

SHEPHARD POTTER

Shepherd Potter was a very likable and interesting man. He was an old time woods cook and it has been said that he could turn his hand to almost anything. He had dreams and aspirations far ahead of his generation. The most of his idle time was devoted to experiments in an endeavor to invent perpetual motion.

Shepherd always dressed well, whether he was in the woods or in the village.

In 1859 a great tragedy occurred which changed Shepherd's whole life. It was considered one of the greatest tragedies of the time.

On April 7, 1859 Marshall Potter, of Lee, Maine, son of Hannah and Alexander Potter, invited a school teacher, Elizabeth Stone, to ride to his home with him. For some reason which she could not seem to explain, she rejected the invitation. Marshall went along alone and upon arriving at the homestead he murdered the inhabitants of the house with a shingle maul. Those murdered were: Marshall's mother; his brothers, Oliver and Alexander; and a nephew, Albert, crippled son of Shepherd Potter. Marshall then set the buildings afire and fled.

When the people of the neighborhood discovered the tragedy they sent for Dr. Wilson. The doctor examined the mutilated bodies and reported that there had been foul play. A party of three men was sent to find Marshall. They were: Joseph W. Burke, George Norton and William Summerbee. He was found in St. Stephens, N. B., Canada, hiring men to go on the drive.

They cleverly succeeded in coaxing him across the line and took him to Musquash Lake where they held his head under water until he confessed the crime. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and died May 18, 1864.

After 1859 Shepherd built himself a house on Lot No 35 in Transalpine and lived a very lonely life.

A SUDDEN MARRIAGE

Lydia Soule, of Brownville, Maine had worked for some time at the home of Elder Gowen's in Transalpine. The Gowens had become very fond of her and she did her work very well. She had a quiet, easy manner and was a born homemaker. She was especially adapted for care of the sick. Her cool counsel and comforting aid was sought by many. She loved church music and all the beautiful things of life. Elder Gowen had come to think of her as a daughter almost. But he managed to keep his thoughts very much to himself.

One bright Monday morning Lydia was busy washing out of doors, as was the custom in those days. Her face had become flushed from bending over the soft suds and she never looked prettier. Elder Gowen, stood far back under an apple tree, apparently in deep thought. Presently his son William came out of the barn with an empty pail in each hand and walked in the direction of the well. He stopped to pass the time of day with Lydia and both smiled into each others face. Perhaps it was their youth that inspired the Elder to do what he did, for just as William was about to pass on with his work his father shouted for him to come back and stand where he was. Then Mr. Gowen rushed into the parlor, got the old family Bible and came back all out of breath. Without even asking them, HE MARRIED THEM right then and there. Elder Gowen had won for himself a fine new daughter-in-law and the marriage proved to be a very happy one.

There were seven children born to this couple. Their names are as follows: Florentine, Jessie, Jemima, Sarah, Benjamin, James and Franklin.

JONAS COBURN WAS OLD TRAPPER AND HUNTER

For many years, the wild life around Lincoln thought Jonas Coburn their friend. He spent the greater part of his time in the woods and could creep noiselessly through thicket and underbrush without making even a sound. He was a born hunter and woodsman and knew as much about nature and the haunts of animals as any Indian.

One day a grizzly bear chanced past Jonas's dwelling and paused to peek through his window. What he saw, was countless skins of wild creatures, three stuffed birds and several live pigeons fluttering about in a cage much too small for them. The bear grunted and then darted away to the forest and from that day on Jonas had to work harder for his game.

Jonas, always had two or three hounds to help him in chasing down deer and foxes. He usually got one or two silver foxes every year and they netted him a good return.

But Jonas's greatest pastime was catching pigeons. Pigeons were thick in those days. They came in large flocks every spring for breeding and remained until late in the fall. The woods seemed full of them. Often times the farmers became much annoyed by their attacks upon the ripened fields of wheat and rye.

Beds for pigeons were made in a pasture or field at some distance from the dwelling house. The turf on a patch of ground a dozen or fifteen feet square was removed and the ground made smooth and thinly covered with grains of wheat or rye. Four or five perpendicular poles and as many horizontal poles were then erected on each side of the bed for the pigeons to alight upon. As they flew through the air some of them would take a glance at



Ard, May and Kate Edwards

the bed and halt to get a luncheon. Then larger groups of birds would fly down to investigate the new feeding ground and soon the poles would be swarming with them. The pigeons' net was placed upon the bed concealed from sight and when the pigeons were busy taking their food the operator (in a boughhouse) would spring the net and generally the pigeons would be killed on the spot by pinching their heads. However, they were sometimes taken alive to a great pen in the barn where they were fattened so as to make them bring a better price in the markets.

These birds are practically extinct in this part of the country now, but they are found in large numbers throughout the west.

The lower end of Jonas Coburn's farm (the end where Cold Stream Lake is) will ever be referred to as the "Old Swimming Place." Boys used to go in groups to Jonas's farm on Sunday mornings and take a cool dip in the refreshing waters before attending church. Some of them claimed it helped to keep them awake during the long services (while sitting on hard wooden seats) in the old school house.

