

The TBM Newsletter of the NHLSA

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"If a cluttered desk is a
sign of a cluttered mind,
of what, then, is an empty
desk a sign?"

~ Albert Einstein



Photo courtesy: Andria Dobberstein

A view of the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River

Deadline for Advertising and Articles

The TBM Newsletter of the NHLSA is published monthly.
Copy and ad deadline is the 1st of each month.

Inside this issue:

<i>Been There, Done That</i>	2
<i>Who Surveyed That?</i>	8
<i>What are Great Piddocks?</i>	17
<i>Book Review: The Gold Seekers of '49</i>	22

**Been There, Done That:
Another Tale From A Country Land Surveyor
“That’s What They Make Dynamite For”**

By Edward Goodrich, Jr., LLS 677

All kinds of people own land. As land surveyors, we meet many different kinds of landowners and have listened to their stories. We’ve heard it all.

The layman homeowner tells us: “I only want what my deed claims?” “The realtor told me the corner was the telephone pole.” “I only want what’s mine?” Or, “I have this map that the town gave me.”

The developer asks you: “How many lots can you get me?” Or, “The planning board meeting is next Wednesday. Can you have the Mylar ready by then?”

Some home owner clients just like to complain. They complain about how their neighbor keeps moving the pins. They gripe about the government taking away their property rights. I pay my taxes! And of course, “Why do surveyors charge so much?”

Part of our work involves enlightening people on what we do, why we do it and the benefits of a proper survey. Many times, a client will teach me some things too. It may be a thing or two about physical evidence or past owners. We all gain something from our interaction.

Yes, as surveyors we hear lots of things and we get to see things that few people ever do. How many out of the way waterfalls in the woods have you seen? How many old cellar holes, different wildlife creatures or great views? Sometimes the field work is just a paid for pass to trespass on posted property.

Developers are a different breed all together, especially the ones back in the 1970s and 1980s. When I was starting out in this profession, I was hungry for jobs. I took on almost any project to be employed. There were times that I cringed and held my nose, but took on the job anyways. All for the sake of food and shelter. One former developer client stands out as being very gifted. He thought fast on his feet. He would come up with an answer for every question and an equally quick solution for every problem.

Now, before I start this tale, let me say that I am a faithful member of a Federated Church. Three churches that joined together in 1927: UCC, UU and Methodists. I have served my Church in many capacities over the years. I have been chairman of Stewardship Committees, Building Committees, a Sunday School Teacher, sang in the choir, Treasurer, and an active reader of lessons before the congregation. I even ran a whole Sunday service one time when the Minister became ill at the last minute and we couldn’t get a substitute pastor.

This story is about a developer client who had found religion, wanted to share it with me and then he lost his religion. He has since gone to his final rest, wherever that may be for him, but while he was in action, look out!

He was so open about his devotion that the brick walk leading to the front door of his home had a cross made with bricks that had raised letters spelling the word, “PRAY” on each one. He would compassionately tell me that he prayed for me and hoped that he would be able to save me before I was ever hit by a bus. I thanked him and suddenly felt safer in traffic.

He hired me to work on a little three lot subdivision. The lots were about seven acres each with ample road frontage, but there was an issue. Once you stepped from the right of way line onto the lot, your nose ran straight into a vertical ledge. Remember I was a young, hungry land surveyor. I told him that this was crazy, the PB won’t approve this, people can’t even get on the lots. He replied that I needed faith. Then he added, “That’s what they make dynamite for!” I kid you not!

Fortunately, this project was outside of my normal market area and I wasn’t asked to take it before the PB. Oddly enough, I happened to be in the area this last weekend and decided to drive down memory lane. It had been a number of years since I was there, but I thought that I remembered the location. I did. I saw the pins, paint and fresh flagging at the right of way line, but no evidence of any explosives or terrain alterations.

Sadly, one day he told me that it was all wrong. No, not the previously mentioned subdivision. No, he had lost his faith. Not surprised, he had an IRS audit scheduled. He prayed really hard before arriving at the time and place, but was very disappointed with his deliverance. He told me that he avoided jail, but not the fines. Karma can be a bear!

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NHLSA Licensure vs Certification

By Mark Condodemetraky, LLS

What would a surveyor from 50 years ago think of the profession today? Would it still be recognized as the surveying they practiced, or has it changed over the years? As technology in surveying improved did it change the entire process of surveying or make it better? What will a surveyor from today think about the profession 50 years from now, or even perhaps 10 years based on the technological trajectory we are on?



The fact is we do not know what the surveying profession will look like in 50 years, much less 10. The bigger question to ask is will it still even exist?

There is a significant movement in this country to eliminate the Licensed Professional Surveyor and replace this designation with some kind of certification, be it voluntary or some form of required credential.

The argument is framed in the sense that the Licensed Professional has essentially gotten too big for their britches, or comfortable and as a result, innovation in the field has been stifled and become less efficient. Also the cost to the consumer is too high and there is no "competition" to allow for lower competitive bids from more efficient, nimble companies that, while they may not be licensed, can provide a superior product at a significantly lower price.

While this may sound like fantasy it is building momentum and there is a significant call to eliminate Licensure altogether across this great nation.

Let us look at this argument from the perspective of the advocate. There is a tremendous amount of data that is freely available in the public forum currently. LiDAR data, orthophotos, parcel polygons, flood hazard layers and on and on. Why can't a data company take this information and use it to provide services such as planning and road location, building layout and utility infrastructure location, or design? After all, the data is all referenced to a specific coordinate system that has an extremely low tolerance for error. Furthermore, the map the data company produces, whether they are domestic or offshore is irrelevant, is very attractive and looks better than some surveys. Why wouldn't Joe homeowner want a nicer looking product? And at a lower cost to boot.

This is a very difficult argument to overcome, especially when both Land Surveyors and non-licensed outfits are using the same data. But let's back up for a minute. 50 years ago, the surveying statute in NH was signed into law for a reason. Basically, prior to the law being enacted, anyone could put out a sign and say they were a surveyor with many mixed results. There was no real technical requirement, and the consumer did not have any way of determining the quality of the product being produced, outside of a reference from their neighbor. The typical person based their decision on cost and the lowest bidder usually won. As a result, there were many charlatans and the product that was produced was not consistent and did not follow any basic standards.

When the law was passed in the state of NH it ensured the consumer that there was a minimum standard a Licensee had to follow otherwise there would be recourse in the form of discipline by the board.

