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Historical Address of the Town of Jackson Given by Everett E. Morton at the One Hundredth Anniversary of Jackson as a Plantation

Everett E. Morton

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Historical Address

of the

TOWN of JACKSON
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GIVEN BY

Everett E. Morton

AT THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF JACKSON AS A PLANTATION AND OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH ON OCTOBER 5-6, 1912

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Mr. Chairman and Friends: I regret very much that the committee have chosen me to take this part, as I think the subject deserves much better treatment than I can give it.

You must all know that when you undertake to give a history covering one hundred years in the short time we have at our command, it must of necessity be very incomplete.

The town was named for Gen. Jackson.

The first men to move into town were Benj. Cates and his two sons, James and John. John Cates claims to have felled the first tree in town on Lot 19. Near where Percy Cilley now lives.

The first couple to be married in Jackson was Nicholas Hamlin, who came from Gorham, and Deborah Cates. They were married by Elder John Whitney. In those days all the minister received for performing the ceremony was the privilege of kissing the bride. Nowadays he wants at the least one dollar and a half and wants to kiss the bride, too, if she is good-looking. One of the first causes of the high cost of living.

The first child born in Jackson was Enoch, son of Nicholas and Deborah Hamlin. Dr. Knowles was called from Unity, 12 miles away. He came on horseback through the woods, in a very severe rain storm, to attend them.

The first death to occur in Jackson was that of Mrs. Abner Whitcomb in the year 1805.

The people lived mostly in log houses in those days. The first framed house was built by Benj. Hodgkins on Lot 29, near Geo. Hasty's.

The first minister in Jackson was Elder John Whitney.

The first Doctor in Jackson was Augustus Stiles, brother of Mark L. Stiles, Sr. Dr. Roberts had practiced in Jackson some years earlier, but he lived just over the line in the town of Brooks. Mrs. John Cates, sister of Dr. Roberts, was something of a doctor and she used to go long distances to attend the sick. She was a large woman weighing 200 pounds.
There is but little we can say about the inhabitants of Jackson along these years. They were an honest, industrious people, working hard to provide a home for themselves and families. Always ready to give a helping hand when needed. One writer says, “If they had a hard job to do and needed help, all they had to do was to furnish a dinner and some—rum and they would all come.” In 1815, when Michael Heighton raised his barn, he furnished three gallons of rum to do it with. When they got the body of the barn up the rum was all gone and the men refused to put on the roof until he got more rum. That was the first Strike on record.

The first settlers located mostly in the western half of the township.

In the year 1812, Jackson was organized as a plantation, and the Congregational Church of Jackson was organized the same year with Rev. Silas Warren, as its Pastor. Mr. Warren was born in Weston, Mass., in 1767. Graduated at Harvard University in 1795, and was ordained as Pastor of the Jackson and Brooks Church in 1812.

In 1812, when Jackson was organized as a plantation, there were about three hundred inhabitants. The first meeting of the plantation was called on the 13th day of July, 1812. I will read a copy of the first meeting of the plantation.

At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the Jackson plantation qualified by law to vote in plantation affairs held on Monday, the 13th day of July, A.D., 1812. The following business was transacted, viz.:

Nathan Page was chosen Moderator.
Ezra Abbott was chosen Clerk.
Voted to choose three Assessors.
Nathan Page, Thomas Morton, Nathaniel Knights, were chosen Assessors.
Voted that the Assessors and Clerk be paid one dollar per day. Jonathan L. Green agreed to collect the taxes for twelve cents on a dollar.
Daniel Clary was chosen Treasurer.
Voted to raise forty dollars to defray plantation expenses.
Voted to adjourn to the 7th day of Sept. next.

EZRA ABBOTT, Clerk.

From the year 1812 to the year 1818 we find no records and will pass over those years. In the year 1818 the inhabitants of the Jackson plantation decided to petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for an act of incorporation.
In June, 1818, such an act was passed by the Senate and House of Representatives, and Jackson was incorporated as the two hundred and twenty-ninth town in the State of Massachusetts. There were fifty-eight families in town at this time.

