



A document recording the long-forgotten words that brought about one of the first overt military actions of the American Revolution returns to New Hampshire from Oregon. Left to right, photographed at Fort Constitution, formerly Fort William and Mary, in New Castle, 2013: New Hampshire Revolutionary War historian Thomas Kehr; New Hampshire Historical Society Executive Director Bill Dunlap; and brothers David and Clark Beck, representing the donors, the Beck family.

## THE NEW HAMPSHIRE RIDE OF PAUL REVERE

Thanks to a generous West Coast donor and a dedicated New Hampshire researcher and Society member, a missing document critical to the state's and the nation's history has returned to its origins. It is well known that in December 1774 Boston silversmith and Revolutionary patriot Paul Revere carried a message from Boston to Portsmouth that led to the capture of arms and ammunition from the colony's arsenal, Fort William and Mary in New Castle. The incident has been called one of the earliest overt actions of the American Revolution.

Contemporary accounts hint at the content of Revere's message, but until now its exact wording has been unknown. The actual document carried on horseback from Boston is still lost, but the Portsmouth Committee of Correspondence fortunately transcribed it. A copy was forwarded by express rider to the nearby town of Exeter. Exeter patriots penned a message on the back and forwarded it in turn to Josiah Bartlett of Kingston. Bartlett then sent a synopsis to the town of Sandown. In the

words of New Hampshire Revolutionary War researcher Thomas Kehr, "This is remarkable stuff . . . a message forwarded from hand to hand in the patriot communication chain . . . [that] vividly captures this precise important moment in New Hampshire history."

The letter turned up in a box of early New England newspapers purchased by Clark Beck in New Jersey around 1960. Clark gave it to his brother, David, suggesting that he save it for his children. It remained tucked away in Oregon until 2010, when an internet search led the brothers to an article by Kehr describing just what happened after the letter arrived—New Hampshire patriots raided Fort William and Mary.

The Beck brothers, together with David's son Fletcher, decided that "instead of hanging on our wall in Oregon 3,000 miles from its birth place we would like to donate it to a more fitting home." With Mr. Kehr's assistance, the Beck family arranged to donate the letter to the Society during a visit to the fort at New Castle. "We are grateful to both the Beck family and Tom Kehr for saving, recognizing the significance, and securing the future of this long-lost piece of New Hampshire history," said Bill Dunlap, the Society's executive director.

*See page five for images and a transcription of the letter.*

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**HISTORICAL**  
SOCIETY FOUNDED 1823

**Newsletter**

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**MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

You may have seen in the media that we recently received the welcome news of a \$200,000 grant from LCHIP (the state's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) towards planned upgrades to the energy systems of the Society's National Register-listed headquarters building at 30 Park Street. These plans call for improving the energy efficiency of the building's roof and skylight systems and updating its 100-year-old heating system, which is at the end of its useful life. These changes,

which will be invisible to the eye and respectful of the building's historic fabric, will result in annual fuel cost savings of 50 percent and a reduction of our carbon footprint by 75 percent. And the collections housed and exhibited here will be better protected from temperature fluctuation and ultraviolet light.

LCHIP's favorable decision reminds us of the esteem in which this building is held and its primacy in the life of the Society. In recent issues of this newsletter we have reported on the digitization of our collections. While this work is progressing well and is vital to the future of the Society, it is important to remember that our identity is embodied both virtually—in electrons and gigabytes online—and physically—in granite and marble. Our beloved building is not only a physical place of offices, meeting rooms, and safely stored collections; it is also a powerful symbol of the importance of history in our state and national life.

The energy efficiency and risk mitigation plans are an important part of our current capital campaign, which also includes goals for endowment growth and for the implementation of the online New Hampshire History Network—the centerpiece of the digitization initiative. These goals all are important but none has elicited greater interest than the one relating to our building. Our members feel a special responsibility for the care of this public treasure.