There are now many grey areas that encompass surveying. With free LiDAR and drone technology the argument is that the surveying laws are outdated and need to sunset in order to usher in a new era of innovation and efficiency. Surveyors are seen as a romantic figure from a bygone era and eliminating the laws in favor of some form of certification will create a robust new era of digital data use, at very low cost to the consumer.

I see this happening already around the country. Outsourcing firms are using LiDAR data to certify elevations in compliance with FEMA standards to amend Flood Insurance Rate Maps and provide municipalities with GIS mapping to use for planning and property inventory. In North Carolina the state embarked on a massive data collection project, where they used LiDAR to obtain the elevation of the first floor of every structure in the state. It was then marketed as survey quality data. There is talk at conferences about using GIS polygons to determine property corners using state plane coordinates. Based on available technology, why can't a company, who may never even need to visit the site or be located in this country, produce a digital rendering with polygon boundary representation and have an attorney petition a court to determine this is indeed the boundary location, after all attorneys and surveyors do not determine boundaries, only courts do. This is not that far-fetched or futuristic.

I feel the apathy of the surveying community is contributing to the certification movement and, we as a profession need to educate the public as to the value of licensure for the protection of the public and property. We do need to change the law governing surveying. As technology and the profession have evolved, the laws governing surveying have remained static. If we are to have any hope of preserving surveying as a profession, we need to take action.

Think of this, if there is no minimum standard a surveyor would need to meet, and only voluntary certification, who will be the backstop to protecting the health and safety of the public? If two "certified" professionals come up with differing opinions that create significant legal issues, which opinion has merit?

The other question then that needs to be asked is who becomes the certifier? Is it a trade group association? A government entity? Are there educational and experience qualifications or do you just need to take an online class? What kind of recourse will there be for the consumer for bad actors?

This is a real issue that is gaining momentum. As surveyors we must be aware that there will be more and more encroachments on Professional Licensure that will dilute the essence of surveying. Change needs to occur in order to prevent the elimination of licensure.

I am an advocate of updating RSA 310-A:54 to bring the definition of surveying into the 21st century and prevent the elimination of licensure for something else.

FEEDBACK



More opinion feedback on next page.

Re: *Acknowledging the Importance of Paraprofessionals in Land Surveying*

Great article. Great in-sight. Their attitude, contentment and command of the tools and procedures used are essential to land surveying and needs to be recognized by NHLSA.

David R. Noyes

Barbara ... I was visiting my brother the other day and he was showing me this collection of old books he has and this one jumped out at me... a lot of the more "seasoned" members of NHLSA no doubt remember this alumnus.

Dusty Smith
dsmith@astsurvey.com



Re: September TBM

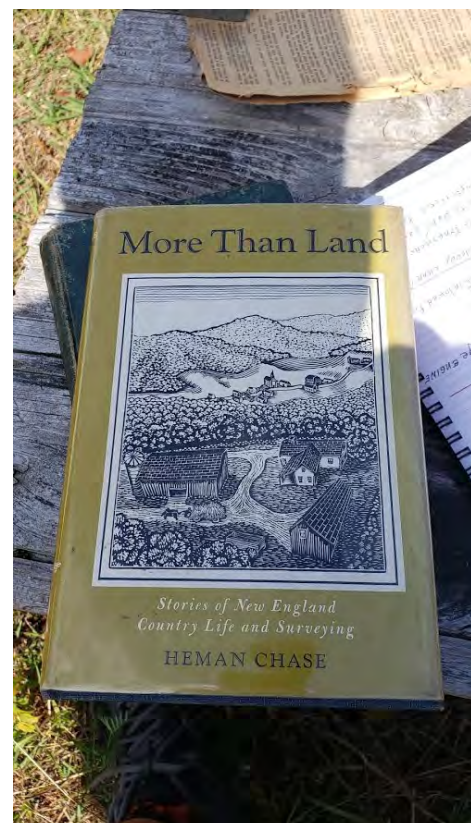
Thank you!

Another great issue. I look forward to each edition of yours!

While I am no longer the editor of *The Interior Angle*, the Kentucky Association of Professional Surveyors quarterly publication, I encourage the exchange of documents such as this. I noticed that a Kentucky-boy won an award in the 2020 Map/Plat competition.

Thanks! Keep me on your mailing list, please.

Doug Comer, PE, PLS



Hi Paul,

I just read your opinion piece in the draft TBM and all I can say is wow, you hit the nail on the head!!

If I could add "mic drop" at the end, I would....

You have managed to formulate what us "unlicensed folks" have felt like for years. I have been in this profession for 15 years and have done every task from running an instrument all the way up to boundary determinations. There are many of us who can/have worked alongside a licensed surveyor, doing all the same tasks just as well as they do, the only difference is, we don't have a stamp. Someday I will be licensed, just not today....

Having the respect and appreciation from fellow "seasoned" surveyors, access to resources, and most importantly a voice, goes a long way.

It might be a conflict of interest being an editor of *The TBM* to submit my thoughts on your opinion, but I will at least get something on paper. This topic kinda hits a sensitive nerve for me. I have been vocal at quarterly meetings here & there over the years on the topic of non active members having no say on anything.

Did you know that non active members of NHLSA do not get the NSPS newsletter? When I brought this up three years ago at a quarterly meeting, I was kind of disgusted by the response of those in attendance. They assumed us "field guys" did not care nor needed to be involved in the works of the national level association.

Well, at least the Young Surveyors Network now has an active presence in NSPS.

Something to keep in the back of your mind, this would be a phenomenal topic for one of our future Young Surveyor Committee meetings. The YSC is kind of in limbo right now. Everyone is stupid busy, we are unable to complete many of the tasks on our goals list because of the pandemic, monthly zoom meeting attendance is down, although our August in person but distant meeting was very successful.

I can only imagine how hard, crazy & time consuming your new role as Publications Director is, but you know what, you're rocking it!! You had huge shoes to fill and you've been doing a great job so far!

-Emily Hayes



Paul,

I just read your article in the recent issue of *The TBM* and couldn't agree with your points more. As a profession we have a tendency to try to elevate ourselves as licensed professionals by keeping our paraprofessionals down.

I also agree with the need for more professional development for this group and seminars should play a significant role. I was approached a couple of times in recent years to become Education Director for NHLSA but have been reluctant to take on that role without support. In August I attended the Young Surveyor's BBQ and spoke to the group to them looking to enlist their help. Many hands makes light work and young and eager learners have many questions and even better ideas.

