



TOWNSHEND

HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

N E W S L E T T E R

FALL 2012

PO BOX 202, TOWNSHEND, VT 05353

www.townshendvt.org

13th ANNUAL MEETING

**Sunday
Nov. 18th, 2012**

**West Townshend Country Store
Program starts at 1:00 Pm**

**General meeting and tour of the
New West Townshend Country
Store.**

**Update about a new
Book Project.**

**Pizza from our new Cob oven!
Pizza crust, Sauce and Cheese
will be provided. Bring your own
favorite topping to share.**



info@townshendvt.org

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Transporting Goods to Market

*Memories from Charles
Gray Atwood, Part III*

In these days we had no railroad in Vermont. All the freight was brought from Boston in huge wagons, drawn by six horses. Such fine horses! The driver sat up on a high seat, and did all his driving by talking and using a whip --no reins. It was wonderful how much those horses knew. The limit of the loads was six tons each, on account of the wooden bridges....

I certainly did have great fun when the great droves of horses were driven down from Canada; and came through the village on their way. This is the way it was done. A string of say fifty horses would be tied on each side of a long rope, in pairs. Then the rope would be tied to the hind axle of a heavy wagon, drawn by a strong team of Percherons. The other end of the rope was tied to another team in the back, to keep it taut. After a good night's rest at our hotel, the drivers cleaned the horses, making their coats just shine, and brought them out onto the Common for sale or trade. Then such buying and selling you never saw! Here is where my fun came in. Father would sit me up on horse after horse to show off the horse (and perhaps his pride in how well I could ride). In this way I got many a fine ride, and often a lot of sixpences from the crowd. I guess that is where my great love for horses began.

There were often fine droves of cattle also brought through: fat, sleek animals going to city markets. But the queerest of all were the droves of turkeys. These had to move very slowly, of course. There were often two or three hundred of them. They would walk along all right, till



dark came on. Then, no matter where they were, they'd go up into the trees and onto the fences to roost. The men with them knew that they were perfectly safe for the night; so the men would find the nearest tavern, and go to bed too.

In the morning, the drovers would go out and begin to sprinkle corn the way they wanted to go. Down would come the turkeys and follow the trail, eating their breakfast as they went. It was funny to watch. First one old gobbler would fly down from his perch, and begin on the corn, and all the rest would soon follow. Before they knew it, they were well on their way to Boston, getting fat as they traveled.

The droves of sheep and hogs kept us very busy, especially the sheep. All the boys in the village were hired to go ahead of the flock to keep them from eating the laurel, poison of course to sheep.

The above selection was excerpted from "A Bit of Family History: Memories by Charles Gray Atwood," from Joyce Coil.



In the News:

Townshend Village loses another historical structure. In July the residence owned by Carlton Smith blew up early in the morning. (above: house on extreme right) This is the most recent of a number of architectural losses in Townshend Village over the years.

Other significant structural losses in recent memory have been the Thayer Place (also referred to as the Schnebly Place, bottom photo) that burned in 1977, the Catholic church in 1968 and the Leland and Gray Science Building in 1967.



Recent Acquisitions:

Two record books of the Townshend town baseball teams of 1905-1908 have been given to the Historical Society by Charles Marchant of Townshend. These ledgers list the players' names, date of game and statistics of games played with neighboring towns and businesses. A unique game of "married" vs. "single" was played on July 18, 1908. The score appears to be 13-0, the winning team not identified.

Robert Follette of Belchertown, MA has given THS a wonderful collection of framed family portraits of his family, including those of James Otis Follett, known for his skill as a builder of stone arch bridges in the area. Included in the donation is an 1861 letter to the family detailing the burial arrangements for Samuel Follett killed in the Civil War. Robert Follette is also the donor of the beautiful Civil War register lithograph now on display in the THS collection.

Do you have this photo or know who does?



Maple Open House 2013

We had such a
successful sugarhouse tour,
we will be repeating it this
March. Please keep a look
out for details of the

MAPLE HOUSE TOUR!



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Yearly Dues for 2012

A New Date for Dues!

Our Historical Society Year for dues will now begin on January 1st each year. As you may have noticed, we did not solicit for dues during the last year in order to make the transition (from a June as our year's beginning). So if you've been eager to pay up, now would be a good time. We depend on your dues in order to serve the community through our mission of preserving the stories and history of our town. We are enclosing an envelope for your convenience.

Walter Corcoran, Treasurer