Jackson is now an incorporated town with power to transact business, but cannot do so as they have no organization and no town officers to call a legal meeting.

An application for a meeting was made to Bordman Johnson, a Justice of the Peace, for the County of Hancock, signed by eight voters of the town of Jackson: Jonathan Wright, Thomas Morton, Ezekiel T. Hatch, Henry D. Chase, Nathaniel Curtis, John H. Boody, Portius Johnson, Charles Johnson.

The warrant was directed to Jonathan Wright, a freeholder of the town of Jackson, and was posted by him calling a meeting of the voters of said town of Jackson to be held at the schoolhouse near Henry D. Chase's on Monday, July 3rd, at two o'clock P. M.

At this meeting the following officers were elected: Jonathan Wright was elected Moderator. Bordman Johnson was elected Clerk. Ezra Abbott, Thomas Morton and Ezekiel T. Hatch, Selectmen. Ezra Abbott, Treasurer; John Rich, Constable. The town is now organized to do business legally.

This was two years before Maine became a State, in 1820. The number of inhabitants at this time was 450. The largest number the town ever had was eight hundred and thirty-three in the year 1850. In 1900 there were four hundred and thirty-nine.

The number of polls in town in 1860, the first year we have any record in the Maine Register, were one hundred and ninety-six. Estates, $162,840.00. In the year of 1904 the number of polls were one hundred and forty-two. The estates were $146,715.00.

EDUCATION

The schools of the town of Jackson have been conducted mostly on the old district system. Since the law abolishing school districts that had less than seven scholars, they have, by a vote of the town, maintained schools in those districts rather than to transport the scholars to other districts. Our schools have, I think, been as good as the average school in the country towns.

Sometime in the years of 1840 or 1850, Prof. Henry H. Boody tried hard to establish a permanent school of a higher grade in town, but the voters of the town failed to give him their support and we failed to get the school. It would, perhaps, have made a great difference in the history of our town.
After the Free High School law came into effect Jackson has for the greater part of the time taken advantage of that law, and we have had some very profitable terms of school.

Among the scholars of the olden times who wished to get a higher education than our town schools could give them we find first on the list the names of Ezra Abbott, Jr., Henry H. Boody and Samuel Johnson.

These three boys were raised in the same town, went to school in the same schoolhouse, and later entered the same college—Bowdoin. Ezra Abbott was a very studious boy. He knew his letters when he was nineteen months old. At five he was promoted into the first class in reading. He was so small that he had to stand upon the bench.

I will give his biography as it was given at the Harvard College Memorial Exercises:

"Ezra Abbott, eldest child of Ezra and Phebe Abbott was born in Jackson, Waldo Co., Maine, April 28th, 1819. Was fitted for college at Phillips (Exeter) Academy; graduated at Bowdoin College in 1840, and received its degree of A. M. in 1843; removed to Cambridge in 1847. After some time spent in teaching, in pursuing private studies and in rendering service in the libraries of Harvard College and the Boston Atheneum, was appointed in 1856 Assistant Librarian of Harvard College; and in 1872 Bussey Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation in the Divinity School.

"He was elected in 1852 a member of the American Oriental Society, and from 1853 its Recording Secretary; in 1861 a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; in 1871 appointed University Lecturer on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament; in the same year chosen a member of the New Testament Company for the revision of our English Bible. He was also a member of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegetics and of the Harvard Biblical Club.

