



THE HISTORIAN



VOLUME ONE, ISSUE SIX

FALL, 2015



Jacob Thompson House 1811



Fuller House 1869

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

The Historical Society has had a busy summer and early fall. The Thompson House project is coming together nicely. We had the brick ends re-pointed after the paint was chemically stripped. The bricks received two coats of a beautiful original brick red and the white lines on the mortar joints are almost complete. All of the storm windows are installed as well as the storm doors and new 1/2 round gutters have been put up. The two upper bedrooms and the front hall have been repainted. We have received a price and we will soon begin the painting of all of the rooms left on the first floor, except for the office. In conjunction with this painting, we will be

removing the 1940's maple floor from the dining room and painting the pine floor beneath. Bill Dominick and Tamara Cabey have been in charge of the interior work and, to them, we say thank you.

While we are thanking people, I would like to mention the wonderful job Leona Brahen has done in upgrading our computer network and her work on the newsletter and also re-doing our website. This will be an ongoing process for the near future.

Appraisal day Sept. 27 was a success, as we had a steady crowd all afternoon which kept our appraisers from Kaminski busy at both tables.

Due to the ongoing work at the Jacob

Thompson house, we will not be having a Christmas open house, but we are planning an open house party in the spring to show off the project.

Great news! The society has received a grant and a donation from the Grace Makepeace Trust for Historic Preservation in the amount of \$1,327.95 for archival boxes, due to Mary Swierad filling out the application and doing all the research into what containers we needed and how many of each.

Dennis Swierad, President



Officers:

President – Dennis Swierad
Vice President – Tamara Cabey
Secretary – Leona Brahen
Treasurer – Kevin McNabb

Board Members:

Denis Duquette (2018)
William Dominick (2017)

Board Member Emeritus:

William Hatton
Emma Ladd Shepherd

Voting Positions:

Accessions Manager – Mary Swierad
Collections Manager – Mary Swierad
Building Restoration – Dennis Swierad
Editor – Leona Brahen
Historian – Dennis Swierad
Membership – Denis Duquette
Annual Meeting – Denis Duquette
Rental Manager – Tamara Cabey

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 on the web at info@monsonhistoricalsociety.cincastbiz.net

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

THE MONSON/CHINESE CONNECTION

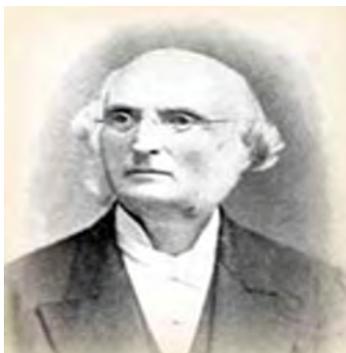
BY DENNIS SWIERAD

This edition's story is about the history of a 19th century missionary who was brought up in Monson and, through his calling, traveled across the world to bring Christianity to the Orient. Also, it is the story of one of his students.

Samuel Robbins Brown was the second child of Timothy Hill Brown and his wife, Phoebe Hinsdale Brown. He was born in Scantic Parish, CT on June 16th of 1810. His father moved the family to Monson in 1818 to take advantage of the education at Monson Academy for his children. Samuel's father was a house-joiner and his mother was a hymnlist.

Samuel entered Monson Academy at 9 years of age and, from then on, his lifetime goals were to acquire a liberal education, study theology and, finally, to become a foreign missionary.

Originally, after graduation from Monson Academy in 1828, his hope was to enter Amherst College, though his father had no money to help him. He did give him a hat, an empty pocketbook and the use of a horse and buggy to drive to Amherst from Monson. He went with change enough in his pocket to pay for the horse's feed and to buy himself some crackers and cheese. After a consultation with his mother, he would forego Amherst College and go to Yale College after deciding Amherst was too much of a country village school. He heard about a Mr. Arthur Tappan who published a notice that he would pay the tuition bills of any number of men, not exceeding one hundred, who would enter Yale College that year



**Rev. Samuel Robbins Brown
1810 - 1880**



**15 Mechanic Street
Childhood home of Rev. Samuel
Robbins Brown**

with a view to the sacred ministry. Accordingly, he went back to Amherst, paid the bills due there, and then with the poorest and meagerest outfit that a college student ever had, he went to New Haven and entered Yale near the second term of freshmen year with \$37.00 in his pocket. When not at Yale, he took work at the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in New York as a teacher. At commencement from Yale, he paid all the outstanding bills against him and, the day he graduated, he started out in the world with all debts paid and \$50.00 in his pocket.

He went to Columbia, South Carolina to study theology for two

years at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He returned to New York in 1837 and finished his theology courses at the Union Theological Seminary, being one of a class of six who graduated there in 1838.

