

January meeting of the Trustees of the Jacob Edwards Library.

1941.

Those present were Messrs, Crawford, Kay, Laliberte, and Mrs. Smith. The treasurer's report was read and accepted, The secretary's was also read and accepted. Next the Annual report the Budget report were read and signed by the Trustees.

1. It was voted to have Mr. Laliberte talk with the board of the Worcestor Electric Light Company about new rates for our library such as rates enjoyed by churches in the town and report his findings.

2. Re-issue building inspection for five year period beginning Feb. 1, 1941.

3. The treasurer to arrange for the auditing of the Treasurer's account for the year.

Miss Shane gave a short report of the conditions in the library and the meeting adjourned,

G.W. Smith, Secretary.

February, 1941.

The Trustees present were Messers. Wells, Key, Crawford, Laliberte, and Mrs. Smith.

Mr. Wells was Made chairman in Mr. Edwards absence.

The report was read and accepted for accounts and minutes of last meeting. Then the auditor's report was read and accepted, and placed on file. The Trustees approved the payment of \$5.00 for this service.

The trustees records were also audited by a State auditor.

Mr. Crawford (treasurer) appeared befor the Finance Committee of the town explained and filed the budge tand financial report for this year. The Librarian's report was also filed at the Selectmen's office.

An article was filed to appear in the Town Warrant regarding the appointment of a Treasurer for the Trust Funds.

The invoices for the month were signed and the meeting adjourned,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith, Sec.

JACOB EDWARDS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

MEETING - MARCH 25, 1941

Postponed monthly meeting was called by the Chairman, J. K. Edwards at 7:00 P.M.

Those present were: Messrs. Kay, Edwards, Laliberte, Crawford, and Miss Shane.

Absent: Messrs. Wells, Francuzzi, and Mrs. Smith.

The Secretary's report of the January 15, and February 19 meetings was read and duly accepted, and ordered placed on file.

In the absence of Mrs. Smith, W. W. Crawford acted as Secretary Pro-tem.

Report of the Treasurer was read, duly accepted and ordered placed on file.

Consistent with the vote at the Town Meeting on March 10, 1941: "Article 20 - voted that the Town authorize the Board of Trustees of the Jacob Edwards Memorial Library to appoint one of its members as treasurer on the condition that he give bond as required under the provisions of Section 10 of Chapter 78 of the General Laws", the Trustees authorized the filing of application for the bond to be purchased through the office of J. E. Desrosiers.

Current invoices were discussed and duly approved for payment.

Librarian reported on the invoice from Foley's News covering periodical subscriptions for the year 1941. Miss Shane pointed out that the library was being charged retail prices for the publications, whereas, libraries may purchase them at special prices. Disregarding newspaper subscriptions which are at net rates, the invoice calls for periodical subscriptions amounting to \$266.50. It was pointed out that from two different sources it was learned this represented an excess cost of \$56. and \$58. respectively. Miss Shane was to discuss this situation with Mr. Foley, and in view of the order being placed previous to her assumption of responsibility the invoice would be paid as rendered if Mr. Foley did not suggest any other basis of settlement.

Miss Shane brought up for discussion question of sources of book supply, and stated that there was a cut-rate market through which a slight additional discount might be obtained. There seemed to be some question as to whether the amount saved would be offset by advantages now obtainable through the sources of supply that have been patronized in the past. It was voted

to leave this matter to the experience and judgment of the librarian.

Miss Shane recommended the adjustment of certain payroll rates retroactive to January 1, 1941. The amount involved would be less than \$100. and it was voted to authorize the adjustment. The Town Accountant had been consulted and stated that it was permissible to have payroll adjustments retroactive if so voted, and provision for payment had been made in budget.

There was a discussion of the cost of heating water by gas. Miss Shane reported that results were unsatisfactory, and the cost too high. It was voted that Mr. Laliberte be directed to replace gas with water leg to be installed in heating boiler.