*Our beloved building is not only a physical place of offices, meeting rooms, and safely stored collections; it is also a powerful symbol of the importance of history in our state and national life.*

In addition to the LCHIP grant we have received generous gifts from many individuals, and we have a grant application pending with the National Endowment for the Humanities. Architectural historian Jim Garvin is consulting with us on this and helped write the application. In Jim's words,



The rotunda of the Society's headquarters building at 30 Park Street, photographed by Fiona Boyd, courtesy of *New Hampshire Home*.

The project will enhance the Society's headquarters building, which was carefully planned to offer an educational benefit and to proclaim the stature of history in an enlightened society. The project has been designed with cognizance of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

- All changes that are proposed for the welfare of the collections will be invisible from within the building and from the exterior.
- The project will preserve the distinctive materials, features, finishes, construction techniques, and examples of craftsmanship that characterize the 1911 building.
- None of the proposed changes will impair historic materials or features, or alter spatial relationships within the carefully designed structure.
- All proposed construction will be designed so that, if removed in the future, the essential character of the historic building will be unimpaired.

Our 1911 building was technologically advanced for its period. Yet the expectations for a new building in 1911 differed widely from those of today, both with respect to energy efficiency and to the storage and exhibition of fragile collections that are intended to survive indefinitely once they enter the custodianship of an archive and museum.

In summary, this is an investment worth making. We will keep you apprised of our progress.

*Bill Dunlap*

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## A WELL-DOCUMENTED MARRIAGE

Domestic life and culture are important parts of the history of New Hampshire. Births, weddings, and deaths were the most common and memorable events in the lives of ordinary people. Few married couples survived to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, and objects commemorating these events do not appear in large numbers until the 20th century. According to family tradition this recently donated pitcher was presented to Samuel and Nancy S. Kaime by the people of Barnstead on their 50th wedding anniversary in 1867. Samuel Kaime was a selectman, justice of the peace, and represented Barnstead in the state legislature in 1833 and 1834. The pitcher was made in England of molded white porcelain with red and gold enamel decoration with "S. & N. S. Kaime / 1817 / Barnstead N.H." painted in gold and green on one side and "In Wedlock / January 1st. / 1867 / Fifty Years." on the reverse. A quilt designed and made by this same couple has been in the Society's collections since 1983 and documents an exceptionally close working relationship within their marriage: Samuel is said to have cut out the patterns from which Nancy created the quilt. The documentation of the Kaimes' joint lives provided by these two pieces is thanks to the generosity of several descendants over time.



A c. 1860 quilt and a 50th wedding anniversary presentation pitcher, probably 1866; both testaments to the lifelong partnership of Samuel Kaime (1789–1875) and Nancy Simes Nutter Hoyt Kaime (1793–1875) of Barnstead, married January 1, 1817; the gifts respectively of Miriam and Deborah Page in memory of Barbara Page Hutchins (quilt), and Frances A. Marston (pitcher)—all descendants of Samuel and Nancy Kaime.



## THE NEW HAMPSHIRE RIDE OF PAUL REVERE (continued from page 1)

This newly acquired document, although fragmentary, reveals the long-lost message that Paul Revere delivered from Boston to Portsmouth on December 13, 1774, and that inspired the attacks on Fort William and Mary on December 14 and 15. This copy of that message, dated December 14, was then sent by the Portsmouth Committee of Correspondence to the comparable committee in Exeter. Gift of the Beck Family.

[transcription]



[. . .] Colonies a circular Letter to each of the governors upon the Continent arrived in the last Pacquet, probably recommending the placing all the Fortresses of the Colonies into the hands of the Kings Troops, yesterday afternoon dur[ing] Divine Services a number of Troops embarked very private[ly] as reported for New Port, but generally reported suspected for yo[ur] place to take possession of the Fort there; we are informed th[at] our Brethren in NewPort having received some intimation of such design, have already dismantled their Fort & remove[d] the Cannon to a place of security, in duty to our Brethren of Portsmouth, we have sent this early intelligence of the design of our Enemies, that being seasonably advised you may take such measures as you may think necessary in this matter. — — We are &c Signed

