

MHS Newsletter

The Marlow Historical Society, Marlow, NH, 03456
P.O. Box 12, Marlow, NH 03456

Fall 2012

One Man's Dream is Another Man's Nightmare



It's not your typical town history--no chapters, no genealogy, no index. It's a book that has puzzled readers, the publisher, and even this author. So what's the story behind *The History of Marlow*? Civil engineer and historian Elgin Alonzo Jones (1852-1939) spent much of his life researching the early history of Marlow. He transcribed the 18th century Town Proprietors' record book that described each lot of land as laid out to the original grantees. He then used this information to draft and revise a detailed map, identifying each building located within the various school districts. He began a handwritten manuscript, *Marlow as I know it*. His dream was that, one day, his life's work would be published.

Elgin Jones had no heir apparent to carry on his efforts. His wife, Sarah, predeceased him by just one month. They had no children. So, he made a provision in his will to allocate funds for the publication of his manuscript. He named attorney Orville E. Cain, a former mayor of the City of Keene, as his executor. Elgin Jones intended to send a letter to his executor with specific instructions regarding the publication. Likely that never happened, leaving Orville Cain the unenviable task of publishing a book on a subject he knew little about.

In the process of disposing of his client's estate, Orville Cain discovered Elgin Jones' transcription of the Proprietors' record book and the maps that accompanied it. However cryptic they may have seemed, he made arrangements with Sentinel Printing, Keene, NH, to produce a limited edition of a hardcover book entitled *Notes on the History of Marlow*, compiled by Elgin A. Jones, 1941. In his foreword, Attorney Cain included a disclaimer that this publication "is not intended in any sense as a history but as an effort to preserve the information assembled by Mr. Jones." (continued on page 2)

*Reference notes for this article are available in the online version available at MHS website

Consider Our Future

When an organization depends on fewer and fewer volunteers, we lose our vitality, and we lose the creative energy that many voices bring. Our vision for the Marlow Historical Society includes the voices of the young, the not so young, the “experts” and the novices, the new residents, and the old timers. We, as a community, are in charge of the kind of activities and relationships that we enjoy together; no one from “away” can do this for us. This historical society has done so much over the years to bring people together with history and with each other—let’s continue to do that! We need you; we need your opinions, and some of your time, and some of your talents to bring information, and fun, and laughter, and nostalgia, and good times to Marlow.

How can you help? There are many ways, large and small but all important. Would you consider:

Providing refreshments for an event; Helping with mailings; Putting up a poster or two; Helping plan a program; Tending Murray Hall flowerboxes; Helping refurbish the art display backgrounds in Murray Hall; Being a Museum volunteer during the season; Putting signs out on the green for events; Cleaning up after events; Making phone calls; Working in the Collection; Doing research; Getting involved with the Murray Hall restoration efforts; Helping with the Annual Art Show; Thinking of new fundraising events; Planning “Field Trip” events for members---and the list could go on.

Please consider taking an active role—be it large or small—in the Society. In times long ago, people in Marlow “made their own fun” and built a close community. Come along and help us continue in this tradition! Our board meetings are on the first Thursday evening of the month, at 6:30 p.m. at the Chapel, and anyone may attend.

(Nightmare, cont.)



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Just when Orville Cain thought the Marlow history project was laid to rest, a new discovery came to haunt him: Elgin Jones' handwritten narrative. Reviewing the history, Orville Cain realized that he had, inadvertently, published the wrong manuscript. However, by this time, the bulk of the funds had already been expended. What was he to do? For the sum of \$125, he engaged the services of a stenographer named Charles R. Dresser. The result was an imperfect typescript, simply entitled MARLOW, which Attorney Cain distributed as a courtesy to the recipients of the hardcover book. Though its cost was minimal, its value is priceless. Last year Marlow celebrated the beginning of its' 250th anniversary. Perhaps the time has come to make Elgin Jones' dream a reality?