Mr. Laliberte presented a special contract which he had obtained from the Worcester County Electric Company and which was signed by Mr. Edwards. The special rates will result in a saving of from \$50. to \$55. a year on the basis of present electrical consumption.

It was voted to record the appointment of Trustees by the Town for the year commencing April 1, 1941 as follows:

J. K. Edwards
O. J. Laliberte
Rene Francuzzi

It was also reported and recorded that the Edwards Trustees were likewise reappointed, effective April 1, 1941.

It was voted that the Library would, in the future, until otherwise changed make no distinction between the privilege of resident and non-resident borrowers with respect to time.

Upon motion duly made it was voted to adjourn at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

W. W. CRAWFORD, Secretary Pro-tem

bj
4/9/41

April 1941.

Regular meeting with Messers, Edwards, Crawford, Laliberte, and Mrs. Smith, present.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and accepted.

Mr. Laliberte brought in a report concerning the hot water heater but it was decided after due consideration to look up the prices of an upstairs unit to heat run by electricity to eliminate a gas bill. All this to be decided upon after receipt of costs etc., were figured.

Four new screens were to be purchased to go on windows near the stacks.

The resignation of Mrs. O'Shaughnessy was read and accepted (to take effect June 1, 1941) It was voted to have Mrs. Smith write a letter to her thanking her for the years of faithful service and the the trustees regretted her going.

It was voted to give Miss. MacMasters the position thus open and to give her a week's vacation besides the regular 2 weeks she takes each year for special training at the University of New Hampshire. This change to make Miss Berneim a full time worker instead of a 30 hour a week one. She also to receive a weeks vacation.

Bills for the current were signed and the meeting adjourned,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith, Sec.

Special Meeting held in May, 1941

The town allotted the Library the sum of one thousand dollars for repairs and necessary painting after over twenty years of continual service to the public.

At this meeting it was decided to have Mr. Laliberte have charge of the re-conditioning of the main room, reference room and the librarian's study. The ceilings to be whitened side walls painted and columns repaired, and this to be done during the summer months.

Lighting was discussed with a special representative from Worcester presenting solutions. It was voted to lay this matter on the table for the present. A special rate was obtained by Mr. Laliberte and the Light bills should be reduced.

A truck for moving books was purchased and several small items to make the plant more efficient.

Mr. Crawford, Mr. Wells, Mr. Laliberte, Mr. Kay and Mrs. Smith were present.

Meeting adjourned,

Mrs Smith, Sec.

June, 1941.

Mrs. Smith and Mr. Wells and Mr. Crawford were the only ones present.

The reports of the secretary and treasurer were read and filed as well as the treasurer's bond. The latter to be kept by the librarian.

The trees have been fed and sprayed by a Tree surgeon (Mr. Ormsby) Price \$55.75

1. It was voted to have a sleeve put on the lower part of the flag pole where it has corroded to prevent further damage.

2. Miss Mac Master's pay to be increased to \$900. as of July, 1, 1941.

3. Persons using the library during the summer must make a deposit of \$1.00 or \$2.00 as the case requires.

Miss Shane discussed the current problems and how she is meeting them and the meeting was adjourned,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith, Sec.

October 1941.

Those present were Messers, Edwards, Crawford, Laliberte and Mrs. Smith.

The report of the finances since June were heard and accepted.

It was voted to expend the balance of the town allotment for the current year toward the following

I. redecorating newspaper room
museum

2. Elevator repairs. \$200. limit.

3. Flag pole repair.

4. Steel file. \$25.00 limit for book ends etc.,

Motion made to list and loan to the Wells Museum articles in the library basement museum room.

Voted to give the Janitor a raise of 10% effective Oct. 1, 1941

Meeting adjourned,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith.

October 15, 1941.

Regular meeting was held with MR. Crawford, MR. Edwards, MR. Laliberte, and MRS. Smith present.

Mr. Crawford's report was read and accepted. He recommended that the committee consider the needed repairs and improvements necessary for maintenance be expended prior to the year 1942 when the appropriation might not be available.