William Cooper Clk

To the Committee of Correspondence at Portsmouth — —

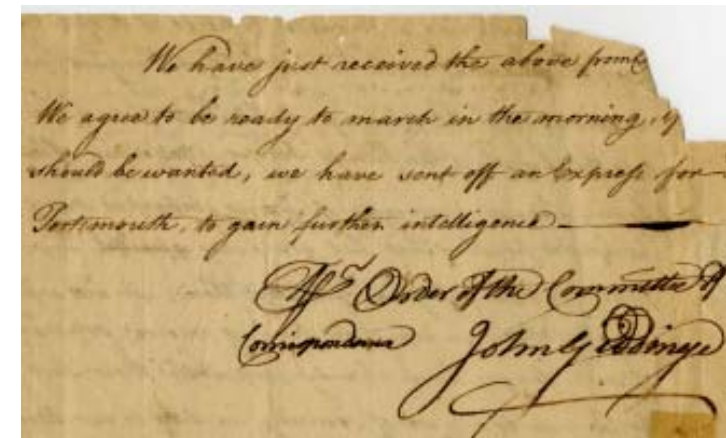
Portsmouth Decem 14. 1774

Gentlemen

The above is a Copy of a Letter from the Committee of Correspondence in Boston. You'l see by the Tenor thereof what steps may be necessary to be taken here. People in general say that it is necessary to secure the Powde[r] &c at the Fort, and in that case some aid from your an [. . .]

On the reverse of the same document is a message from John Giddinge, representing the Committee of Correspondence in Exeter, to Josiah Bartlett of Kingston, known later as a signer of the Declaration of Independence. As a result of this message and whatever subsequent "intelligence" arrived, Captain Giddinge's company and others from Exeter soon marched to Portsmouth, where they stood ready to participate as needed.

[transcription]



We have just received the above from [. . .] We agree to be ready to march in the morning, if [. . .] should be wanted, we have sent off an Express for Portsmouth, to gain further intelligence —

Per Order of the Committee of Correspondence

John Giddinge

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Mary Louise Hancock, 93, with her portrait, painted when she was 27 years old by Concord artist Alice Cosgrove (1909-71).

Political activist and social advocate Mary Louise Hancock of Concord is a longstanding member of the Society—the longest, in fact, at 65 years. Hancock joined the Society in 1949 at the age of 29. Her love of and interest in all things New Hampshire has kept her a loyal member ever since.

Employed in various positions in the New Hampshire Office of State Planning, Hancock served as its director from 1960 to 1976. She later became the first woman to serve as senator from District 15. However, she is best known for hosting legions of presidential and other political candidates in her living room, offering advice and counsel along with soda and cookies.

Hancock also has generously donated numerous items to the Society's collections over the years, most notably paintings and drawings by her good friend and colleague Alice (Ericson) Cosgrove.