Tracy W. Messer, 2012



A Tinker Tale

Reading about the Tinker family in the recent MHS newsletter brought to mind a humorous exchange that my father witnessed one day long ago while shopping at Lucian Tinker's store, which sheds some light on the character and personality of this local merchant of the past. The Tinker establishment was, I believe, located in one of those buildings which burnt with the Forrest House hotel in the summer of 1916. As my dad arrived in Marlow in 1910, we have a rough time frame for this episode.

Though my dad related this to me some thirty five or more years later, it might have happened that morning and he was still laughing. It was summer and dad was in the store to make a purchase. There were a number of other customers present, likewise waiting their turn. Mr. Tinker was behind the counter engaged in adding up someone's account. From outside in the street a motor car could be heard driving up the road into town. In those days cars in town were a rare occurrence and got everyone's attention.

The vehicle, arriving from the direction of Keene, came across the bridge, pulled up in front of the store and stopped. It was an open touring car containing, besides the driver, several passengers all dressed in long white dusters and wearing goggles. Without removing her attire, a middle aged woman alighted and entered the store. Showing no regard for the other customers present and ahead of her, or that the storekeeper was otherwise occupied, she barged right up to the counter.

"Mr., do you have any peppermint candy?!" she demanded in a loud voice. Mr. Tinker ceased his computations, looked her straight in the eye, replied: "Yes," and resumed what he was doing. The woman stood impatiently for a moment or two staring at his bowed head and, as he made no further comment, pressed on.

"Well, where is it?!" she further demanded. All others in the store had become riveted by this curious exchange. Again Mr Tinker, interrupted, stopped, looked straight across the counter at her and in a loud voice replied: "In the attic!"

Without further comment or question, the rude motorist turned, marched out of the store, climbed into her vehicle and departed. Mr. Tinker returned to the task at hand without further interruption. My father and the other customers waited their turn as before.



Joseph Feuer

Did you know

Elgin Jones, who wrote The History of Marlow, New Hampshire, died in 1937. He had been the proprietor of the Forest Inn or the Marlow Inn which burned in a disastrous fire in 1916 (not in the more famous fire of 1941). He was an amateur botanist and geologist as well as a historian. He was a fine carpenter. He was a traveler. He named New Hampshire's Camp Takota after the wise and friendly Takota (Dakota) people he met in his travels to the West. He gave the building which we call the Chapel today to Marlow's Temperance Society after the original Temperance Society building burned in 1916. His wife was a member, and he gave it in her honor. When the Temperance Society ceased to exist, the building became the property of the Methodist Ladies' Aid Society and it still belongs to the women of the Methodist Church today. It was his parents who gave Jones Hall (Marlow's old meeting house) to the Town.

KROKA EXPEDITIONS

767 Forest Road
Marlow, NH 03456

www.kroka.org
603-835-9087

Summer Camps Semester School
Programs for Schools

Adventure Trips & Earth Living Skills for Ages 6-21

Fall Programs

Saturday September 15
Jones Hall

5:30 P.M. Business Meeting:
ELECTION OF OFFICERS
6:30 P.M.:
Folk Concert with Fred Hill
Desserts will be served

ALL MEMBERS SHOULD COME!!

Sunday October 7
HARVEST FESTIVAL IN THE
VILLAGE/ MARLOW ART SHOW
at Murray Hall, opening Saturday
October 6 at 4 p.m.
50/50 Raffle!



Master Plan Discussion Meeting Sept 30 6:30 p.m. at the Chapel

Members of the Historical Society have an opportunity to voice their ideas as a part of the 2013 Marlow Town Master Plan process. On Sunday September 30th we will have coffee and dessert together at the Chapel, and have a discussion on our vision for historic preservation in Marlow-- Murray Hall, and much more. All members and guests who are interested in this topic are most welcome. We will meet at 6:30 p.m. Our ideas and input will be recorded for inclusion into the final report of the Master Plan Committee, so come and share!

