



THE HISTORIAN



VOLUME V, ISSUE ONE

SUMMER 2019



Jacob Thompson House 1811



Fuller House 1869

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings:

I am sitting here writing this on the hottest day of the year. I hope you will enjoy the article in this edition on the subject of trains, which I know many of you are interested in. An interesting note after you read the train story is that John Broadfoot lived in the Jacob Thompson house.

The Thompson House hired man's room project is going along slowly, but hopefully it will be ready for the fall. We did find definitive evidence that Monson Academy students did board at Jacob Thompson house (1850).

While researching the train article, I found an interesting story about Dr. Fuller. Back on July 4th, 1905, he held a party for eighty of his Green and Lincoln Street neighbors. He fed them both lunch and supper on the lawn and, in the evening, supplied a display of fireworks on the railroad tracks behind his residence. Wish I was there!

The floors in the two front rooms in Memorial Hall were just sanded and are in the process of being refinished. This will be the final project in order to complete the restoration of these rooms.

Dennis

As a reminder, some of you have not updated your membership as of May 1st. Please check your membership dates and renew if you are not current. Thank you.

Office for Rent

The Monson Historical Society has a vacancy at the Fuller House One Green Street, Monson, MA

\$450.00 per month

Two rooms, 500 square feet

On street parking

Call Tamara Cabey

(413) 267-5244

For appointment

- Dennis Swierad**—President, Historian and Genealogist
- Tamara Cabey**—Vice President and Rental Manager
- Leona Brahen**—Secretary, Webmaster and Newsletter Editor
- Kevin McNabb**—Treasurer
- Paul DeMaio**—Board Member and Building/Grounds Manager
- William Dominick**—Board Member
- Denis Duquette**—Board Member, Membership Director and Publicity
- Mary Swierad**—Accessionist and Collection Manager
- EmmaLadd Shepherd**—Board Member Emeritus

Mission Statement

To obtain and preserve historical data and articles pertaining to the town of Monson, Massachusetts, and to encourage and develop the pursuit and expression of such interests in all suitable ways.

Visit us on the web at www.monsonhistoricalsociety.org

Email us at monsonhistoricalsocietyinc@gmail.com

Do you need information about the history of Monson? Write, call or email us. We may be able to help.

MONSON'S GREAT TRAIN WRECK OF 1905

A DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS FROM THE MONSON REGISTER WITH PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE AFTERMATH FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

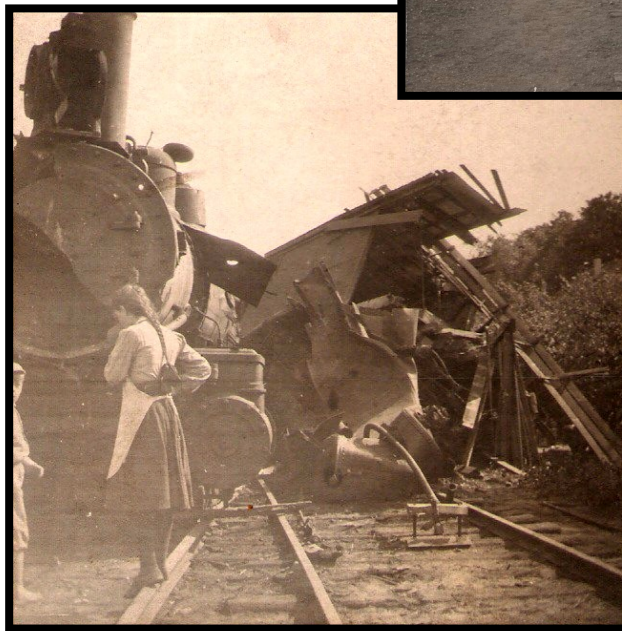
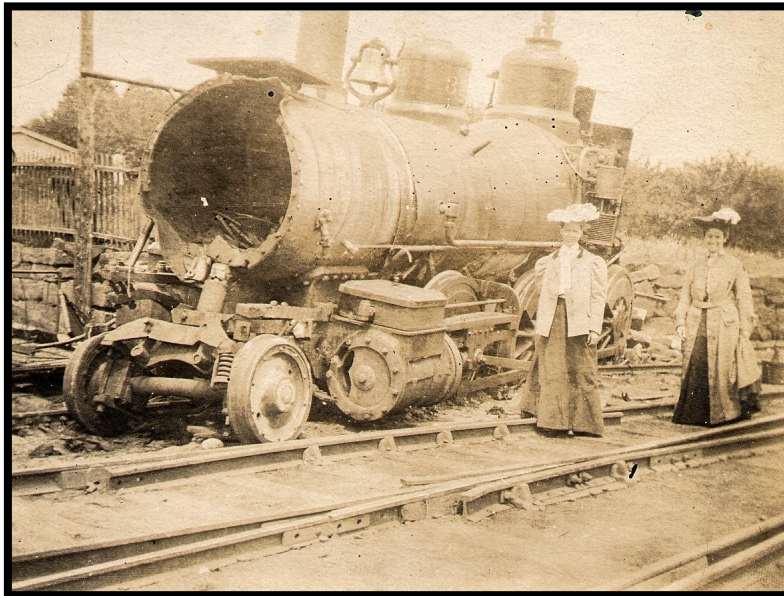
By Dennis Swierad