There was some cautious interest but more needs to be done to engage them fully. This may be in part because many professionals don't really give them their due or take them off the leash.

Clearly you have ideas on developing the core of our profession. I'd love to start a conversation on what we can do in this area to help promote the development and investiture of our paraprofessionals.

Best Regards,
Mike Hammer, PLS/LLS



Dear Ms. Cormier and the NHLSA:

I want to express my sincerest gratitude for your decision to grant me one of your scholarships out of a pool of deserving applicants. With this said, I would like to apologize for not seeing nor replying to this email until just now, almost a week after the Fall Quarterly Meeting. I recognize that it is an honor and a privilege to receive a scholarship from this generous organization. I express my deepest condolences that I was unable to reach out and participate in this event; I have been at Middlebury College for almost a month now, but college preparations and a deep, time consuming investment into my academics and college life here at Middlebury has, admittedly, caused me to fall behind with other obligations. I was only just able to see this email; and I wish I were able to give you prior notice of my unavailability. If there is any way I could help out the NHLSA or perhaps speak to my gratitude or your generosity, please let me know. Thank you again for your generosity and understanding.

Sincerely,
Erin Chouinard



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Old Ads with Surveyors

This month's old ad with surveyors is for a 1958 Ford. I am not old enough to know the model, but I am sure some of you will know what it is. However, I have been surveying long enough to know the "Crew Chief crouching to explain what the heck we're doing to the nosey neighbor" stance. I am sure Mr. Neighbor also worked on a survey crew at sometime in his life, and so, knows all about what they are doing....

Photo courtesy: Alan M. Barnard, LLS



WHO SURVEYED THAT?

We are searching for the records of the following land surveyors.

These surveyors have a plan filed in Rockingham Registry of deeds.

RCRD Plan 1699 in Auburn by Johnson-Gagnon-McLaughlin 1968

RCRD Plan 00298 Massabesic Lake Terrace by Alfred L. Eliot, CE Boston, MA 1906

RCRD Plan C-10177 in Deerfield by Allen I. Lewis, NH LLS 287

"Thank you" to all of you who are responding with information about the lost survey records.

Jim Franklin, Land Records Chair
Tel. (603)483-3096 ~ website: www.JEFLS.com
Email to: JEFLS@comcast.net



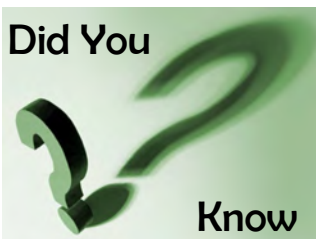
2020 Student Project of the Year Recipient

Michael Ness, Geomatics student at Oregon Tech, has been selected as winner of the annual NSPS Student Project of the Year Award. The title of his project was the "2020 Oregon Tech Campus Control Network."

Congratulations



Did You



Who invented the scarecrow? About **2,500 B.C.**, Greek farmers carved wooden scarecrows in the image of Priapus, the son of Dionysus and Aphrodite, creating a "scarecrow" that was supposedly ugly enough to scare the birds away from their vineyards, ensuring a good harvest.



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You may have learned about the email issue that we have been experiencing so we wanted to share with you the message below which was sent to NSPS Officers and Directors.



Hi Everyone,

Thanks for your patience as we have been working through this email issue.

What seems to be happening with email is that users in our **Basecamp account** have had their email contacts accessed by spammers/phishers who then send the types of messages you're seeing to all of those user's email contacts -- including their Basecamp reply addresses.

Setting up a new Basecamp account won't prevent this from happening again and the type of virus (Macro) that has been circulated may have infected all the files within Basecamp. (see attached Macro viruses). We will probably need to delete Basecamp and find a different platform to communicate. Basecamp did indicate that they are a bit lenient with security.

Below are some encouraged suggestions:

Basecamp and IT strongly recommends that your passwords be reset for email addresses, if you haven't already. If you don't reset the password for your email address then this could happen again.

We encourage you to set strong passwords for your email addresses/clients so that it becomes more difficult for your email account to be accessed. You can create a unique random password here: <https://1password.com/password-generator/>. (And if you need a password manager to store passwords we recommend 1Password or Bitwarden.)

You should also consider additional security measures (e.g. two-factor authentication) for extra protection. <https://phoenixnap.com/blog/email-security-best-practices>.

I have attached our Incident Report that was created by IT.

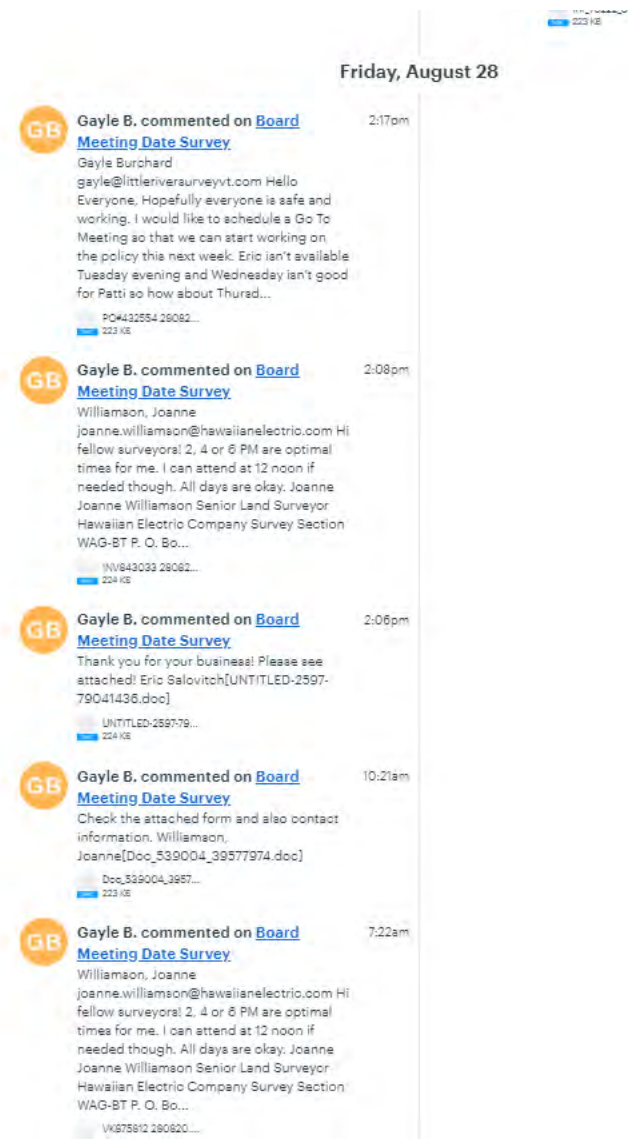
If you have any questions please let me know and I will pass them on to the experts!