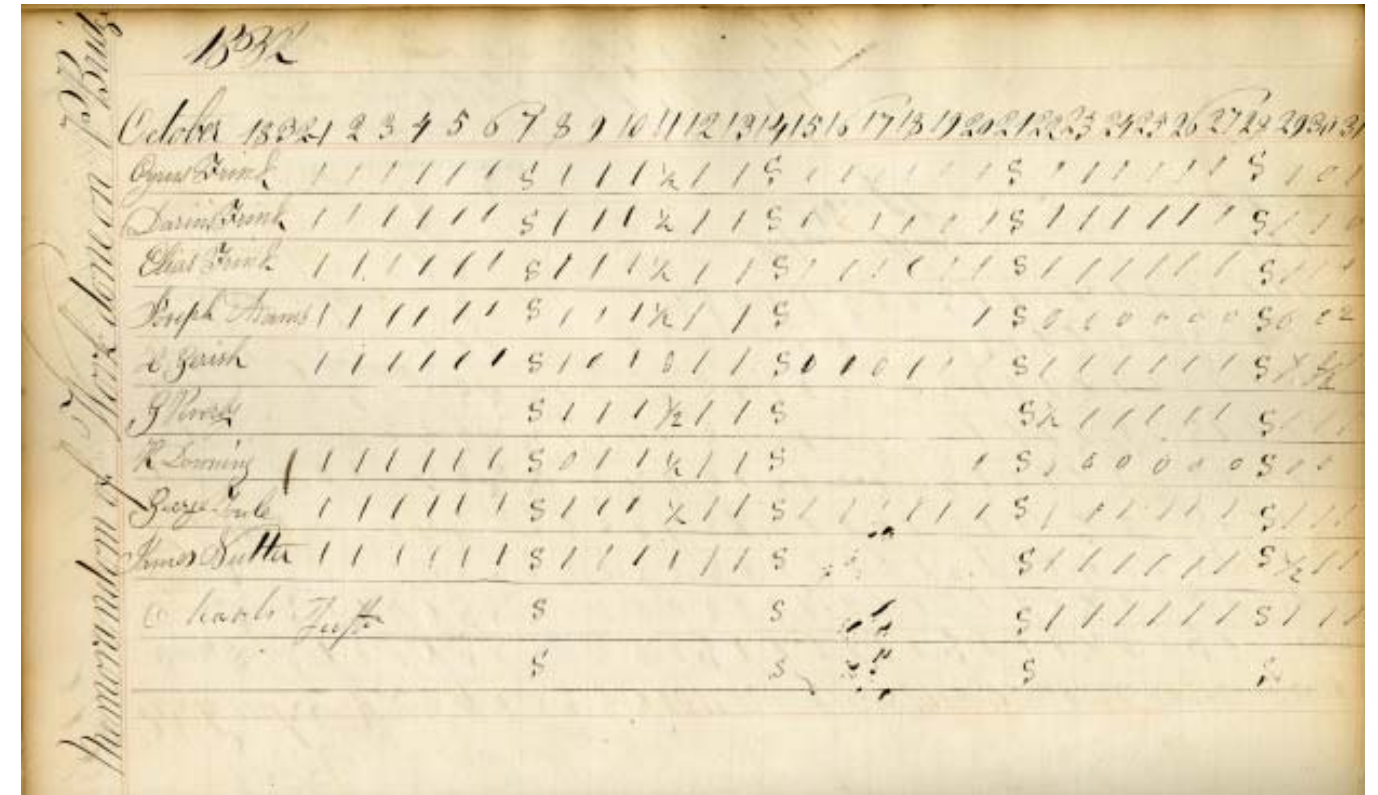
## SOCIETY RECEIVES LEGACY GIFTS

Recent bequests from the estates of Virginia L. Close and Charles E. Ireland have been added to the Society's endowment, where they will provide support in perpetuity for the Society's work.

Virginia Close once wrote that, even though she was a Vermonter, she had a high regard for the New Hampshire Historical Society. She expressed that regard through her 50-year membership and her pride at owning an almost complete set of the Society's journal *Historical New Hampshire*. In the 1970s she compiled the journal's first-ever comprehensive index. Her long career at Dartmouth College's Baker Library was a testament to her love of libraries and books. In retirement she collaborated with Dr. Richard Hoefnagel on the book *Eleazar Wheelock and the Adventurous Founding of Dartmouth College*.

Charles Ireland loved the White Mountains and climbed them at every opportunity. After a long career as an electronics engineer he spent time in his retirement researching the region's history. He loved and collected books, too. He gave the Society his own annotated transcriptions from the 1863 *Boston Commonwealth* of Louisa May Alcott's "Letters from the Mountains," as well as his own compilation of descriptions of the White Mountains written by numerous other travelers between 1524 and 1872.

Silkscreen print designed by Alice Cosgrove, issued by the New Hampshire State Planning and Development Commission, c. 1954, gift of Mary Louise Hancock.