July 1, 1905 - There was a bad freight wreck at this station yesterday about 1:15 p.m. Train No. 95 from the south, running at a high rate of speed, collided with an engine attached to one car standing just in front of the telegraph office. The impact was terrific, and the crash was heard long distances from the scene of the wreck. The car and engine of the extra freight standing in front of the station were carried at least 100 yards down the track. The car was being unloaded at the time, and John Broadfoot was inside. He was thrown to the end of the car, but was not seriously hurt. It is a miracle that he was not killed, but with the exception of a few cuts and bruises he escaped. The only fatality was that of Charles Gregg, fireman on No. 95. The engineer jumped and saved his life, but poor Gregg stayed on and was ground to pieces when they came together. The engineer and fireman of the engine standing still saw No. 95 approaching in time to get out of the way. Both engines, Nos. 325 and 326, are total wrecks. Nine cars were derailed and several of them badly broken. The coping over the station platform is smashed

nearly the whole length of the building, which indicates that one of the box cars was tipped in the air during transit. The conductor and two trainmen were assisting Mr. Broadfoot in unloading the car. Ted Keefe was on the platform and saw No. 95 coming. He yelled "Jump," and the men unloading the car quickly went inside the freight depot. John, inside the car, did not get a chance to jump. Besides the shock of the first collision, he was thrown again when the car he was in was carried against the balance of extra freight 35, which had been backed on the side track. This threw him back to the other end of the car with some force. He then went to the side to get out and jumped into the cellar hole, opposite Ralph Clifford's residence. The blame for the accident is on the flagman sent out by Conductor Remmert of train 325. The flagman, whose name is Reed, was sent out 35 minutes before the wreck occurred. He states that he got as far as the tunnel. Soon after making this statement he disappeared. There was talk of arresting him if he could be located. Engineer Packard of train 95 saw no flag. It is probable that the train crew of No. 325 will be censured for being on the track on 95's time, even after taking the precaution of putting out a flag. The property loss will be heavy, as the two engines are wrecked the worst in the history of the road. Besides this several cars are

smashed and other damaged. Help was summoned from Stafford and Palmer to clear the track. A sidetrack was moved far enough to clear the cars, and at 4 o'clock it was possible to get by the wreck. The body of Gregg was pinned in the wreckage of his engine and a car. He was horribly mutilated. Assistant Medical Examiner Jackson viewed the body, and it was later removed from the wreck and taken to Bradway's undertaking rooms. The passenger station, after the accident, was a sight to behold. One window, casing and all, was sprung in and the floor was littered with broken glass and debris. A crowd soon gathered to see the wreckage and there was a swarm of people at the scene all the afternoon, many coming from Palmer. A wrecking train from New London arrived here about 5 o'clock and commenced the work of clearing the main track.





July 8, 1905 - Soon after the wreck last week Friday afternoon people commenced to arrive to view the ruins. Those who were unable to get a look Friday were present Saturday or Sunday. Many from the adjoining towns were among the spectators. The work of clearing up a wreck is interesting. The big, unwieldy cars look like a hard proposition to handle when they are off the iron, but it is easy enough for those who know how. Superintendent Nash arrived in town with the wrecking train from New London, Friday afternoon, and remained here until the wreck was cleared up. He is a practical railroad man, and able to go up against any kind of a proposition that presents itself. The super has a nice, easy flow of language, and addressed the men in a way that they can understand and admire, especially at critical intervals. Roadmaster Benny, Traveling Engineer Sample and that good old wheel horse, James Todd, were all present, and there was something doing every minute. One by one the big cars were pulled back on the track by an engine brought here for the purpose. As the cars were taken out the track could be re-laid. One car, the first from the engine on the north bound train, was so badly damaged that it was no