Thanks, Trish

Editor's Note: Although Barbara had set up a Basecamp login, she never created an email using Basecamp, but did reply to others using it.

If you would like a copy of this incident report that Trish mentions, email Barbara and she'll send you a copy.

We recommend that you remain vigilant and to look at the returning email address from all NHLSA, and others, and if it says it's coming from Barbara/NHLSA, and the return email address isn't info@nhlsa.org or barbc@nhlsa.org, delete it.



Macro viruses add their code to the macros associated with documents, spreadsheets and other data files.

The first macro virus, called Concept, appeared in July 1995 and macro viruses (mostly infecting Word documents) subsequently became the dominant type of virus until the turn of the century, when Microsoft disabled macros by default in Office (versions since Office 2000): since then, cybercriminals have had to try and trick their victims into enabling macros before their infected macro is able to run.

How Macro Viruses Spread

Macro viruses are most commonly found embedded in documents or inserted as malicious code into word-processing programs. They may come from documents attached to emails, or the code may be downloaded after clicking on "phishing" links in banner ads or URLs. They are difficult to detect, as they do not operate until an infected macro is run, at which time they perform a series of commands. A macro virus is similar to a Trojan virus, since it may appear benign and users may not immediately notice any ill effects. Unlike Trojans, however, macro viruses can replicate themselves and infect other computers.

Risks

The main risk of macro viruses is their ability to spread quickly. Once an infected macro is run, all other documents on a user's computer become infected. Some of these viruses cause abnormalities in text documents, such as missing or inserted words, while others access email accounts and send out copies of infected files to all of a user's contacts, who in turn open and access these files because they come from a trusted source.

These viruses can also be designed to erase or compromise stored data. In addition, it's important to note that macro viruses are cross-platform; they can infect both Windows and Mac computers using the same code. Any program that uses macros can operate as a host, and any copy of an infected program — sent via email, stored on disk or on a USB drive — will contain the virus.

To remove these viruses, users should rely on security software that provides specific macro virus detection and removal tools. Regular scans will clean any infected documents and ensure no new computer viruses are downloaded.



These scarecrows were seen at the office of NH Land Consultants on Route 4 in Northwood. Scott R. Frankiewicz is the LLS at NHLC, and gave permission to take and use the photos. We understand that John Newman also had a hand in creating these scarecrows, and that it was done as an entry to the Friends of Northwood Recreation Committee Scarecrow Contest. Someone driving NH Route 4 to go to the State Archives alerted Brian Burford about these unique surveyors seen on the side of the road. Brian called Mark Stevens. Mark called Pat Bell knowing that Pat lived in Northwood and asked him to take photos. So there were at least 2 surveyors involved in creating them and at least 3 more involved in photographing and submitting them to *The TBM*. Thank you to all involved.

Mark Stevens, LLS



Backsights and Frontsights

Backsights

Amidst a global pandemic, on Thursday, September 17th, the Fall Quarterly Seminar and Business Meeting were held at the Pheasant Ridge Golf Club in Gilford, NH. Given the ever-changing dynamics of guidelines put in place by our elected officials, the Fall Quarterly carried on the tradition of being coordinated at the very last minute. With a vacancy in the position of Education Director, the Association owes much gratitude to our Executive Administrator, Barb, and the panel of presenters whom she persuaded to speak on short notice.

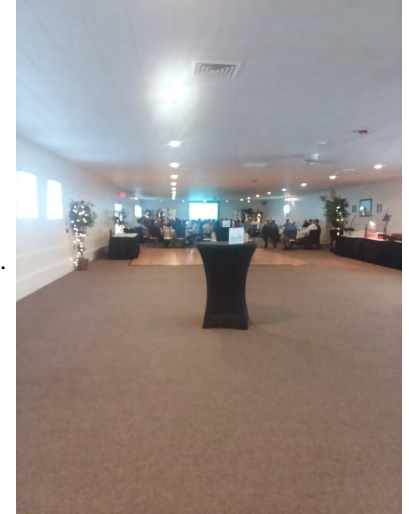
As many of you know, the Fall Quarterly Seminars are customarily a series of case studies pertaining to the work we're all so passionate about. This year, we as an Executive Committee were only able to secure one speaker for a case study. We'll chalk that up to the courts delaying civil litigation for the majority of the year. With more folks spending time at home nowadays, we're sure to see a spike in land use cases in the coming years. With that said, I don't know that we've had a lineup consisting of four presenters as well-spoken as this year's in quite some time.

In an attempt to be as inclusive as possible, the Fall Quarterly was offered both to in-person attendees and virtually as a Zoom webinar. This was our first attempt at such a technological feat and to say a lot was learned and will be improved upon moving forward is an understatement. More on that later... At peak participation, we had 79 unique virtual attendees and about 45 brave souls that made the trip to Gilford. It's speculated that the ability to attend virtually is what caused overall attendance to be greater than the usual 100+/-.

First to present in the spacious Grand Hall, filled to 15% capacity with ample space between tables and many smiling faces obstructed by face coverings, was Brian Burford. Brian developed a presentation around "The State of Vermont v. The State of New Hampshire" 289 US 593. Offered at a steep discount for this presentation, many attendees could be found with the NHLSA's reprint of the case in front of them. Brian eloquently portrayed the history of who claimed what land adjacent to the Connecticut River and ultimately what the court decided. There was lively discussion on whether the boundary remains riparian through its extents or if it is fixed at the monumented points. The answer is likely a combination of the two. Possibly one of Brian's most intriguing questions was along the lines of, "What legal right do we have, as surveyors in NH, to cross over into Vermont and measure the monuments that exist there in an attempt to ascertain the boundary?"

Second to the podium was Ray Hintz. Having made a career as an educator, Ray was as thrilled to be able to speak in person to the group as we were to have him after a long spring and summer of presenting virtually. Combining his extensive technical knowledge of the subject with unmatched enthusiasm, Ray spoke about remote sensing, photogrammetry, and their various applications within our profession as he walked us through manipulating example data sets utilizing the software Global Mapper. The room was seemingly filled with laughter throughout the 2-hour presentation as Ray unleashed his comedic charisma.

