



Dennis Historical Society

Newsletter

May 2019

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The May Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, May 15, 2:00 pm at the DHS Library in the West Dennis Free Public Library, 260 Main Street (Rt. 28), West Dennis
Members Welcome

Please send information & stories for the newsletter to Dave Talbott at the DHS Website email address: info@dennishistoricalsociety.org

Making My Job Easy!

The articles in the May Newsletter were written by our members...*Thank you!*

Paddock Household

This fascinating article was written by Leslie Ray Sears, III and Pamela Sears Cooper

In the 1880 Dennis census, when Isaiah Hall, 1880 census enumerator, reached the house at the northwest corner of the Old King's Highway and Bridge Street in East Dennis, (just a few miles away from our great-grandfather's house) he recorded the following on page 14 of enumeration district 12 "dwelling house (in the order of visitation) #160, family #170: Mary C Paddock, age 56, keeping house." In fact in the *1880 Atlas of Barnstable County*, you can clearly see this house labeled as Mrs. M Paddock. The 1880 Atlas is a valuable resource when studying the census from the whole town point of view. Mary Crocker Paddock (1821-1892) was the daughter of Judah and Mary Crocker (Crowell) Paddock. Whether this entry listed Mary as a "Mrs." in error or whether they were referring to her deceased mother who was also named Mary Crocker Paddock (1794-1868) is a mystery.

Living with Mary are Anna N Shaw, 33, boarder, clergyman b. England; Emma F Angell, 30, boarder, physician, b. NY; Ellen McLaughlin 20, servant, b. Ireland and John McLaughlin, 7mos., boarder. It's difficult to think of a 7 month old baby as a boarder, but clearly his mother is employed by the owner to support the other boarders. Four women, all single. Pam discovered this intriguing household during data entry for the 1880 Dennis tree and did some more digging.

It seems, from *Who's Who In America, 1890*, Emma Frances Angell was a physician, b. Angellville, NY, 15 Sep 1849, and after undergraduate work, graduated Boston University Medical School in 1882. She was later editor and publisher of *The Home-Maker Magazine* and author of *What a Young Wife Ought to Know*, 1901. Emma seems to be quite a liberated thinker for her time. Just three years later, 1883, she is married to Rev Ellis R Drake.

It's no wonder Emma is in the company of Reverend Anna Howard Shaw (1847-1919) (another case where the enumerator wrote N instead of H or just our lacking ability to discern his penmanship). The minister appeared to be inviting all of her forward thinking friends to come preach and teach in East Dennis. We wonder if the local seafarers' wives made a particularly good audience since they must have been an independent lot. Anna had graduated from the Theology School of Boston University in 1878 at age 31. From 1878 to 1885 she was pastor at East Dennis, Mass. She was ordained by the Methodist Protestant Church on Oct. 12, 1880.

Reverend Dr Shaw must have been quite a leader as she is described in Jim Coogan's Barnstable Patriot article "The Woman Preacher Who Faced Down a Sea Captain" in the 24 Jun 2001 issue. "Two factions in the East Dennis Methodist church were at each other and couldn't get along. She said 'I will refuse admittance to any among you who bring personal criticism into your public prayers.' One retired sea captain stood up angrily. 'I have prayed in this heavenly way for 50 years before that gal was born," he pointed to Shaw. 'And she can't dictate to me how I shall pray in the future.'

Shaw allowed him to continue. When he finished, she spoke directly to him. 'Captain, If I came aboard your ship and refused to follow orders, would you not consider that an act of mutiny?' The old man nodded in assent. 'And would you not put me ashore in irons?'

Problems continued in the church until Reverend Shaw said she would resign and went home to that house on Bridge street to pack her bags. The parishioners would have none of it.

Coogan continues "But before she could leave, a delegation of church goers surrounded her house. They were led by the same captain that she had earlier banished from the church. He had heard about the sermon and agreed that the young woman preacher was indeed correct in her assessment. 'It's high time quarrelling and backbiting were stopped,' he told the crowd. 'I've come here to say that I'm with the gal. She got real spunk. Put me down for my original subscription and ten dollars extra!'"

Anna attended Albion College, Michigan, just 30 miles from Olivet College, Michigan where Dr. Emma did her undergraduate work. Do you suppose this is the connection that resulted in their being boarders in the same house in East Dennis? Or maybe it's the fact that Anna attended Boston University School of Theology just six years before Dr. Emma. They are only two years apart in age. Rev. Anna became the first woman to be ordained a Methodist Protestant minister in 1880. Of course the church in East Dennis is no stranger to famous people. Our grandmother attended that church when Peter Marshall, Jr. was preaching there in the 60s.

Rev. Anna, M.D. is another story altogether. Apparently, while living in the same household with Dr. Emma, Anna also attended B.U. Medical School and graduated from there in 1886. At this point she became very active with Susan B. Anthony in the Women's Christian Temperance Union. You can bet she was an outspoken advocate of political rights for women all along as she competed in the male dominated theology and medical schools. This makes a person wish they were living in East Dennis in 1880. The movie *Iron Jawed Angels* depicts the brutality that another group of suffragettes experienced after picketing Woodrow Wilson's White House in 1912. Alice Paul meets with Rev. Anna to take the reins of the Washington D.C. chapter of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Well you can see a little census study can quickly digress.