Many people came to the Coburn farm to dig SWEET FLAG which grew plentiful there. It was a very valuable herb for use in rheumatism. Young men often chewed SWEET FLAG to sweeten their breath - before going to see their best girl.

TWO SAD FATES WITHIN A YEAR

Few people living today can remember Annis Delano, mother of Dan Delano, who once lived below the Josiah Perkins Place.

One of Annis's hands had been removed above the wrist and even though she had but one hand she knit socks, stockings and mittens. She would take a small corn cob and make a hole in one end and tuck one end in her belt then stick one end of the knitting needle in that hole and steady it with the stub arm and with her left hand manage the knitting.

Annis was very neighborly. Often times people hired her to care for their children while they were away. She was very dependable and trustworthy. She was never without her carpet bag. In this bag she carried, besides her knitting work, her sleeping garment, one or two clean aprons and a few little necessities. If she was ever any place making a call and was invited to stay longer she was always prepared without going back home.

One winter's day her husband was skating across Cold Stream Pond with a brass kettle tied on his back. He accidentally went through the ice and was drowned. Annis became ill with grief and her mind began to wander. Late the next fall she went out the latter part of one day carrying her carpet bag. Her daughter-in-law thought she was going to some of the neighbors and did not question her. Her footsteps took her to the lake, and the scene of her husband's tragedy. She wandered about aimlessly until after dark. A heavy snow storm and blizzard arose and she lost her way. She circled around a large rock many times and then finally becoming exhausted, she laid her carpet bag down for a pillow, stretched herself out and apparently went to sleep. Her frozen body was found

When this town was first being settled, many of our ancestors used a pitch knot for a light. In those early days there were at first, no stoves and the glow from the large fire places lighted the room so well that small labors could be carried on very successfully. On either side of the old time fire place, were cedar switches or lighters.

The first candles for lighting purposes, were made from the tallow of mutton, raccoon, woodchuck or other wild animals. When whale oil first came into use it was considered a great blessing - despite its disagreeable odor.

Flint for building fires was obtained from Piscataquis County. Punk was taken from Rock Maple, in the form of decayed wood on the inside of the tree.

People were greatly inconvenienced when the fire in the big fire place went out entirely. If they lived near neighbors, they would send one of the children with a tin lantern, containing a tallow candle to borrow some fire. Instead of the lantern, they would sometimes send a pan to be filled with live coals. When the fire was lost, and there were no neighbors near, fire was kindled by striking a flint upon a piece of steel over a small quantity of tinder made of burnt rags placed in a tinder box which was composed of tin. The sparks upon the tinder were raised to a flame by touching it with the end of a match which had been dipped in melted sulphur.

The first match which we ever heard of around Lincoln was the ORONO MATCH.

The secret of making lucifer matches was discovered about this time, but they were more expensive than the friction match and were not much of a success.

A Boy Who Could Cook

Fred Clifford of Millinocket and Greenville, Maine was raised in Transalpine and is proud of it. He never tires of talking about old times and is always glad to see old school mates.

As a boy, Fred was rather quiet and shy. He was fond of parties and outdoor amusements, especially crust sliding on Long Ridge Hill. Fred was not particularly fond of doing chores or filling wood boxes.

Fred was a great favorite because he could cook and prepare a most excellent meal. One day he invited some of the older girls of the school to have dinner at his father's house. He cooked corn, beans, new potatoes, bread and baked a delicious apple pie. Girls always liked Fred and he was usually the center of attraction at picnics and home gatherings. He cooked and served trout at his table while attending the 1937 Transalpine Reunion.

Fred is owner-proprietor of the Rainbow Lake Camps which are located in the Mt. Katahdin region. He is especially adapted to this line of work, is a perfect host, and attributes his success to his early days in Transalpine.

Many of the early settlers, about Lincoln, obtained their supply of water from the nearest spring or brook. The first wells, some of which were very deep, were furnished with the old fashioned well sweep and pole, to one end of which "the old oaken bucket" was attached by a rope or chain. Jonas Coburn had a well of this type on his farm. There was an old apple tree near it which for many years was called "Well Sweep Tree". Only a very few of these devices for drawing water can be seen today.

The Windlass and chain with a large box filled with small rocks, to balance the bucket, was next introduced. Following this, the revolving chain pump came into use to some extent. These were followed by substantial suction pumps. Then water was next conveyed direct to the kitchen by aqueducts.

The community watering trough or fountain has long since faded from view. The beatings of horse hoofs along the streets are becoming fainter and fainter.

The town pump has long since been done away with. A few of the Lincoln people still retain pumps in their door yards. These people who still have their pumps, tell of the hundreds of people who visit their yard yearly in quest of a drink of the clear, cool water, sweet and sparkling, fresh from the well. It has no comparison with the water coming through miles and miles of pipes. Dozens of the old people have been heard to remark that - "Just the looks of a pump makes them thirsty."

If one is really thirsty, good, cold water knows no substitute. There are several bubbling springs within the vicinity of Lincoln, and if you have never drunk water from a bubbling spring, on a hot summer's day, you have a real treat in store for you.