Come noontime, the staff at Contigiani's was as hospitable as ever, kindly serving at the build-your-own-sub bar from behind barriers of Plexiglas, just as the snacks and drinks were throughout the day. During lunch, members were noticeably glad to converse with one another after the unusually long duration between meetings, with most not having seen each other since the 50th Annual Meeting, last December.

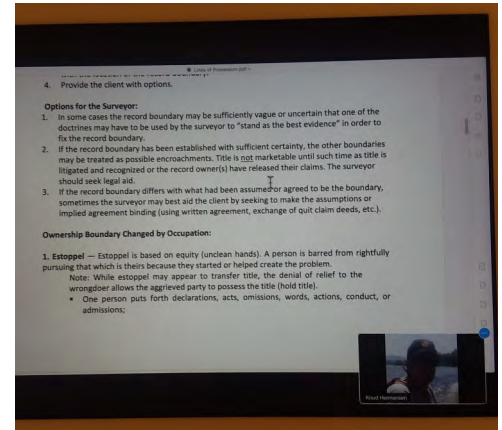


Thirdly, Mark Condodemetraky, the Association's Government Affairs Director, took the podium with a presentation he developed regarding the FEMA process and the NFIP. Mark captivated the after-lunch crowd by describing the do's and don'ts pertaining to the black and white nature of elevation certificates & LOMAs as well as how to determine the base flood elevation at your site. Sharing stories and redacted examples of how these forms are commonly misused shed light on just how cautious and intentional land surveyors need to be in populating them.



Last and certainly not least, Knud Hermansen joined the webinar remotely from the Sunshine State. With no shortage of knowledge, experience, and stories to tell, Knud spent all of 90 minutes sharing numerous anecdotes relating to lines of possession. Some of the not-so-predictable punchlines had us all questioning some of the very basic decisions we make, or choose not to make, on a daily basis. Throughout the presentation, the importance of occupation lines and the doctrines that can cause them to become ownership boundaries were driven home.

After Knud's presentation, the majority of the remote webinar attendees signed off but not before sharing their appreciation and kudos in the comment section. While the overall enjoyment of the webinar shined through, as always, there's room for improvement for both groups of attendees. Namely, it became readily apparent during the quarterly that folks would like a recording of the presentation. Where this hadn't been done before, this wasn't a product we were logistically prepared to produce. Rest assured, it will be a talking point moving forward. We could have also used additional camera operators, audio equipment, and comment monitors to provide a more immersive experience for the attendees, particularly during the Business Meeting and Foundation Raffle.



Speaking of the New Hampshire Land Surveyors Foundation Raffle, several changes will need to go in effect to make the process more intuitive for the remote participants moving forward, but overall, the results were a success with the Foundation raising a total of \$205. Thank you all for your many contributions, both buying tickets and bringing items to raffle off.

Following the raffle, President Eric Mitchell called the year's first Business Meeting to order where Committee Chairs were invited to speak on their respective disciplines. President Mitchell provided updates on the happenings of the Association, ongoing discussions of the Executive Committee, and reiterated the need for volunteers to help fill the presently vacant and soon-to-be vacant positions within the Association. In case you couldn't stay for the end of the Business Meeting, those positions in need of volunteers are; Vice President, Secretary, and Education Director. The current vacant committee chairs are History, GIS, and Merchandising.

We'd like to thank all of you for attending and helping make successful both the Fall Quarterly Seminar and Business Meeting.

Sincerely,
Mitch Cummings, LLS
Vice President, Program Chair

Thanks again to all of the donors. Unfortunately, when Barbara sent a photo with the list of items and donors to the members who were viewing virtually, somehow the list didn't show up, so we can't recall who donated what. We apologize for the error, but then this is one of those times where we live and learn.



Continued next page

Seminar Feedback

I thought the Fall Seminar went very well. The content and all four speakers made for an enjoyable, entertaining, and informative day throughout. The Zoom option was a welcomed alternative for me. Although I wanted to initially attend in person, I realized that I would not be able to because that particular date was not going to work for me.

You see, my wife and I had two vacations cancelled this year due to the pandemic. So when the Mexican Caribbean opened up to limited capacity in July, we scheduled our vacation for the first week in September at our favorite luxury resort (Excellence Playa Mujeres) which went off without a hitch. The resort had their safety protocols in place in such a way that made you nearly forget there was a pandemic.

Anyway, the State of NH requires you to self-quarantine when returning from international travel which we did. But that meant I would not be able to attend the seminar in person since it fell within that two week time frame. We had made our plans prior to the Fall Quarterly Seminar information being released. So when that came out, I was pleased to see the remote attendance option. That worked perfectly for my situation where I attended from my comfortable home work space. I actually enjoyed the remote attendance much more than I thought I would. Maybe that was because of the content and speakers. Thank you to all who made it happen.

Greg Brown, LLS

I wanted to let you know I enjoyed having the Fall Quarterly Seminar available over Zoom. The presentations were great and, other than the small issue with the live audience not being able to hear Knud at the beginning, went off without a hitch. The audio for me over Zoom was loud and clear the entire time. There were a couple times Brian was pointing at the projector screen and on Zoom, I couldn't see what he was pointing at. Other than that, I feel like I got as much out of the presentations as physically being there.

While it's definitely not the same as seeing everyone in person, it's a great solution at a time like this. Attending virtually saved me 3.5 hours of driving as well. Even once this pandemic has passed, offering virtual attendance could be beneficial to many members.

Thanks,

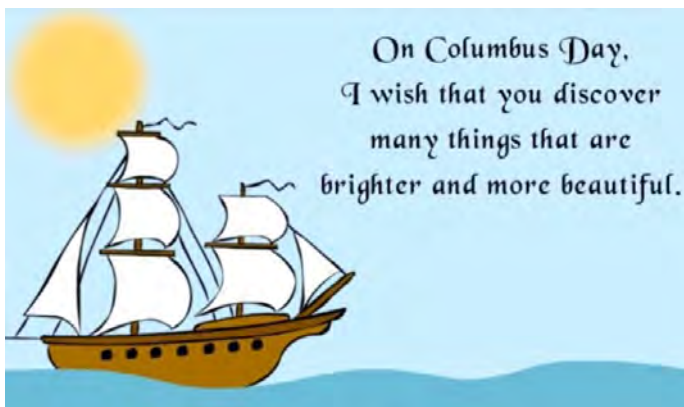
Eric Peabody, LLS



Frontsights

The Annual Meeting Committee is currently working on the 51st Annual Meeting & Equipment Show program. At the October Executive Committee, it was decided to hold the Annual entirely virtual. The Courtyard Marriott & Grappone Conference Center isn't scheduled to open until the 1st of November. With that in mind as well as the uncertainty of what the next couple of months will look like, given the upswing in numbers of COVID-19 positivity, we thought it was in the best interest of all members, guests, and friends to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Stay tuned for more information as we continue to move forward in these continuing uncertain times.