Soon, Samuel's life took a turn that would influence him for the rest of his life. On the 4th of October 1838, he was invited to go to Canton, China in the service of the Morrison Education Society, with the purpose of educating Chinese boys in both English and Chinese. He was informed that he would be going to sail on the ship Morrison from New York on the 16th of October. He had scarcely twelve days in which to make preparations for the voyage. He went to Monson, MA to say farewell to his friends and spent one night there. The next day, he went to East Windsor, CT and was married the same day to Miss Elizabeth Goodwin Bartlett, daughter of Rev. Shubael Bartlett. The following day he went to Lyme, CT to see his mother and a sister, whose husband lay sick of typhoid fever. The next day he went to New York where he was ordained by the Third Presbytery, finished his hurried preparations for sailing, and embarked for China on the morning of the 17th on the ship I mentioned before. He arrived in Macao Roads in China on the 23rd of February 1839, having made the passage in one hundred and twenty nine days.

After going to Canton, he reported to the officers and returned to Macao. He spent the next seven months chiefly in the study of the Canton dialect of the Chinese language to prepare himself for teaching. Of course, at this time, the first war between England and China commenced and made it hard to open a school. During this turmoil, he opened a small school with a half dozen children between 10 and 15 years old. He continued on for several years until he had 24 pupils. After the wars, Hong Kong was ceded to the British government by the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. A new school was erected with a large commodious school building, library and dormitories for students. In 1842, the Morrison School was moved from Macao to this new location in Hong Kong. In 1846, Reverend Brown left the Morrison School and Hong Kong to return to Monson with three of his students, one of which, Yung Wing, a graduate of Monson Academy, would go on to become a very important and influential part of the opening of China to the west and especially America. The second student, Wong Fun, studied for between two and three years at the Monson Academy, then went to college in Edinburgh, Scotland and became a surgeon and was commissioned by the London Missionary Society as a Medical Missionary to China. The third student brought by him to this country was Wong Shing, who, after only two years at Mon-

son Academy, returned to China and became the China Vice-Council at San Francisco.

In 1859, Brown was sent by the Protestant Church of America to Japan for missionary work. He died in Monson in 1880.

Yung Wing

Yung Wing was born in 1828 near Macao, China. He spent 5 years in the Morrison Missionary School run by Rev. Samuel Brown. Then Yung Wing and his two other Chi-



*Yung Wing 1828-1912
Yale Class of 1854*

nese companions came to Monson to be educated at Monson Academy. Yung Wing and the others were placed under the care of Rev. Brown's mother, Phoebe H. Brown. They boarded with her at her Mechanic Street home, but had a separate room right across the road in a separate cottage.

Her widowed daughter along with her three boys had taken up all the spare rooms in Phoebe's cottage, which accounted for the lack of accommodations. They paid \$1.25 per week for board and lodging, including food, light and washing. They had

to take care of their own rooms and in the winter split their own wood, which they found to be capital exercise. Their lodging was about a half mile from the Academy. They had to walk three times a day to school and back, in the dead of winter when the snow was three feet deep, which gave them plenty of exercise, a keen appetite and a fine condition. Yung became a Christian in Monson and, at once, accepted his Divine call to devote his life to the Christian service of his nation.

Yung Wing entered Yale College in 1850, received his baccalaureate degree in 1854 and returned to China. His education caused him to reflect much upon the social, political and religious conditions of his countrymen. Even before he left America, he longed to devise some plan by which the educational advantages he had enjoyed might be given to other Chinese young men in large numbers. He first sought to enter some lawyer's office at Hong Kong as a student, but British prejudice prevented a Chinese from studying law there



16 Mechanic Street

This is the home where Yung Wing, Wong Fun and Wong Shing stayed during their time at Monson Academy in the late 1840's.

and he had to give it up. He then went to Shanghai seeking occupation as a business man. He acquired significant wealth, \$25,000, over the next

few years and because of this and his reputation, he was entrusted by a leading businessman to go to America to purchase machinery made in Fitchburg, MA for a new enterprise in Shanghai. He did this and soon followed the machinery home to make his report and render his account to the Chinese government, which had a stake in the purchase. During the 1870's, Yung Wing was able to convince the Chinese Government to open a school for the instruction of Chinese boys in English preparatory to their being sent abroad. One hundred and twenty students were eventually sent to America at this time by the Chinese Educational Commission to further their education.