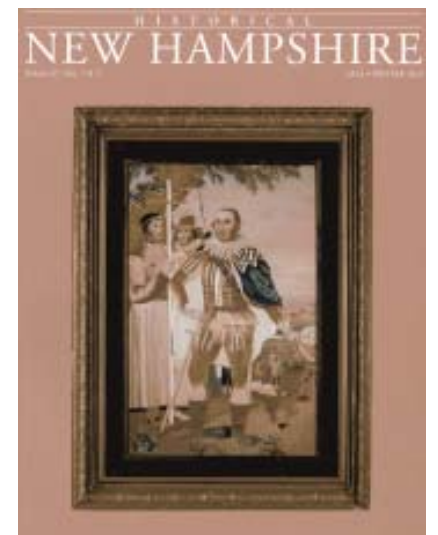


"Memorand[u]m of Work done on P[iscataqua] Bridge," October 1832. That Piscataqua Bridge was kept passable and safe for 60 years, especially without a protective roof and in a saltwater environment, is attributable to the efforts of Cyrus Frink, his sons, and the teams of laborers hired to work each spring and fall on bridge repairs. From Cyrus Frink's daybook, gift of David Stopford Brooke, in memory of Charles S. Parsons.

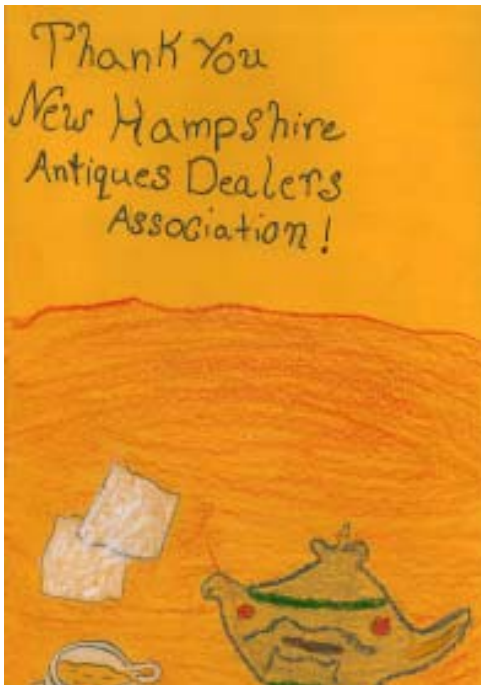
## DONATION HAS IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM USE

Special thanks to David Stopford Brooke of West Windsor, New Jersey, for his recent gift of a pair of account books kept by Cyrus Frink of Newington from 1809 to 1849. These records help document Frink's decades-long involvement with the Piscataqua Bridge. Society staff had been aware of the existence of these books since 1979, when Brooke contacted former director John Page after acquiring them at auction in Kennebunk, Maine. In 1984, the Society borrowed the records for the exhibition *Highways and Hotels: On the Road North of Boston* and, in 2012, had requested to borrow them again, this time for use by Helen Frink, a descendant then at work on an article about the bridge that appeared in the fall/winter 2013 issue of *Historical New Hampshire*. However, Brooke generously offered to donate the volumes instead and to do so in memory of Society trustee Charles S. Parsons. Brooke, who has served as director of both the Currier Museum of Art and of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in

Williamstown, Massachusetts, worked closely with Parsons at the Currier on the 1970 exhibition and catalog *The Dunlaps & Their Furniture*. Thanks to Brooke's gift, researchers now and in the future can examine Frink's own business accounts alongside the closely related records of the Proprietors of the Piscataqua Bridge that the Society purchased in 2008.



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## GRANTS SUPPORT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A number of foundations and businesses have recently awarded grants to support the Society's school programs. The **Lincoln Financial Foundation** is providing leadership support for the development of the *New Hampshire History Network*, a digital gateway that will provide centralized access to New Hampshire's history and historical collections. The **New Hampshire Humanities Council** underwrote *Teaching the Civil War through New Hampshire History*, a two-part workshop where middle school teachers used historical documents and objects to create lesson plans that will be published online. The **Abbie F. Moseley Charitable Trust** and **Target** awarded grants to support school outreach programs, enabling the

Society to bring history lessons, free of charge, to classrooms throughout the state. The **Merrimack County Savings Bank Foundation** renewed its sponsorship of a program on colonial history for fifth-grade students at Rundlett Middle School. The **Mary Louise Billings Trust, RBS Citizens, N.A. Trustee** awarded a grant to support the Society's 2014 Advanced Placement Conference for U.S. History. And, for the second consecutive year, the **New Hampshire Antiques Dealers Association** underwrote the cost of bus transportation for hundreds of students to visit the Society.