Marlow Historical Society

Officers

President: Joanne Thomas
Vice President: Maria Baril
Secretary: Loisanne Foster
Treasurer: Mary Blank

***Like us on Facebook; visit our
site:
www.marlowhistoricalsociety.org***

***Not a member yet? Why not join
us in
preserving Marlow history??
Contact Maria Baril at
maria@barils.com***

**Marlow Historical Society
Museum**

**Located at the Methodist Chapel on
Rte 123
Open Seasonally
May - October
3rd Sunday of the Month
9:00 a.m. to Noon**

The Marlow Historical Society
P.O. Box 12
Marlow, NH 03456

"One Man's Dream Is Another Man's Nightmare" Tracy W Messer, 8/27/12

FOOTNOTES

1. The original volume of the proprietor's records was last known to be at the Marlow Town Office. Elgin Jones' transcript of the "Layout Book of Marlow" was to have been lodged in the Cheshire County Registry of Deeds. See "Item 16", Last Will and Testament of Elgin A. Jones, File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH. See also "Chapter XXI/Residents" of Elgin Jones' unpublished manuscript, *MARLOW*.
2. "The map that accompanies the story is made from the original layout book, so fortunately preserved to us. The first glance at it would impress one with the idea that it represented a modified Chinese puzzle. Not so. Marlow, unlike all the adjoining towns, was never subdivided into ranges and lots. Each person who owned a share could select land wherever he chose, have a survey made by the committee, a record made in the layout book, and then his title was complete. The irregularity is thus accounted for." See "Chapter XXI/Residents" of Elgin Jones' unpublished manuscript, *MARLOW*.
3. His original manuscript may be found at the Historical Society of Cheshire County. See "Item 18", Last Will and Testament of Elgin A. Jones, File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH. See also Rumrill, Alan F. [Record Group Number 29: Marlow Hand Written History by Elgin A. Jones](#), Historical Society of Cheshire County, compiled May 1983. Retrieved 25 August 2012 from <http://www.hscnh.org/libraryrg/rg29.cfm>
4. In the fall of 1934 he gave his surveying tools, compass, tapes, etc. (but not drafting tools) to Lucien D. Webster of Campello, MA. See "Item 6", Last Will and Testament of Elgin A. Jones, File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH.
5. See <http://keenepubliclibrary.org/library/vital-records/deaths-1939-1941>
6. See "Item 18", Last Will and Testament of Elgin A. Jones, File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH. The text reads as follows: "After paying all my debits, expenses, legacies and all taxes if I have not published my manuscript "Marlow as I know it", and there remains sufficient funds to publish the same, and a letter to my administrator is found with this will containing directions, I hereby authorize and direct him to publish said manuscript accordingly, using such of my estate funds as may be necessary; selling the resulting volume at such reasonable price as will recompense my estate, in part at least, for the expense. If no letter of directions is found herewith, then said Manuscript and map shall be given to the New Hampshire Historical Society. Also the sum of five hundred (500) dollars to pay in part for its being published in its "Collections."
7. See "Item 19", Last Will and Testament of Elgin A. Jones, File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH.
8. See "Item 18", Last Will and Testament of Elgin A. Jones, File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH.
9. There are four known copies of this book: one at the New Hampshire Historical Society; one at the Historical Society of Cheshire County; one at the Keene Public Library; and one at the Marlow Historical Society. It is not known how many copies were printed. However, the cost for "Sentinel-Jones Marlow History" came to \$877.19. See The Account of Orville E. Cain, Executor of the Will of Elgin A. Jones, Late of Keene, Deceased; Paper 6; File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH.
10. See Jones, Elgin A. *NOTES ON HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF MARLOW, N.H.* Sentinel Printing, Keene, NH: 1941, page vii.
11. See The Account of Orville E. Cain, Executor of the Will of Elgin A. Jones, Late of Keene, Deceased; Paper 6; File #510, 8th Circuit Court, Probate Division, Keene, NH.
12. There are five known copies of the "*MARLOW*" typescript: one at the Keene Public Library; one at the New Hampshire Historical Society; one at the Historical Society of Cheshire County; and two at the Marlow Historical Society.