When the Chinese government in 1878 determined to send ministers to Washington, Yung Wing was appointed by the Empress Mother as Assistant Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the United States. At this time, Yung Wing also tried to get Chinese students admitted to Annapolis and West Point, but was met with scorn, distrust and race prejudice. By 1881, due to misunderstandings between the Chinese government's representatives and the United States, the Chinese students were eventually all returned to their homeland.

During the 1890s, Yung was embroiled in conflict with the Chinese government to the point of being in fear for his life as revolts were happening all over China and some were actually losing their heads. In 1899, Yung went to Hong Kong to place himself under the protec-



*Dr. Yung Wing and Carolyn Cushman
Main Street, Monson
June 21, 1910*

tion of the British Government and stayed there until 1901. Yung managed to return to the United States where he lived until his death in 1912. It will not be out of place to state here, as a fact, the significance of which will be readily appreciated, that he caused the son who was born to him in 1876—his first born—to be named Morrison Brown, the first after the school which provided him with his life-long direction and the latter to immortalize his mentor in life.

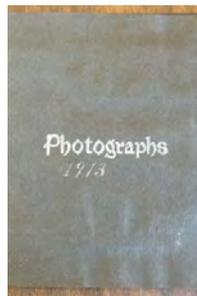
Bibliography

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Yung Wing
Samuel Robbins Brown: B: By Person: Stories: Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity
Samuel Robbins Brown Biographical Memoranda Class of 1832
Yale College
Yung Wing: Becoming Chinese American? By K. Scott Wong

NEW ACQUISITIONS



Large Round Log, Merrimack Mills.



*Photographs
1913*

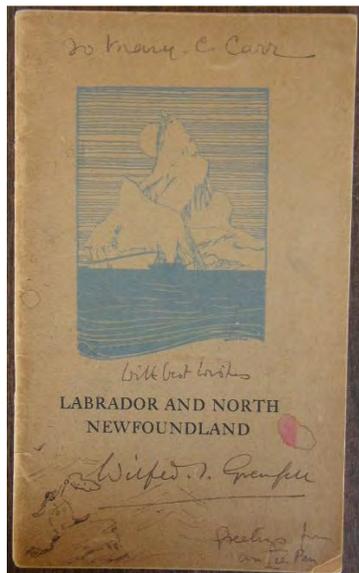


*View across Merrimack Valley from Merrimack town and
shanty and house of J. A. G. Hoyt*

1913 photograph album with photos of temporary lumber mill located on Bunyan Road



*Team Horses of J. A. G. Hoyt
Merrimack Mills*

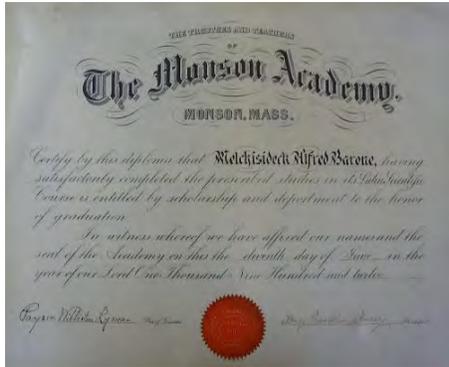


**Booklet by William T. Grenfell,
Friend of the Cushman's**

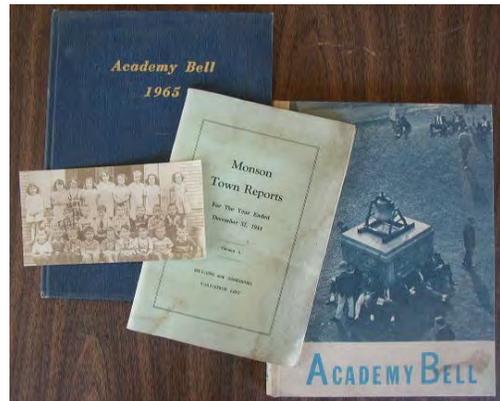


Black & White photos of trolley bridge near Bunyan Road, Flynt Quarry Railroad bridge near Chestnut Street, etc.

NEW ACQUISITIONS



1912 Monson Academy Diploma



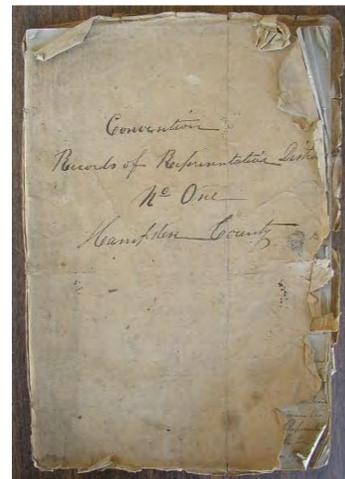
Monson Academy Yearbooks, 1944 Town Report, Class photo South Main Street School



Handmade wooden, cloth and paper banner from Monson Academy class of 1921



3 Ellis Mills wool blankets



Convention Records of Representative District No. 1 Hampden County 1866 through 1888

PAST EVENTS REVIEW

APPRAISAL DAY— SEPTEMBER 27, 2015

On Sunday September 27th from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., two of Kaminski Auctions expert appraisers were on hand at the Jacob Thompson house to look at family treasures and tell about them: their age, condition and value, and how to best care for them.