"In 1861, he received from Harvard College the honorary degree of A. M.; in 1869 that of L.L.D. from Yale College, and the same from Bowdoin College in 1878; in 1872 from Harvard College that of L. T. D.; and he was tendered the degree of D.D. by the University of Edinburgh at its recent tercentenary, but passed away before the date of the celebration. Mr. Abbott is said to have been the greatest scholar that America ever produced. He died at his home in Cambridge at 5:30 P. M., on Friday, March 21, 1884."
Henry H. Boody was born in Jackson, Nov. 8, 1816. He graduated from Bowdoin College in the class of 1842. For the next three years he was tutor in Greek. From 1845 to 1848 he was professor of Elocution and instructor in Rhetoric; and from 1848 to 1854 he was professor of Rhetoric and Oratory. Owing to a serious throat trouble he resigned and in 1859 moved to New York, where he has since made his home.

For more than half a century he has been connected with the banking interests of that city, first with the firm of H. H. Boody & Company, and later with Boody, McLellan & Company.

After the Chicago, St. Paul & Fond du Lac R.R. Co. failed, the creditors adopted a plan proposed by Prof. Boody which resulted in the formation of the Chicago & Northwestern Ry. He was also active in the formation of the Union Pacific; the first subscriptions of stock for that company being made in his office.

Before going to New York to live Prof. Boody was, for a time, interested in politics in Maine, and it was through his efforts that the Republican party was organized in this state. In the fall of 1854, after resigning from the faculty of Bowdoin College, Prof. Boody was elected to the State legislature. About that time he went to Washington and became interested in the newly organized Republican party. Returning to Maine he interested General Samuel Fessenden of Portland, in the new party, and when the legislature met the following January they found that 30 out of 31 senators and 114 out of 151 representatives were ready to join. Soon after the first Republican Convention was called in the State and the party became a power in State politics.

Prof. Boody died at Brunswick, Maine, Sept. 10, 1912.

Samuel Johnson entered Bowdoin College about the same time that the other two boys did. After leaving college he settled on his father's farm in Jackson. He taught school fall and winters, and in my judgment, was one of the best teachers that ever taught in town. When the State Farm was first established in the town of Orono, he was superintendent of the farm for several years. Mr. Johnson later moved to California with his family and died there.

Later, as we come down through the years, we find the name of William Sullivan Pattee.
OBITUARY

"Dean William Sullivan Pattee, head of the College of Law, University of Minnesota, since its inauguration, died on April 5, after a protracted illness, at his residence, 1319 Fifth Street, Southeast. He was 65 years old.

Dean Pattee was born in Jackson, Waldo County, Maine, Sept. 19, 1846. He fitted for college at Kent's Hill and received the degree of A. B. at Bowdoin College. Later he was awarded the degree of A. M.

He became Superintendent of Schools of Brunswick, Maine, a position he filled until he accepted the chair of Natural Sciences in Lake Forest University. He went to Northfield, Minn., in 1874, where he taught in the High School. While in this capacity he began the study of law and was admitted to the bar, June 28, 1878.

In 1884 he was elected to the Legislature by the Republicans and four years later, in 1888, was appointed Dean of the new law school of the University of Minnesota, a position he had held continuously since. He was married in Plymouth, Maine, Nov. 30, 1871, to Julia E. Tuttle. He is survived by his wife, one daughter, Mrs. E. W. Evanson, Spokane, Wash., and by two sons, Carl S. Pattee, Britton, S. D., and R. S. Pattee, Scanlon, Minn.

Dean Pattee was the author of the following works: "Illustrative Cases in Contracts;" "Illustrative Cases in Equity;" "Illustrative Cases in Personality;" "Illustrative Cases in Realty;" "Elements of Realty and "Elements of Equity."

John F. Downey, Dean of the College of Science, Literature and the Arts of the University, said of him:

"I had associated with Dean Pattee ever since he came to the University of Minnesota. He had always been a man of high ideals, in matters both of law and of life. The addresses he gave to the law students at the opening of the University every year had held up to the prospective lawyers higher principles than merely winning cases. This had made the teaching of law to these men all the more effective.

"His students, as judges and leading attorneys in many parts of the State and beyond, are exemplifying the high order of instruction given them and the high ideals held before them. All of his associates among the faculty of the University had for
him the highest respect. He had always been personally agreeable, easily approachable and ready to co-operate in anything that told for the highest interests of the University and community.