use, and it was rolled down into Ralph Clifford's meadow and burned. As the side-track gave an opportunity for other trains to pass, time enough could be taken to save everything worth saving. While the cars were being replaced on the track the engines were dismantled as far as possible, and eventually they were ready for a trip to the repair shops at St. Albans. The work of clearing up the wreck was completed Monday. But for the loss of the firemen the wreck would not be a very serious matter. The property loss is not as large as it seems. For instance, the two engines would appear to the uninitiated to be nearly a total loss. If this were true, this one item would amount to many thousand dollars. On the contrary, an expert figures that \$1000 will put the engines back in commission. This expert states that all the expensive parts of the engines, though slightly disarranged, can be reassembled. Only one car was totally smashed, and the trucks of this car can be used again. In this car were a lot of sewing machines and miscellaneous freight. Some of the machines were damaged, but the freight loss is very small. It is thought that \$3000 is a liberal estimate on the property loss. Anyone looking at the wreck Saturday morning

would place the figures at many times that amount. The flagman, on whom the blame seems to rest, has left for new fields. If he did not know any better, he is perhaps entitled to more pity than blame. One of the remarkable things in connection with the wreck was the ride the head-end brakeman took. He was on the third car from the engine and never left it. Besides the shock of the collision this car plowed along through two feet of sand, and was a very unsteady vehicle. The brakeman clung to the running board of the car until it stopped, and escaped with a few scratches. John Broadfoot, who also had an exciting ride, is nearly as good as new. He was quite lame and sore for several days after, but his bruises were of a temporary character.



Monson Train Station on Washington Street looking north on a typical day
 This Station was taken down in February 1960

WESTERN RAIL-ROAD.



THIS road will be opened for the transportation of passengers between Worcester and Springfield, on Tuesday, October 1st, 1839. The trains to run regularly as follows:—

Leave Worcester daily, (Sundays excepted,) at 10 A. M. and 4 1-2 P. M., immediately after the arrival of the trains over the Boston and Worcester Road, leaving Boston at 7 A. M. and 1 1-2 P. M.

Leave Springfield daily, (Sundays excepted) at 6 1-2 A. M. and 1 P. M. arriving in Worcester to connect with the trains leaving for Boston at 10 A. M. and 4 1-2 P. M.;

Tickets for Springfield, or any way station on the Western Road, to be purchased at the office of the Worcester R. R. Depot, Boston.

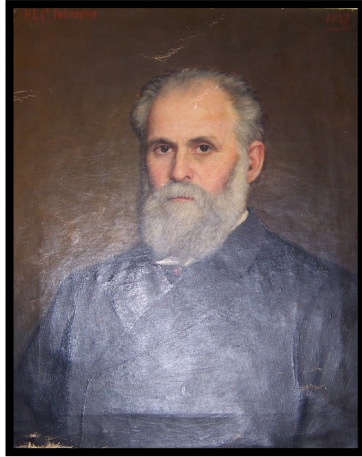
Tickets for Boston, or any way station on the Worcester Road, to be purchased at the office of the Western R. R. Depot, Springfield.

GEORGE W. WHISTLER, Engineer.
 Oct. 8. ep8eoptf7

I thought you might enjoy seeing this original advertisement that was found in an old book of mine, for the Great Western Railroad which passed through the northwest corner of Monson in 1839.

Dennis

NEW ACQUISITIONS



top: Oil painting of Cyrus W. Holmes, Jr. 1887 by H.E.C. Peterson



right: Mantle clock with reverse paintings on glass of Monson Academy Buildings presented to Henry W. Benton from his friends at Monson Academy 1971

Donation from Florida resident



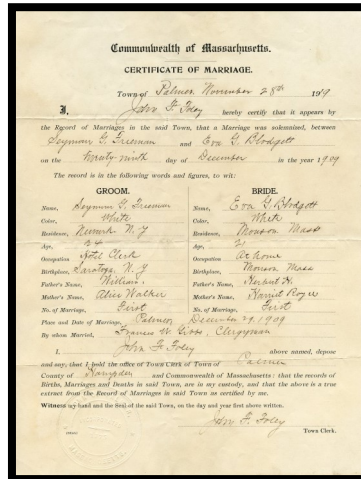
above: Two Monson Academy songbooks, label from A. D. Ellis Mills of their "Emberton" line of wool, Dorcas Dishes cookbook, Dorcas Society members photograph, recent photographs of the Bliss Street Mill just before demolition

