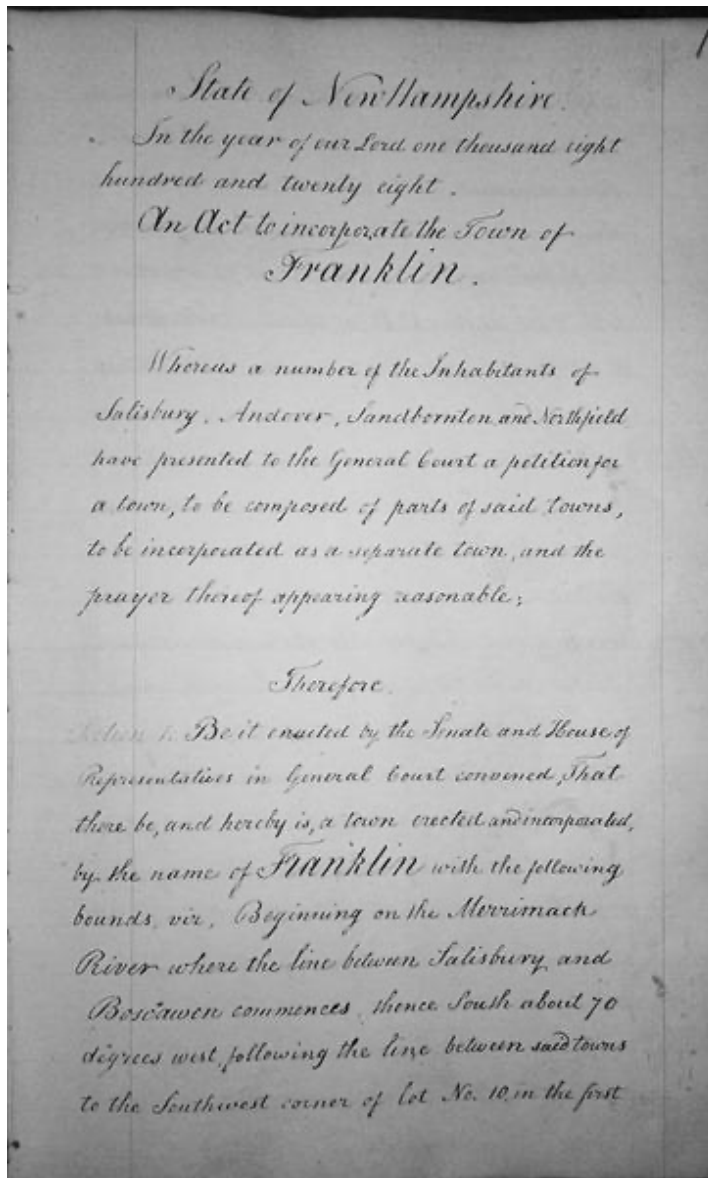


Franklin Historical Society Newsletter for October 2025

It is October already. Fall, beautiful fall! In the north country, peak magnificence is already on display, while in Franklin...not quite yet. A little color here and there, but only slight harbingers of future glories. Perhaps a foliage slide show may be scheduled for next season to honor this yearly occurrence, but for now, on **Thursday, October 2nd at 7 pm, "More Treasures from the Franklin Public Library"** will be presented at the Society's museum., 21 Holy Cross Road at Webster Place. A gracious thank you is extended to the Library Trustees and Director Rob Sargent, for without their gracious consent, this program would not have been possible. Such incredible finds such as rare photographs, artifacts from the Joseph L. Thompson archive



documenting the long process of getting the first high school built in 1876, and papers from the Webster Birthplace Association will be showcased. Tidbits from Franklin's past not seen in decades should pique the interest of any lover of viewing and understanding the city's history, and appreciating those who created it. Light refreshments will be served between the presentation and the Society's regular business meeting (to which all guests are invited). The programs of the Society are *always* free and open to all.