"One Man's Dream Is Another Man's Nightmare" Tracy W Messer, 8/27/12

One of the copies at the Marlow Historical Society contains the following typewritten note: "Mr. Elgin A. Jones made a provision that should he die before he had put the History of Marlow in book form and published, that attorney Orville Cain of Keene would complete the task. After the death of Mr. Cain, his office was being cleared out of all unnecessary papers. It is through the thoughtfulness of Mr. Herbert Beard (formerly a resident of Marlow, then of Keene) that these records were saved. He thought I would like to have them. I certainly did want them. They contain valuable information about the beginning of Marlow. I treasure them along with the memory of Mr. Elgin A. Jones. Signed: Mildred Langdon Kinson.

The copy at the Keene Public Library contains an original cover letter from Orville E. Cain addressed to the Board of Trustees, Thayer Public Library, Keene, NH dated May 6, 1942. It reads as follows: Gentlemen: After printing the notes of Elgin A. Jones on the Town of Marlow a manuscript was found which contained much valuable information and this has been mimeographed. I enclose a copy herewith. Yours very truly, O.E. Cain"

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

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- Batchelder, Elizabeth (Editor). History of Marlow, New Hampshire By: Elgin Jones. Re-Edited 2002 by: The Marlow Historical Society. [Available for sale through the Marlow Historical Society for \$15].
- "ELGIN A. JONES, LONG ACTIVE IN COMMUNITY, DIES - Well Known Citizen Had Seved in Many Offices; Funeral on Thursday." *Keene Evening Sentinel*, Tuesday, March 14, 1939, page 1, 5.
- Foster, Loisanne. "Marlow's First Town Meeting", published online Sat Apr 12, 2008 6:39 pm. Retrieved 25 August 2012 from <http://www.marlowhistoricalsociety.org/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=231#p466>
- Foster, Loisanne. "Notes on the History of the Town of Marlow, Jones" published online Wed Oct 24, 2007 8:07 pm. Retrieved 25 August 2012 from <http://www.marlowhistoricalsociety.org/phpbb/viewtopic.php?t=209#p427>
- Jones, Elgin A. File #510: records pertaining to the estate of the late Elgin A. Jones who died 13 March 1939. Copied 17 August 2012 from the records of the Cheshire County Probate Court by Tracy Messer.
- Jones, Elgin A. *NOTES ON HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF MARLOW, N.H.* Sentinel Printing, Keene, NH: 1941.
- Jones, Elgin A. *MARLOW*. Unpublished manuscript. Transcribed (by Charles R. Dresser, circa 1941) from original handwritten manuscript.
- Messer, Tracy. "Map Lot Supplementary Index to Elgin A. Jones' History of the Town of Marlow, N.H." Unpublished document compiled circa 1995.
- "Over \$17,000 Made in Public Bequests By The Late Elgin A. Jones. *Keene Evening Sentinel*, Friday, March 17, 1939, page 1.
- Rumrill, Alan F. [Record Group Number 29: Marlow Hand Written History by Elgin A. Jones](#), Historical Society of Cheshire County, compiled May 1983. Retrieved 25 August 2012 from <http://www.hscnh.org/libraryrg/rg29.cfm>
- Swart, Hon. William P. "AMONG THE LEGISLATORS OF 1911." *The Granite Monthly*, Vol. XLIII, Granite Monthly Co. Pub., Concord, NH: 1911, page 58 (photograph and biographical sketch of Elgin A. Jones). Retrieved 27 AUG 2012 from: <http://books.google.com/books?id=mGESAAAAYAAJ&q=jones-v=snippet&q=jones&f=false>