Appraisers Mary Westcott and Steven Demers of Kaminski Auctions were on

hand to provide expertise on fine and decorative arts, furniture, jewelry, vintage clothing, orientalia, old books and manuscripts, furniture, glass and ceramics. So if you were ever curious about family heirlooms, that was the place to be. It was enjoyable and educational to listen to what experts had to say about the artifacts that others brought in.

The event was free of charge, but a donation was requested for the Monson Open Pantry. There was a lot of foot

traffic but, while waiting, the Jacob Thompson house was open for viewing.

The Society's museum on 7 Main Street is being restored because of a generous grant from Monson's Community Preservation.

MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Over the next several issues, we will be highlighting the board members of the Monson Historical Society. We thought it would be an interesting highlight to know a bit more about the people that serve on the Board and what motivates them to donate their time and expertise to make the Society what it is.

Dennis Swierad

President, Building Restoration Manager and Historian

I attended Fitchburg State University and graduated with a BSE in 1971. I taught Industrial Arts in Palmer High School (Palmer, MA) for over 20 years. I have been an antiques collector and dealer most of my lifetime. After purchasing my home in Monson in 1975, I soon became interested in the activities of the Monson Historical Society and joined soon thereafter. I am currently President and have served many positions on the Historical Society. The history of Monson is near and dear to me, as is historic preservation.

Mary Swierad

Accessions Manager and Collections Manager

As a lifelong resident of Monson, I became curious about the history of the town I called home. The Historical Society had programs that were open to the public and I decided to check them out. I was fascinated by all the information that was available about the town. I soon joined the Society and have held many positions over the years. I continue to learn something "new" about Monson's history on an almost daily basis. Along the way, I have met many very interesting people who also feel that it is important to remember how Monson came to be, and who want to preserve it for the future.

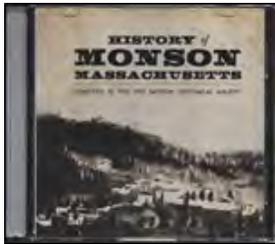
ITEMS FOR SALE

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 1 year free membership and our quarterly newsletter "The Historian". Shipping costs for the CD are included in the fee.

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



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

Please include your email address

Make your check 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.

GARAGE SPACE AVAILABLE

The Historical Society has space available at its garage located on the corner of Lincoln Street and Squier Avenue for rent on a yearly basis. The space measures 12 ft. x 21 ft. and is reasonably priced at \$70.00 per month. If you know of anyone, or if you are interested yourself, please contact Tamara Cabey at 413-267-5244 to arrange a tour. You would be getting a great storage space while, at the same time, supporting the Historical Society.



**** ARE YOU UP TO DATE ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES?? ****

Membership renewals occur on May 1st of each year. If you receive our newsletter through postal mail, please check the date on your mailing label. Current memberships should read “5/1/2016” or later. If your label reads “5/1/2015”, you need to renew for another year. If it reads, “5/1/2014”, you need to renew for 2 years to be up-to-date.

For those who receive our newsletter via e-mail, please check the subject matter. If it reads “Monson Historical Society Newsletter”, your membership is current. If it reads “Monson Historical Society Newsletter/Renewal”, you will need to update your membership. Please read the text in your e-mail for renewal instructions.

Please consider taking the time today to complete the membership form and mail it back, along with your check, to the address listed on the form. Your membership will be updated through 5/1/2016.

******Also note that we have reduced our “Life Membership” rate in half from \$500 to \$250!******

If you receive the newsletter via e-mail, please be aware that all newsletters will be forwarded from this e-mail address, DCDuquette@msn.com, with the subject matter regarding Monson Historical Society.

MONSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address _____ Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail Address (for newsletter) _____

Please indicate a membership category & enclose a check made out to “Monson Historical Society, Inc.”

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

___ **Individual** (under age 18) \$5⁰⁰ ___ **Individual** (age 18 & over) \$10⁰⁰ ___ **Family** \$20⁰⁰

(NEW REDUCED RATE!!) ___ **Life Membership** \$250⁰⁰ **(NEW REDUCED RATE!!)**

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

*And as always, we **Thank You** for your continued support of the Monson Historical Society!*