In recognizing our fellow states who celebrate Indigenous People's Day instead of Columbus Day: AL, HI, ME, NM, OR, SD, and VT.





2020 EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS

NSPS is pleased to announce the winners of the 2020 Excellence in Journalism Awards and expresses its appreciation for all who participated. NSPS also wishes to thank the judges for their dedicated efforts.

Best Editorial - The Four-Year Degree and the Future of Land Surveying, Shane Trotter, PLS Nevada Association of Land Surveyors

Best Feature Article - Autobiography of Land Survey Monument, Norman C. Caldwell, PS Michigan Society of Professional Surveyors

Best Newsletter - Section Lines - Kansas Society of Land Surveyors

Best Magazine - The Nevada Traverse - Nevada Association of Land Surveyors

The purpose of this contest is to encourage high-quality publications and content by NSPS affiliates. The contest is judged by a committee established by the Chair of the NSPS Board of Directors, and it is open to newsletters, magazines, and content in either published between January and December of the previous year. The affiliate's executive director, publication's editor, or their designee may submit entries for consideration. The following criteria apply for submissions to the 2020 contest:

- Entries must have been published between January and December 2020.
- One entry per state per category.
- For each entry, at least six (6) copies must be provided for judging.
- An entry form and a cover letter must accompany each entry.
- The cover letter shall specify the category to which the entry is being submitted, and provide a brief statement about the entry's audience.

Deadline extended to June 30, 2021

Entry Categories

Newsletter

Content geared specifically to the needs of the primary audience, (members of state society). Hence, the question to ask is, "Is the content informative and does it serve the information needs of the publication's stated target audience?" [Examples of newsletter content: Minutes, President's message, Director's report, Contact information for officers, Calendar of events, Activity reports, Technical Notes contributed by members, attribution of reprinted content, etc.]

Magazine

Content geared toward the needs of the primary audience and having a greater proportion of bylined technical articles and articles with information which may be relevant to state society members related to national developments in the field of surveying and mapping. [Examples of state society magazine content: Reports and news items related to state society business; by-lined surveying articles with state-wide appeal contributed by members; reprints of surveying and surveying-related articles from national magazines].

Original Feature Article—published in either a newsletter or a magazine.

Editorial—published in either a newsletter or a magazine.



Criteria for Judging

All categories will be judged on legibility, composition and clarity.

- Affiliate newsletters and magazines will also be judged on the focus and quality of their content, overall publication, design and layout.
- Original feature articles will also be judged on the substance, relevance, photography, and presentation.
- Editorial entries will also be judged on how well the topic/issue is presented and the position is argued.

All entries will be judged by the Excellence in Journalism Judging Committee comprised of five members of the NSPS BOD. The judging committee will elect a chairman. The decisions of the judging committee are final.

The judging committee may decide that no award will be given in any year when there less than five entries.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nspss.us.com/resource/resmgr/2020_awards_pr_campaign_get_kids_into.pdf

I Found It—Now What Is It?

Another contribution from our intrepid anonymous contributor. I think this one looks a bit fiendish, what could it be? Quarter for scale. If you think you know what it is, send in your guess to Barbara at info@nhlsa.org.



I Found It – Now What Is It? Responses

Alan Barnard and Dennis McKenney were correctly able to identify the September mystery item as a race knife or timber/bark scribe. This tool was used by surveyors for carving names, initials, dates, etc., into boundary trees. If you come across something unusual, whether you know what it is or not, send it to Barbara at info@nhlsa.org.



Barb,

Hope you are doing well. It's a Timber Scribe or Race knife. Here are three timber scribes I have, you may want to use as a follow up to the "What is it."

Regards,
Alan Barnard, LLS

What Is It? Looks like a bark scribe to me.

Dennis D. McKenney, LPF #61/LLS #691



Continued next page

Editor's Note: Our June issue featured an "I Found It – Now What Is It" mystery item that Susan Cragin attempted to identify in the July issue. However, a recent issue of *New Hampshire Magazine* included the below article which solves *The TBM* mystery and reveals what our unidentified item is. Reprinted with permission from Editor Rick Broussard, the below article originally appeared in the September 2020 issue of *New Hampshire Magazine*.

What Are Great Piddocks?

A local oceanic mystery in need of solving

August 14, 2020
 Marshall Hudson

The mystery started with a simple walk on the beach. The tide had gone out and left behind all the drifting goodies that wash ashore with a stormy high tide. Suzanne "Suzie" Graham was vacationing at Plaice Cove in Hampton, and was walking the beach collecting shells when she started noticing some peculiar objects. Graham has a knack for finding unique things — she once found an unusual rock that turned out to be a 30,000-year-old caveman hammerstone. She didn't know what these Plaice Cove mystery objects were, but their hardness and sheen made her think they were metallic. Many of them were similar in size and shape, suggesting they might be machine-made in a factory somewhere.



Are these mysterious ocean objects metal? Stone? Synthetic or natural? Marshall Hudson is on the case. *Courtesy photo*

The mystery items were dark in color and roughly the size and shape of a good homemade cookie, but with holes in them that gave them a Swiss cheese look. Graham decided she needed to find out what these mysterious objects were, and why they were suddenly washing up on the beach. She collected some samples, sealed them in plastic baggies, and set out to solve the mystery. Showing the samples to friends and local Seacoast residents yielded no answers, so she took pictures of her mystery whatzits and sent them off to area science centers. She never got a response.

While reading an article in *New Hampshire Magazine* about the drowned forests at Odiorne Point and Jenness Beach state parks, Graham wondered if her mystery widgets might be petrified remains from the drowned forests, so she sent her photos and an inquiring note to the editorial staff at *New Hampshire Magazine*. The novel coronavirus shutdown made it a challenge, but I coordinated a meeting with her to examine and obtain samples of her mystery objects. Casual observers of our meeting might have thought they were witnessing a drug deal going down, as two masked strangers met briefly in a deserted parking lot behind an empty building at an on/off ramp to exchange mysterious substances in plastic baggies.