Society recent happenings: mention was made at the last meeting of the possibility of temporarily taking custody of a ledger, now in the City Manager's office, detailing the *town* of Franklin's business from its inception in 1828 through 1848. This book, arguably the most important city record, will have to move along with all the contents of the two city vaults during the extensive renovation of Soldiers Memorial Hall. In order to keep it safe during this extended period, and provide the opportunity to make a digital copy of it, the Society

has offered to store it in the Society's fireproof safe when not actively digitalizing its contents, a sample of which is above (page one of 454).

However, upon further investigation, this vault contains the handwritten records of *all* selectmen meetings, annual town meetings, and copies of all warrant articles, in multiple ledgers, each containing 18-20 years worth of information (the next in succession covers 1848-1865). In order to catalog the contents of this room (which is scheduled for demolition) before moving them to an alternate, secure location, a suggestion has been made that members of the Society create a small committee of volunteers to help perform this labor of preservation. Three names have already been mentioned.

An update on the famous Bank clock: a photo was found with the traffic light and the clock together, suggesting that the impetus for its removal was the 1961 façade work, not the addition of the signals.

As a side note to the library discoveries, on a bookshelf obviously designated for volumes to protect, just a random selection of tomes uncovered publication dates in the early to mid 1800s, with some bearing the previous owner's name written on the first free end paper. Of interest were some signed by Omar A. Towne, who became the publisher, owner, and editor of the Journal-Transcript newspaper, the source of Franklin's news for many years under his leadership.

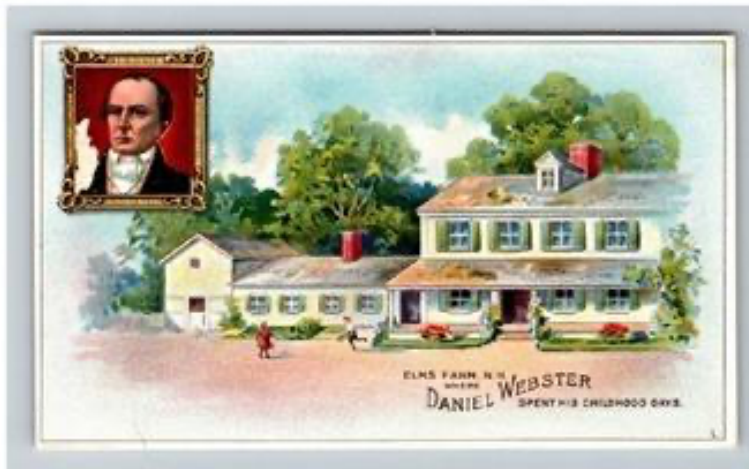
Segueing to other items of note worth saving, the Society wishes once again to issue its undying thanks to the following for adding to the Society's burgeoning collections:

To **Stan Weglarz, via Kathy Fuller**, for two American flags (possibly used during military burials), copies of Andy Nadeau's History of St. Paul's Church and the Pictorial History of the Franklin Fire Department (both for resale), the 1991 Bronze Star certificate and Congressional acknowledgement of service for John Dagata, a framed photo of a gazebo/bandstand, and Stan's ID tag from his 40th FHS class reunion.

To **Betty Whitcomb, via Annette Cain**, for two FHS yearbooks, 1949 and 1952.

To **Christine Dzujna**, for a box Franklin Regional Hospital annual reports, a 1974 Hospital Auxiliary cook book, and copies of the "Hilltop News" from the 1970s through the 1990s.

And to **Frank Genus**, for a vintage postcard of the Society's building when owned by Daniel Webster (who added the one story extension and carriage house in 1830), advertising Webster cigars (did he even smoke?), and an 1866 letter from Arthur ("Sid") Nesmith to his future wife Mary Moulder (see envelope below) in Washington, DC, where the marriage later took place.



These gifts are without saying generous and thoughtful, but even beyond that, are a tribute to the donor, whose understanding of the value of preserving history can never be understated. Thank you again.