"The passing of so excellent and companionable a man occasions great sorrow."

Another name that we find is that of David Augustus Boody. He fitted for college at Andover, Mass., but having trouble with his eyes he gave up the college course and took law. Later he went to New York and became connected with the firm of Boody McLellan & Co., Bankers. Some years later he was elected to Congress, but resigned his seat to become Mayor of Brooklyn, New York.

During his term of office as Mayor, Mr. Boody was instrumental in establishing a system of Free Libraries. It was, I think, the most satisfactory act of his life. He still has the management of the whole system. Mr. Boody is present and will speak to us today.

Cassius C. Roberts was another of the Jackson boys. He is now in Chicago holding a responsible position there.

The last boy to enter Bowdoin College from the town of Jackson was Phillips Boody. He graduated in the year 1906, with honors to himself and to his native town. He taught in different schools in the State until 1908, when he took a position at Kent's Hill as Prof. of English and is now there.

As we come on down to later years we find the names of a number of our boys who went to the University of Maine, Orono. There were three who went at about the same time, Charles Putnam and Chester Wallace, who took Civil Engineering, and Walter Croxford, who took Mechanical Engineering. Putnam and Wallace are still holding good positions in Massachusetts, and Croxford is now foreman in the draughting room of the General Electric Company in Schenectady, New York.

A few years later Percy A. Hasty took the law course, and is now a practicing attorney in Dexter, Maine.

Robert Stiles is now attending school at the University of Maine.

Hundreds of our boys and girls have taken advantage of our town schools, the State Normal school, and of the different schools around us to get a good practical education, and have made good use of it, and have been an honor to the town.
DOCTORS

The first practising Physician in town was Augustus Stiles, brother of Mark L. Stiles, Sr.

Later there was Alfred W. Rich, who was also a model farmer.

Albert Libby practised for some years in the town of Brooks and then went West.

Norman Cook is now practising in Brooks and has a large practise.

Asa Twitchell, another Jackson boy, has been located in Old Town for many years.

The religious teachings in Jackson have always been good. For a great many years there were three denominations in town: Congregationalist, Methodist and Free Will Baptist. The Congregationalist until this church was built held their meetings in the old log schoolhouse. The Methodist held their meetings in the schoolhouse in the Clary district. I remember one of the ministers that used to preach there years ago. We boys used to think he was rather lengthy in his sermons. He would commence at firstly and sometimes would go up to twentiethly—rather hard on us boys. Quite a large per cent. of the nice-looking girls in town attended that church and for that reason they had a full house.

The Baptist people used to hold their meetings in the Stiles schoolhouse years ago, but in the year 1896, they built a fine church at the village.

MINISTERS

When I think of the number of men we, as a town and church have sent out into the world to preach the Gospel, and compare them with those who have chosen other professions, the question arises have we done our whole duty as a town and church.

The first Jackson boy that I know of to fit himself for the ministry was John Wright.

Mr. Wright, after graduating at the Theological school at Bangor, preached for a number of years in the town of Burlington, Maine. During the war of the Rebellion he enlisted as chaplain and was there a number of years. He was thought very highly of by the soldiers. He lost his horse while in the army and the boys bought him another one. When he came home he brought the horse with him. Sometime after returning from the war he, with his family, went to Massachusetts, and died there. Mr. Wright was one of the most pleasant men I ever knew.
David Brackett entered the ministry at middle life, and is still preaching. Mr. Brackett is very highly esteemed by people of all denominations. I suppose that he has married more people and attended more funerals than any minister in the county. Mr. Brackett's wife was Harriett Page and she has been a great help to him in his work.

Friend Tasker, from the east part of the town, entered the ministry in the Free Baptist Society. His health was very poor but he continued to preach as long as his strength lasted. He was much respected by his people. He died some years ago. His wife also was a Page.