Looking closely at the objects, I noticed layers or lines that resembled woodgrain or growth rings on a freshly cut tree stump. Could the mystery items be from sunken logs or wood from an old shipwreck? I put one inside a woodstove and tried to light it on fire. It would not burn. I dropped one into a bucket of water to see if it would float. Sank like a rock. I ruled out anything to do with wood.

Back in 2011, 4 million plastic disks were accidentally discharged from a wastewater sewage treatment plant and ended up washing up on area ocean beaches. The disks provide surface area for bacteria to cling to while breaking down the sewage, and are not supposed to be released from the sewage treatment plant, but it had happened. Could our mystery items be designed to serve the same purpose as the wastewater treatment disks, but be made of a more natural material than plastic? I contacted a friend who works for the state overseeing sewage treatment facilities, and was happy to learn that the mystery doodads I had been handling without gloves had nothing to do with sewage.

I queried a professional geologist, and then other professionals in the coastal environmental world, and struck out again and again, but these contacts forwarded my photos and questions to their contacts, and those contacts forwarded it on to others. Eventually it ended up in the in-box of professor Larry Harris from UNH. Harris thought he knew what the black cheese cookie things in my photos were, but he wanted to examine a sample. Harris teaches marine biology and has a Ph.D. in invertebrate zoology, which means he enjoys studying slimy ocean critters lacking a backbone. Harris had been teaching at UNH since 1969, and after 51 years, he decided to retire in May of 2020. Graham and I caught up with him as he was packing up and clearing out his office/laboratory.

Continued next page

Harris has studied ocean life not only at UNH, but all over the world, including the South Pole. Harris spent a year at McMurdo station in Antarctica studying algae frozen in the ice. He told us that although the algae might have been frozen for thousands of years, when thawed it comes back to life, just as though it had laid down for a quick nap. Harris looked at our samples under a microscope and observed that the holes were funnel-shaped, and became increasingly larger in diameter as they got deeper into the material. "Clams" he said. Not just any old clam, a boring clam named *Zirfaea crispata*, more commonly called Great Piddock. The holes are the home of the Great Piddock, which burrows into the sea bottom and anchors there, pumping water in and out and filtering it to obtain the food and nutrients it needs. The holes are shaped like inverted funnels because the clam grows bigger and fatter over time as it burrows deeper.



Professor Larry Harris of the University of New Hampshire studies the objects. *Courtesy photo*

Our mystery item turned out to be over a thousand years old. It is saltwater marsh peat that had regularly accumulated new layers of silt and organic matter, which created the "growth rings" appearance that I had noticed. A Great Piddock colony had taken up residency and bored holes into the peat when it was still soft. Changes in sea levels and many years of accumulated silt and organic matter compressed and buried the sample deep enough that sunlight and oxygen no longer reached it. The anaerobic environment turned the sample black, and the Great Piddocks died or moved on.

When moisture no longer reached the peat, it dried up and cracked into pieces, where it remained until some dredging operation disturbed it. The disturbed pieces then rolled around in the surf, which rounded off any sharp edges, and sorted them by size or weight as bigger ones sank and the lighter ones rolled on. A rowdy high tide spit them out, allowing Graham to find them while walking on the beach, which in turn led to a marine biology lesson in Great Piddocks from a South Pole scientist. Not a simple mystery, but we solved it.





Many correct guesses for last month's location, thank you all for your participation!

This month is more of a what is it than where is it knowing there may be multiple of these throughout the state. I'll be amazed if anyone knows exactly where this particular one is. Good luck!



Continued next page



By: Emily Hayes

The Location: Table Rock, Dixville Notch

The unincorporated Township of Dixville is home of the Balsams Resort and location of the first in the nation primary voting.

For 60 years, Dixville has held the title and honor of being the first town in the nation to cast and count their midnight presidential primary votes. With a historically small population, 100% participation of registered voters has rarely been an issue.

The Balsams Resort was founded in 1866 when the original 25-room Dix House was constructed. Over the next 40 years, the Balsams flourished and grew. By the end of 1918, the Balsams had transformed into a Grand Resort, especially after the completion of the prominent 400-room Hampshire House. The Resort remained a staple destination of the North Country until closing its doors in 2011. During the past few years, the resort has been in the beginning stages of a major redevelopment project.

Table Rock is an entertaining hike that offers stunning views of Dixville Notch. It can be accessed via 2 different trails, one being a steep 1.5 mile climb and the other is a moderate three mile trail passing some nice cascades. As I found out first hand, the end of the journey may not be fun for those of us who are not a fan of heights (unfortunately, I am one of those people). I didn't make it past the large boulders that lead from the trail to the narrow ledge outcrop. Luckily, I had someone with me who is much more daring than I am! For the folks who would enjoy the thrill of a very high and narrow scenic outlook, toss this outing into your places to visit.

The "Where Am I" for this issue I believe the point of view is from Tabletop Rock in Dixville Notch. Very nice hike.

Thanks,
Mark Condodemetraky, PE, PLS

As always, good job: Where am I? The Balsams in Dixville Notch, and many years ago I recall attending an NHLSA event there.

Dennis D. McKenney, LPF #61/LLS #691

Hi Barb,

I think the Where Is It pictured in the September issue of *The TBM* is The Balsams Grand Resort located near the top of Dixville Notch.

Roy Sabourn, LLS

Barbara,

It is the Balsams Hotel and Resort in Dixville Notch. I'm guessing the photo was taken from somewhere near Index Rock.

John Bean
Clarksville, NH

Barbara,

This photo is of the Balsams Grand Hotel. Photo was taken from "Table Rock" in Dixville Notch. In that picture, in the upper left there are fields on the horizon, I grew up on that farm.

Thanks,
Robert H. Weir, LLS

Hi Barb,

For the Where Is It guess I would say that the it is The Balsams in Dixville Notch from on high at Tabletop Rock.

Gerry Miller, LLS

Hi Barb,

Where am I?

I believe the photo is taken from Table Top Rock in Dixville Notch. Photo is of the Balsams Resort.

Daniel J. Martin

Barb,

The Balsams taken from Table Rock in Dixville Notch area.

Regards,
Alan Barnard, LLS



Side view of Table Rock



The end of Table Rock



Looking east from Table Rock

These last three photos were sent by Emily, but noted the one looking east and the end of Table Rock were taken by David Krause, as she noted, she was not going out there! 😊

I wrote this book review, and I think at least some of our members might enjoy it.