That house is currently an antique shop. Oh to be a fly on the wall at the dinner table in 1880!

Lady Slippers

This wonderful little snippet of our history was written by Phyllis Horton

For many, many years the Indian Lands behind the old Town Hall on Main Street, South Dennis were famous for a very large stand of Lady Slipper orchids.

Starting in the early years of Dennis Historical Society (early 1960s), Dr. Norton Nickerson led a walk through the area and talked about them. It was one of the premier displays on the Cape and beyond. Norton was a local man who grew up a few houses north of the lady slippers and had watched them his entire life. He was a Professor of Botany at Tufts University when he led the tours.

Dennis Historical Society members signed up for the walk as soon as the monthly newsletter arrived. Walking on the pathway you would be surrounded by hundreds (maybe a few thousand) of pink blossoms. Their scent was delicate, but with that many blossoms, it was a heady experience.

The one thing Norton stressed was not to pick them as the next years blossoms came from the seeds dropped when the blossoms faded. Evidently people were picking them when no one else was around and the blossoms were less and less as the years went by. Today you would be hard-pressed to find a lady slipper anywhere in the area. How sad!

The Improper Bostonian

Last September, DHS received an email from an author who was writing an article about "historic Cape Cod nightlife." His request was for information about the history of the property on which the *Improper Bostonian* is located in Dennis Port. All he knew was that Joseph Baker had been the owner and that the house had been torn down. The barn, which survived, housed the nightspot. I sent an email to our Board asking if someone could help the author in his quest. It came as no surprise that our curator/archivist and Dennis historian Phyllis Horton answered the call. Last fall, I forwarded Phyllis's response to the DHS Board. Now with pleasure, I share it in the May Newsletter.

The Improper Bostonian was the barn of Joseph Lincoln Baker, born 1864 in Dennis Port to Joseph K. Baker and wife Hannah. He lived here until adulthood and then moved out to Omaha, Nebraska where he was involved in banking, lumber and several businesses. Mr. Baker made his fortune by developing refrigerated railway cars. He then moved to Chicago and made other sound investments.

I am not sure when he first came home to visit, but everyone who left here to find their fortune came home to visit at least once a year. He built a lovely large house on Main Street across from his father's home. The barn held his team of horses and carriage which came with him when he arrived for the summer. He and his family came in one private railroad car and the horses came in another.

After his death, his wife and daughters continued to come every year. My grandmother was well acquainted with the girls. They spent many hours together. She told of them going to the drug store for ice cream cones, then running back to the house (a very short distance) to go up into the cupola and spy on people walking by.

I was in the house a number of times with my grandmother. As I remember the mother was not there, just the two daughters. I had to sit properly in an overstuffed chair with my hands folded in my lap, and only speak when spoken to.

In my teens (during WWII) the place was entirely empty except for a grand piano. We took turns playing the piano and others danced or roller skated throughout the first floor.

After the war, it evidently changed hands. Augustus Kennedy, a local carpenter from West Harwich took the house down board by board and many houses erected after that time had parts of the house in them, especially the mahogany trim. An office building was built on the site.

Throughout all those years the barn just stood empty. I am not sure when it became a nightclub because I was all around the country with my Air Force husband. It seems to have thrived over the years. I'm sure Linc Baker would be amazed that his barn was still in use!

When Board member Bo Durst read Phyllis's account, her response was, "WOW! What a mind and memory!" Amen!

Last Month's Picture

Not surprising, because of all her research on Dennis Village, Board Member Ann Croston was the first to supply the correct earliest and latest dates for last month's picture. The Dennis Memorial Library was completed in 1924. The Dennis Grade School was torn down in 1955. Josh Crowell further narrowed the time frame by noting that the windows in the picture were as they were when it was a school, not after the building was converted to a fire station in 1931. The lawn behind the stonewall is to the right of the Whittemore house. Does anyone know when that area was built upon? Although last month's picture was not a "*This Unknown House*," a correct answer boosted the reader batting average to .666.



Note the lamppost which is common to and orients these pictures from the DHS Digital Archives.

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HISTORY OF QUIVET NECK

Sears Families, Saltworks & Sea Captains



Artwork of the 1845 Captain Levi Howe's House by Howard Bonington

Researched and Presented by
Dennis Historical Society's Mary Kuhrtz

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2PM AT JACOB SEARS LIBRARY
A \$5.00 donation is requested

Coming this month, don't miss it



"This Unknown House" picture was given to me by Phyllis at the April Board Meeting. Nothing is known about it. If anyone can identify its location, the owners, or provide any other information about it, please email me at: info@dennishistoricalsociety.org **Thank you!**

DHS Library schedule for May:
Tues. 10 am-3 pm