Isaac Deering, an old resident of the town, preached part of the time. Uncle Isaac was very familiar with the Bible. He could repeat from memory a large part of it. He thought a great deal of attending the Quarterly Meetings, but in the last years of his life his children thought it was not prudent for him to attend them on account of his age. "Well," he said, "what is the use of having a Quarterly Meeting if you don't go."

William Johnson, son of Cyrus Johnson, was born in 1834. He is now preaching in California. His mother was a Page. I think there must have been a strain of pure blood in the Page family.

Rev. Frank S. Dolliff was born in the town of Monroe, but he has lived a large part of his life in Jackson, and we claim him as a native born. He received his education in the town schools, the Free High school, Castine Normal, and the Coburn Classical school. He graduated at the Bangor Theological School in 1892, and was Pastor of the Jackson and Brooks Congregational Church for nine years, and was Pastor of the Congregational Church of Island Falls, Maine, five years. On account of poor health, he moved onto his farm in Jackson. He is at the present time Supervisor of our town schools.

Henry Wright intended to enter the ministry. After attending school at the Hampden Academy for a number of terms, he entered the Theological School at Bangor, but was obliged to leave the school and go home to care for his father and mother. What the church lost in a minister, the town gained in a citizen.

INDUSTRIES

The town of Jackson has always been largely agricultural. Some years ago there were five mills in town manufacturing long and short lumber.
Samuel Hadley built a sawmill, shingle mill and carding mill on the Hadley stream. The sawmill is now owned by Boyd & Durham. The shingle mill and carding mill have been taken down.

At the village there was the Peter Moulton saw mill and the J. H. Cook shingle mill on the stream west of the village, and I. G. Ricker had a sawmill on the east stream. J. H. Cook was said to make the best shingles of any man between the two rivers. The Moulton mill is now owned by Arthur Ellis, of Jackson. Nathan Davis manufactured carriages in town for many years. He was a first-class workman.

Geo. W. Wallace also built carriages.

At the present time J. M. Larrabee, E. R. Page and Jesse Littlefield are doing carriage and blacksmith work. Albert Curtis, horseshoer.

Harrison Stevens, manufacturer of robes and gloves.

The latest industry of the town is our creamery, situated at the village and operated by the Turner Center Creamery Association. It is a great help to the farmers in town.

Another industry just started is the manufacturing of apple barrels by Arthur Ellis.

POST OFFICE

For many years there was only one post-office in town, situated in the center of the town, opposite the church. In after years there was a branch office established at the village.

The first Postmaster that I have any record of was Uriah Warren. He was a shoemaker and lived opposite the church where W. E. Warren now lives. He worked in a shop that stood under the old butternut tree, quite near the road, and the post-office was in that shop. There will be a poem read here, written by Erastus Johnson, that will give you a very good idea of Mr. Warren's life and death. This office was kept by the Warren family for many years. Mrs. Mary Warren was postmistress when the Rural Delivery law took effect, and the office was abolished. C. H. Gatchell was postmaster at the village.

The first mail was carried on horseback. Later there were stage lines running from Jackson to Belfast, also from Jackson to Bangor. The mail was carried over these routes by I. G. Ricker, David Boody, Daniel Carlton, and others. After the Belfast branch of the M. C. Railroad was built the mail was delivered at Brooks. Japleth Grant carried a daily mail from Brooks to Jackson nineteen years, until the post-office was abolished. The mail is now brought to our doors by the R. F. D.
With the coming of the Rural Delivery and the Telephone, the country towns and more isolated communities are brought into a closer touch with the world. Almost every family takes a daily paper and they are about as well-posted on the current events as those of the cities and larger towns.

STORES

The first store in town was kept by John Davis in the end of the long shed on the Great Farm in the year 1810. Later we find the names of Edmond Chase, I. G. Ricker, J. G. Cook, Mr. Hobert, John Maddocks, Eli Cook and Luther Hawes, as traders in town. One day one of Mr. Hawes’ customers came in and called for some good tea. “O, no sir, I haven’t got any tea, but I have got some fine black snuff.” At present our traders in town are J. M. Larrabee, Leslie Bickford and Levi Stevens. Mr. Stevens’ business is on the gain, I think, as he has just taken a new wife as a business partner.