Brian

Brian Nelson Burford, LLS 646
NH State Archivist
(603) 271-2236

The Gold Seekers of '49: A personal narrative of the Overland Trail and Adventures in California and Oregon From 1849 to 1854.

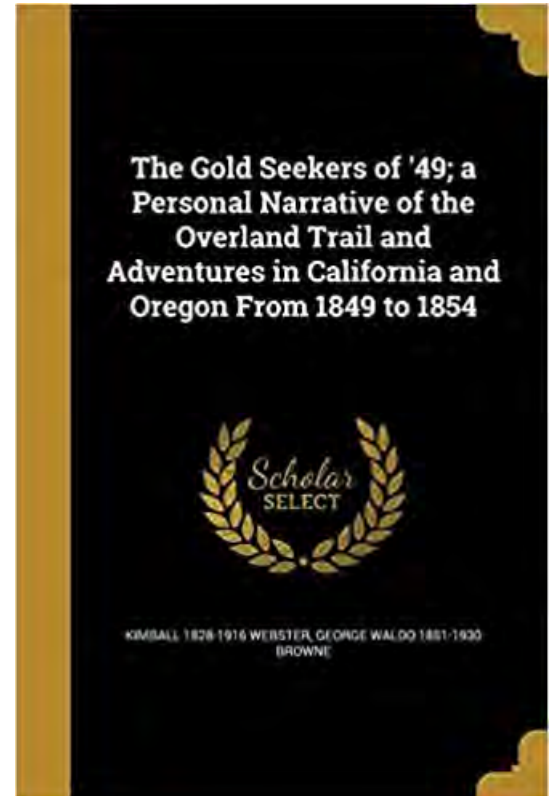
By Kimball Webster, edited by George Waldo Browne (Manchester, NH: Standard Book Com, 1917), 284pp. Reprinted on demand by Sagwan Press through Amazon.com, \$25.95.

Kimball Webster was a few months shy of his 21st birthday when he paid \$300 and became one of 29 shareholders in the Granite State and California Mining and Trading Co. The company was organized in Boston in March 1849, in response to reports of great fortunes to be found in the newly acquired territory of California. Several of his fellow investors hailed from Pelham, NH or from Boston. Webster had been born in Pelham, but had been raised in Hudson. Still, he knew many of the people in Pelham, and several of the shareholders were familiar to him. Other investors were completely unknown to him, coming from other parts of New England. They had one thing in common – they were going to California to find some of the gold they had been hearing so much about. After weighing the three principal routes to the future “Golden State” (sailing around the southern tip of South America, or taking a short-cut across the Isthmus of Panama, or traveling the Overland Trail) they decided the Overland Trail was the least risky and fastest.

The first 100 pages of the book relate the day-by-day experiences of taking a train to Chicago, boats to Independence Missouri, and finally with pack mule following the Overland Trail and the Humboldt River Trail crossing the prairie, the Rockies, the desert, the Sierra Nevada's and down into the Sacramento Valley. They left Boston on April 17, 1849 and reached Independence on May 3. They then gathered supplies and left Independence on May 26 (at 5pm, because they had so much trouble trying to pack the mules) and reached the Feather River in California on October 17, 1849. Webster estimated the company covered 73 miles on the trail in May, 429 miles in June, 436 miles in July, 471 miles in August, 523 miles in September and 198 miles in October. We read about dusty trails, campsites with or without potable water, campsites with or without grass to feed the mules and cattle, rumors of Indian attacks, weather and river levels, decisions about which trail to follow, sickness and death.

The next 80 pages relate several interesting episodes while Webster worked to find his fortune before returning home. He tells of more sickness, crimes and frontier punishments, odd jobs, and the cost of tools and provisions. He talks about the sleeping conditions and the methods used to mine gold, to travel, and other common daily experiences. But the heart of his story is about the interesting people he met and interacted with.

One of the people Webster met was a man named Robert Elder. Elder had come to California from Wisconsin, where he had been a government surveyor. He was then employed to survey a California property and needed some assistants. Webster agreed to help. When the survey was over, Elder gave him encouragement. Several months later, Webster ran into Elder again, and Elder informed him that a new Surveyor General had been appointed for the Oregon Territory, and Elder knew him personally from Wisconsin. Elder was planning to go north to survey in that area, and Webster would be welcome to join him. Webster did not go immediately, but did eventually sail north on a steamer from San Francisco, arriving at the River Willamette on June 10, 1851. Webster worked for several different deputy surveyors, who encouraged him. Webster started by clearing line and blazing witness trees, graduating to chainman, to running the Burt Compass, to the calculations, to managing a survey party, until the Surveyor General deputized him allowing him to sign contracts on his own.



The election of Franklin Pierce brought about political changes such as the appointees of the old administration were replaced by appointees of the new administration. The new Surveyor General of the Oregon Territory had his own phalanx of surveyors and Webster decided it was time to return to New Hampshire. He traveled from Oregon to San Francisco, and on to Panama, and finally sailed to New York. This homeward travel was covered in just 10 pages.

This book is easy reading, as Webster tells his stories with some humor. He expressed himself well, and even the repetitive nature along the Overland Trail gives the reader a first-hand understanding of the monotony of that trip for migrants. But the book connected with me on a number of levels. Many years ago, I began to try to find and track collections of land survey records, and to learn a little about the people who worked on those records. Kimball Webster of Hudson, NH was one that I knew about. Following his return from Oregon and California, Webster worked for a short while for a quarry in Maine, and then came back to Hudson and hung his surveyor's shingle. Webster died in Hudson on June 29, 1916. His records went to Ned Spaulding of the same town. Spaulding's records were acquired by Dana Perkins Associates of North Reading Mass. In the past 10 years or so, Paul Gendron convinced the Perkins company to donate the Spaulding and Kimball Webster records to the New Hampshire State Archives.

And on a personal level, one of my friends and fellow postal history collectors is the great-grandson of Kimball Webster. When I look at George, I am reminded how much he looks like the photos of his ancestor. As I read this book, I felt that I was hearing Kimball Webster telling me the stories about an era of his life a long time ago, filled with interesting people in interesting places and chance encounters. I urge New Hampshire surveyors to read this book. It could have been the story of any one of us.

TBM RATE SCHEDULE - 2020 RATES

NHLSA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

For more information contact:
Barbara Cormier – 800-698-5447 (in-state) – 603-895-4822 (out-of-state)
info@nhlsa.org

DEADLINE IS THE 1st OF THE MONTH

(If the 1st lands on a weekend, the deadline is the Friday before)

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