms. Second place went to Ober & Clark, dry and fancy goods dealers. George H. Hoxie, taxidermist, was awarded third prize with animals in a forest, in the center a wigwam with children in costume. Following the float was Peter Bearce dressed as an old trapper with his gun and coon skins, his hound on a leash. Following the parade a baseball game was held at the Central Driving park, between teams Henderson and Newport, the game being won by Newport – 6 to 0. In the afternoon, the winner was defeated by Dover and Foxcroft – 7 to 2.

Band concerts were given in the squares at 10:30 by the three bands in the parade and by the Milo band which took the noon train. The new Foxcroft concrete bridge was dedicated at noon. These exercises consisted of an address by the Hon. W. E. Parsons, music by the band and a display of day fireworks.

The automobile parade at one o'clock was a disappointment, only two or three cars bearing any decorations. W. G. Parker had his Buick well trimmed. There was a football game at the park in the afternoon following the baseball game, between Higgins and Foxcroft Academy which was easily won by Higgins, 38 to 0.

There was a historical program held at the Congregational Church during the afternoon. In the evening there was a grand ball at Central Hall and a dance in the Palace, both were largely attended. It was a day to remember.

Foxcroft did itself proud in 1912. The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society will be holding a 200th birthday party for Foxcroft at the Observer Building on Sunday afternoon, October 14th, from 1 to 4. We invite our community to stop by enjoy some cake and fun.

Message from Mary

Winter is close at hand and it's time to slow down after the holidays and think about some new exhibits for the Observer Building Museum. As our regular visitors know, we love to entice you back with new things to see. It takes time and work but it is also lots of fun. And we would love help.

We had a busy summer with many visitors at the Blacksmith Shop and the Observer Building. The feedback was good and that makes us keep going. Many genealogical requests were answered too – it's wonderful that we have so much information at our fingertips. We also received some wonderful new items for which we send our hearty thank you. We will keep these treasures safe for the many generations yet to come.

As the Holiday Season approaches we send our wishes for a gay and happy time with family and friends – and our wish for a happy, healthy New Year.

Our Corporate Sponsors

A grateful thank you to the following businesses whose funds support the Society and its efforts to preserve our history. When you shop or see these folks, please tell them 'thank you' for their support!

Ellen Anderson, DPM
Camden National Bank
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Thank you all!

Items Available

We thank Bob's Home and Garden on Lincoln Street for stocking our ornaments and DVD's. Please stop by their store and support this local business.

Glass Christmas ornaments: \$6.00 each (add \$4.00 for shipping)

2008 – Blacksmith Shop
2009 – Observer Building
2010 – Central Hall
2011 – Thompson Free Library
2012 – Foxcroft Academy

DVD's :

Glimpses of Dover and Foxcroft - \$10.00 (add \$3.00 for shipping)

Memories of Central Hall/Lou Stevens - \$15.00 (add \$3.00 for shipping)

Dover-Foxcroft throws: \$40.00 (add \$8.00 for shipping)

Work Day at the Historical Society

Thursdays are almost always workdays at the Historical Society. We generally start work at about 10:00 and work from two to four or five hours. If you are interested in joining us for an interesting and enjoyable day working with good friends, contact Mary for more information. At the moment we are cataloging thousands of old *Observer* photos. Come along and help us identify folks in those pictures.

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society, Inc.
28 Orchard Road
Dover-Foxcroft, ME
04426-3706

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 57
DOVER_FOXCROFT
ME.

Adj. Gen. 1st Me. Inf. 2nd Regt.
April 15, 1865

I certify that a vacancy of 3^d Lieut exists,
and that Wainwright Culshing holds a
Commission from the Governor of Maine to fill
said vacancy, also that the company to which
he is assigned contains more than the
minimum number of enlisted men.

Stephen C. Fletcher
Sr. Col., Comdg. Regt.