It was voted to have Mrs. Smith consult Mr. Tolton about the cost of building bookcases and decorating the room formally known as the museum, and to report at a future meeting.

The bill for the repair of the elevator was handed in by Mr. Laliberte and payment of same was authorized. Mr. Laliberte was also to attend to the repair of the bronze railing on the stairs at entrance of building.

Voted to allow one of town persons working in South-brook to use the Library by depositing the regular amount required of summer residents.

Voted to keep the Library closed this winter on Sundays.

Meeting adjourned,

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith. Secretary.

FROM THE LIBRARY:

Cartridge pouch: initials "P. T."
Tin canteen
Loving cup. "Southbridge Light Infantry"
Dispatch pouch. "U. S."
2 shot pouches
Painted powder horn
Epaulette marked G. H. Hartwell 1944
2 Bayonet sheathes
Miniature bale of cotton presented by Central Mills Co.
Bayonet sheath with dispatch case
Sword
Rifle
Large Spinning wheel
Flax wheel
Clock reel
Two niddy-noddies
Wooden auger bit
Patent papers and imperial seal in case.
Piece of Charter oak
Under hammer pistol
2 wooden sanders
Candle mold
Pair wooden shoes
Glass pestle
Shuttle
Miscellaneous Indian volics
Leather covered box
Surveyor's transit
Bull yoke
Cow hide trunk
Leather suit case
Ax
Flax hetchel
Tin churn
Bull yoke
Bison's head
Roster of Sp. Am. war Veterans
Pictorial map of Southbridge
Adr. of 1st Sturbridge fair
Photo of Civil War veterans
Engraving of Gov. Marcy
Map of Southbridge

told me what I might become, and helped me on in life at that critical juncture. Whichever of merit or distinction I have since attained to, I owe to him more than to any other living person."

And here it may be remarked, that, General Salem Town was not extraordinary in either intellect or cultivated ability; he was a man of fair culture and general understanding, but somewhat remarkable in his kindness of heart and genial temperament; for these qualities he was conspicuous.

Through a long life he has acted the part of a useful man, always gaining friends but never losing them. His efforts have exhibited a desire to do good, always interested in promoting common school education, good morals, and religion.

In the early period of his life he was for a time engaged by the State authorities as a surveyor, in laying out the public lands in the State of Maine, then known as the Province of Maine, a part of the State of Massachusetts. In this capacity he had served in his more immediate vicinity, under the late Caleb Ammidown, Esq., of Charlton, who was noted in all that region in that respect; when at the sale of the personal effects of Mr. Ammidown, by his executors, after his decease, Mr. Town purchased at public auction on that occasion, the surveying instruments the deceased had for many years been accustomed to use, and which were continued for that purpose by him so long as he followed that occupation.

At a recent period when, having no further use for such instruments, this writer being on a visit to him, at his residence at Charlton, conversation turned incidentally to the character and doings of the late Caleb Ammidown, the grandfather of his visitor, then accompanied by his cousin, the late Hon. Ebenezer D. Ammidown, and among other things was related by the general, his acquaintance and great respect for the late Mr. Ammidown; and observed, that he now possessed the identical compass he purchased, and had long used as aforesaid, when by request this instrument was bought by the writer,

and since by him deposited in the museum or cabinet of the public library of his native town; the same having been used among the last acts of the late Caleb Ammidown, in making the first survey of the territory, which originally formed the Poll Parish, incorporated in 1801, and which became the town of Southbridge in 1816. There may this compass, the workmanship of the late Peregrine White, of Woodstock, long remain as a memento of the past, appropriately finding rest, reminding those of the present generation, and those to follow, of the valuable duties it has aided to perform, and also serve as a memorial of the character and important services rendered during the wisely and usefully spent lives of the much respected owners, through whose hands it has passed, and at last found rest in that useful and excellent institution.

CALEB AMMIDOWN.