Donation from Ludlow resident



Women's Polish American Citizens Club minutes & ledgers 1938-1982
Bar Inventories & Bartender Records 1954-1955

Picked up on front lawn of a Monson residence on a free pile



Marriage Certificate 1909

Donation from Monson resident



top: Souvenir Plate of Memorial Town Hall

middle: Trade Card from W. N. Flynt & Co.

bottom: Silver Souvenir Spoon of original Monson Academy Building with engraving "Emma"

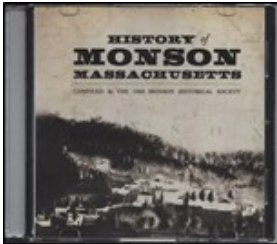
Purchase

ITEMS FOR SALE

1960 History of Monson Book CD

The History of Monson, written in 1960 for the Bicentennial of the formation of the town, is now available in PDF format on a CD.

If you are currently a member of the Monson Historical Society, the fee to obtain the CD is \$15.00. For non-members, the fee is \$20.00, which includes one year free membership and our quarterly newsletter *The Historian*. Shipping costs for the CD are included in the fee.

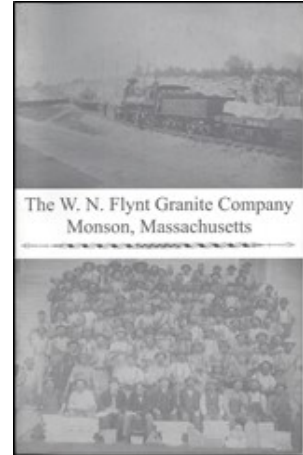


Please include whether you are a member or not and mail your request to:

Monson History CD
 Monson Historical Society, Inc.
 One Green Street, Suite 1
 Monson, MA 01057

Please include your email address to receive the newsletter. Make your checks payable to

Monson Historical Society, Inc.



Also available is the 12-page booklet about the W.N. Flynt Granite Co. Cost is \$3.00 which includes shipping.

WHERE IS THIS?

Answer to Last Month's "Where Was This?"

This was the fountain/well head that was located on the little triangle of land that was in front of the Ellis Mansion which is now the Masonic Hall at the intersection of Oak and Bliss Streets. What-ever became of it, is still a mystery.



Where was this seasonal attraction?



NEW MEMBERS

*Welcome New Member
 Ruth Macnutt of Billerica, MA*

*** MEMBERSHIP ***

Membership Renewals occur on May 1st of each year and are good through April 30th of the following year. (For example, a "5/1/2020" membership means you are a paid member from 5/1/2019 to 4/30/2020).

For Postal Mail Recipients of Newsletter

Check the date on your mailing label. If it reads "5/1/2020" (or a later date), your membership is **current**. If it reads "5/1/2019" (or an earlier date), it is time for you to renew.

For Email Recipients of Newsletter

Check the "Subject" line in the email. If it reads "Monson Historical Society Newsletter", your membership is **current**. If it reads "Monson Historical Society Newsletter/Renewal", your membership has expired and you will need to update it. Please read the text in your email for renewal instructions.

NOTE

Until we get set up on the Historical Society's email account, please be aware that the newsletters will be sent from this email address: DCDuquette@msn.com (Denis Duquette).

Check your "Junk" email folder, in case it gets sent there.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please take the time today to complete the membership form and mail it back to the address listed on the form, along with your check.

Your membership will be updated.

MONSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address _____ Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address (for newsletter) _____

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!)

Indicate a membership category and enclose a check made out to:
"Monson Historical Society, Inc."

(Note: Membership renewal is May 1st of each year)

_____ Individual \$10⁰⁰ _____ Family \$20⁰⁰

_____ Life Membership \$250⁰⁰

Return to: MHS Membership - One Green Street, Suite One - Monson, MA 01057

Any information you provide us will be kept in strict confidence and will
 NEVER be given out or sold at any time.

**And as always, we *THANK YOU* for your continued support of the
 Monson Historical Society, Inc.!**