SOLDIERS

The citizens of Jackson, at the time of the War of the Rebellion, were ready to do their part in carrying on the war, and sent a large number of men to the front.

In looking up the records at the Adjutant General’s office I find that ninety-one men enlisted from Jackson. About fifty per cent. of the available men of the town.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Years ago there was the order of the Sons of Temperance; later the order of Good Templars.

The Star of Progress Grange was organized in 1874; the first Master was Daniel Gould, the present Master is Lawrence Cook. The membership has been from sixty to one hundred. There is also a Tent of Maccabees in town.

Now, friends, what are we to say of the hundreds of men and women who have lived and died in our town in years past, who perhaps have not had so many advantages as those already spoken of. Although they were an industrious, hard-working people, trying hard to give their children good educations and a better chance in life than they themselves had, there were among them some very bright, keen-minded men who thoroughly understood most of the great questions of the day, and who, perhaps, have done as much honor to their native town as those more favored.

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I wish I might name each one separately, but time will not permit me to do so. God grant that the next century may raise up as intelligent, God-fearing a people, as the century just passed has done.

REMINISCENCES

When the Proprietors divided the town into lots they reserved a parcel of land in the center of the town one mile square, which was to be a summer residence for themselves and a Model Farm for the surrounding towns. The buildings were up-to-date for those times. The house was a large two-story building—a real castle—the rooms were very high-posted, with a long winding stairway leading to the roof, with a look-out outside. There were three large barns with all necessary out-buildings. The bricks to build the large chimneys were shipped from Boston to Belfast by water and hauled from there to Jackson by ox teams through the woods. They kept all kinds of stock, the best that money could buy at that time. They were breeders of horses and mules to quite a large extent.

Did you ever hear about the donkey that went to church?

In those days the meetings were held in the old log schoolhouse just below the Great Farm. One warm, bright summer morning, the old schoolhouse was well filled. The windows were all open and the minister had gone through with the opening exercises and had got well warmed up on his subject of future punishment and was telling his hearers how at that last day the trumpet would be sounded and how they would have to give in their accounts. Just at that time one of those donkeys had strayed down across the brook, and looking in at one of the windows, gave one of those brays that no other creature on earth or under earth can make.

The speaker stopped, the men jumped up, the women screamed, and the boys went out through the windows on the opposite side of the house. It was said that in closing the meeting the minister didn’t even stop to pronounce the benediction.

The proprietors when they came down for the summer brought their coach and four with them. The carriages of those early days were very different from the Autos of to-day. They thought when they got to the two-wheeled chaise there would never be anything better than that.

Speaking of the two-wheeled chaise brings to mind a little incident that happened to a young couple of Jackson who were going to get married. After the ceremony was performed they went out for a walk and in the yard stood a two-wheeled chaise
with thills resting on the fence. They thought that would be a nice place to sit and rest and talk over their plans for the future, so they got into the Shay and sat down with a long-drawn breath of satisfaction. As they leaned back in the seat up went the thills of the Shay and they went completely over and had to call for help to get out. The young man said he never knew before how uncertain things were in this world.

What changes one hundred years brings about. On the farm of H. E. Chase, near the road, stands an elm tree that when Henry D. Chase was clearing the land about one hundred years ago, was a very small sapling, and in hauling the logs together to burn they scraped the bark from it and left it to die. It now measures fourteen feet around the trunk.

But I must close or you will be like the story that Lew Barker used to tell.

At a prayer meeting one night the good deacon had prayed for every one from the President down and was going back over the same ground again, when the minister said, "Hadn't you better bring your prayer to a peak, deacon?"

In closing it is my most earnest desire that the boys and girls who may go out from our town during the next century may exert such an influence that the whole world feel to thank God that this town and church ever existed.

I thank you.