In further illustration of the character of Mr. Ammidown and his ancestry, the following is given:

The Ammidowns are descendants of French Huguenots; the ancestor of all of this name in America was Roger Aimedowne, who came to New England with the first colonists to found Massachusetts. He arrived at Salem (before that place took this name), then called Naumkeag. As Mr. Felt remarks in his history of this town,

"Salem was indebted for its first settlement to the failure of a planting, fishing, and trading enterprise at Cape Ann, which fruitless attempt was made by a number of gentlemen belonging to Dorchester in England, among whom the Rev. John White took the principal lead (about the year 1624).

"His heart was strongly set on establishing a colony in Massachusetts. His chief desire and exertion was, that it might become a place of refuge from the corruptions and oppressions which prevailed at home under the countenance of James I. He had learned that some persons of the Plymouth Plantations were obliged with their families to leave and reside at Nantasket. The occasion of such a separation was their siding with the Rev. John Lyford, who was ordered to quit the

FROM THE LIBRARY:

Cartridge pouch: initials "P. T."
Tin canteen
Loving cup. "Southbridge Light Infantry"
Dispatch pouch. "U. S."
2 shot pouches
Painted powder horn
Epaulette marked G. H. Hartwell 1944
2 Bayonet sheaths
Miniature bale of cotton presented by Central Mills Co.
Bayonet sheath with dispatch case
Sword
Rifle
Large Spinning wheel
Flax wheel
Clock reel
Two niddy-noddies
Wooden auger bit
Patent papers and imperial seal in case.
Piece of Charter oak
Under hammer pistol
2 wooden sanders
Candle mold
Pair wooden shoes
Glass pestle
Shuttle
Miscellaneous Indian relics
Leather covered box
Surveyor's transit
Bull yoke
Cow hide trunk
Leather suit case
Ax
Flax hetchel
Tin churn
Bull yoke
Bison's head
Roster of Sp. Am. war Veterans
Pictorial map of Southbridge
Adr. of 1st Sturbridge fair
Photo of Civil War veterans
Engraving of Gov. Marcy
Map of Southbridge

ARTHUR J. KAVANAGH
38 NEWELL AVENUE
SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 01550
May 24, 1984

Dr. Warren Leon
Old Sturbridge Village
Sturbridge MA 01566

Dear Warren:

Caleb Ammidown's surveyor's compass

Last Sunday while we were chatting I asked about the surveyor's compass which used to be in one of the rooms of the Salem Towne house, but has now been removed. You seemed interested in what I told you of the history of the piece. Since then I have dug out some pertinent references and am enclosing them.

I first became aware of the compass 25 years or so ago when reading about the history of Charlton and of Southbridge in Holmes Ammidown's "Historical Collections", two volumes published in the 1870s. Ammidown was a native of Charlton, in the part now in Southbridge, who left town and prospered. He was always interested in local history; hence the "Collections". He also retained his interest in Southbridge and its development, and when he had the Ammidown block on Main Street erected he gave the Town a rent-free lease of the second floor for a library for as long as the town wanted to use it for that purpose. He gave the library many books, and a large part of the books in the present History Room are from his collection.

In vol. II of the "Collections", beginning on p 223, he discusses Gen. Salem Town (sic), but soon gets off into a discussion of his own grandfather, Caleb Ammidown. See the enclosed copy of pp. 224-5. The author gets tangled up in his own grammar, but the meat of the discussion is that Town had bought Caleb's surveying equipment after Caleb's death, and used it for many years. At the time of the visit described here, Holmes Ammidown bought the compass from Town, and ultimately presented it to the Southbridge library, to be kept in the "museum or cabinet".

After reading this I inquired of the (acting) librarian of the time about a historical "museum or cabinet". She did not know of any such thing, but recalled that a number of years before some old things of the nature of historic artifacts had been given to "the Village".

By this time I had been around Southbridge long enough to know that "the Village" meant OSV, so I got on the phone, and found out that the compass was on display in the Salem Towne house. I was invited to come over to see it, and did so. It was shown there with no suggestion of its interest in connection with local history.

A number of years later I was browsing through the records of meetings of the trustees of Jacob Edwards library, and happened on the records of the action transferring the articles. Enclosed are copies of pp. 201 and 205 of the record book of the time, containing the minutes of the meetings of October 1941 and November 12, 1941.

The October minutes contain the article, "Motion made to list and loan to the Wells Museum articles in the library basement museum room."

The November minutes contain the sentence, "A list of items was placed on file of the articles loaned to the Quinebaug Village Museum from the Library."

No such list is entered on the pages of the record book, but a list of items was inserted, loose, between the pages. I am enclosing a copy of that as well. (I suspect that the 1944 in the Hartwell entry is a typo.) The list includes a "Surveyor's transit", but I am pretty sure that a compass was intended, and that it must have been the Ammidown compass. - Somewhere there exists a photograph of the historical cabinet, and among other things it did contain a surveyor's compass. - The compass which I had seen in the Salem Towne house was a Peregrine White instrument.

I forget who it was with whom I had talked when I called the Village, but he remarked that the compass as received had been in rather poor condition, and that they had had to send it out for refurbishing. He said that the bottom had been mutilated (or some such word) and that they had had to repair it and provide a tripod. On thinking this over recently I have wondered. Many early compasses were supported on a Jacob staff, so-called, a single straight rod or shaft pointed and iron-shod at the bottom for piercing the ground, and having a socket joint on the top. I wonder whether this, and not a tripod, was the original equipment.

One trifling disappointment about the Ammidown compass sticks in my mind. I was going to give a talk about Charlton-Southeridge history before the Charlton Historical Society, and thought it would add interest to have the Ammidown compass on exhibit. I made arrangements to do this. The compass was to be brought over for the evening by Harris Prouty, a past president of the Historical Society who was then employed at the Village. When I got to the meeting, Harris told me that someone higher up had decided that the Ammidown compass was too valuable to let out, so they sent another one like it, which they thought would do as well. Of course the whole point of the exhibit was lost.

Sincerely,

Art

P.S. I mentioned having seen you to Evelyn Petrelli the other day and that reminded her that some of them had been remarking a few days before that they hadn't heard from Cindy for quite a while, and wondered what she was doing. I was glad to be able to pass along the information you gave me.

A.

Regular meeting November 12, 1941.

Those present, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Kay, Mr. Edwards,
Mr. Wells and Mrs. Smith.

Mr. Kay was made chairman pro tem, and called for the
secretary's report as well as that of the treasurer's which
were read and accepted.

Mr. Colton was present and submitted details regard-
ing the progress of re decorating the new room in the basement
(old museum room) The final details were left to Mrs. Smith
for completion. The building of a cupboard for the Librarian's
room was left to Mr. Colton after conferring with Miss. Shane.

A list of items was placed on file of the articles
loaned to the Quinebaug Village Museum from the Library.

The bronze work at entrance as well as the flag pole
have been repaired.

Meeting adjourned,

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith

Special Meeting held December 2, 1941.

Mr. Edwards, Mr. Wells, Mr. Kay, Mr. Laliberte, and Mrs. Smith present.

Voted to invest \$1000. (treasury funds) in the Southbridge Savings Bank.

Voted to expend \$200 on carpenter work under the supervision of Mr. Colton and Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith. This to be book cases along the walls of "museum room".

Voted to close the newspaper room in the basement and to move the newspapers to the main reading room. The rack was re built to fit the available space.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith

Regular meeting December 23, 1941.

Mr. Crawford, Mr. Wells, Mr. Kay and Mr. Laliberte, and Mrs. Smith. Present.

Voted to employ an auditor for the books as in previous years for the fiscal year.

The new special account in the Southbridge Savings Bank known as "The Jacob Edward's memorial Library" account.

Voted to transfer Bradford amount in National bank to the Savings Bank account.

Meeting adjourned,

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Hamilton K. Smith