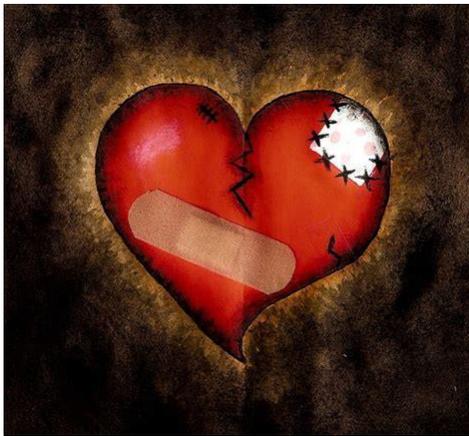


# Historical Society of Clarendon, VT

Issue 2, November 2017

## HELL HATH NO FURY...

Seduction. Deception. Murder. It sounds like the intro to an airport romance novel; add in “hunchback”, and all that’s missing is Notre Dame. Far from being a novel, this the description of an actual event in the late spring of 1902, that ended with the death of a Clarendon native, and the ruination of the woman who murdered him. Andrew Emery, Jr., born in Clarendon, and just thirty two years old in that fateful year, seemed to be leading a blessed life. The handsome young man had a home, wife, and was the father of four children. Yet Mr. Emery had a dark secret,



a secret that would lead to his death. Late on the evening of May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1902, Ms. Nina Danforth would arrive at Mr. Emery’s door, and in an act of

premeditated murder, shot the young man

dead, just foot steps away from his sleeping wife and children. This appalling tragedy would in the coming days reveal itself to be more than meets the eye. Very quickly, the police discovered that Mr. Emery had been killed by his very own wife, but not the woman with whom he shared a home and children, but by his *second* wife, or at least the young woman whom he had convinced that she was his wife. Remember all that was missing was a hunchback? Well enter young Ms. Danforth, described by the press of the time as a three foot tall hunchback, who was wooed by the handsome but already married Mr.

Emery, lured into a sham marriage, and then to add insult to injury was taken on a three day “honeymoon” in a hotel! The poor woman was then after a space of time, dumped by the man she considered her husband, and not face to face, but in a letter. Now keep in mind this was the turn of the century. A woman having spent three nights in a hotel with anyone but her husband would not have had many social aspects, particularly a three foot tall hunchback. One could hazard a guess that Ms. Danforth arrived at her “husband’s” door, heartbroken, full of fury, and fully armed. The rest is, well, history. While Mr. Emery may have been of dubious morals, he certainly didn’t deserve to die for his mistakes, but one can’t help but feel pity for Nina. The jury must have felt pity for her as well, as they sentenced her to less than two years for what was undeniably first degree murder. After her sentence was served, she disappeared from record. For information on this strange case, and to see photographs of the star crossed lovers, as well as original newspaper clippings of the sordid tale, visit our website.

## LAND OF MILK AND...CHEESE



Recently the Society received a donation of several documents from Mr. David Potter. One of those documents was the Constitution of the Chippenhook Cheese Company. This delightful original document is dated January 1870, and lays out the bylaws of what was this early Clarendon business venture. After a little research, we found that this company was still listed by the State as an agriculturally company at the turn of the century, but no trace of it was found after 1910. It would be interesting to find where the dairy products in Chippenhook were shipped. Local only? Or perhaps ladies in Paris were nibbling on a little Clarendon *fromage*? At the end of the document is a list of shareholders, and the number of cows they owned. All of the names are written in the beautiful penmanship of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which to modern eyes can be difficult to decipher. To compound this, the names are old fashioned and unfamiliar now. However, there was one name that was particularly interesting. Under the shareholder named Amos Wescott, is a name that could possibly read as Hannah Wescott. Perhaps the sister of Amos? She is listed as having twelve shares, and twenty cows. If indeed we are reading the name correctly, she would be one of our first examples of a Clarendon business woman. If anyone has any information about the Chippenhook Cheese Company, we would love to hear from you!

## COLONIAL PANIC ROOM



In our last newsletter, it was mentioned that one of our members was interested in finding more about native inhabitants of Clarendon, the Mahicans.

We have since learned thanks to the diligence of this member (thank you Garrett!) that all was not rosy between the first European American settlers and the Mahican.

While not nearly as violent and destructive as the raids further south and into Massachusetts, the settlers apparently did have cause to fear the natives. Understandably perturbed by the lose of their land to the newcomers, as well as the unavoidable clash of culture, there is evidence that the Mahicans had the potential to become violent, or at least the settlers thought they did. We are learning that on the very eastern border of the Pinkowski farm, there might have been a “panic house” constructed by the settlers. This would have been a house that was in a defensible spot, such as a small hill, and would have been more heavily fortified than the typical settlers cottage. In times of unrest, when they felt that they needed to fear the native population, the settlers could head to the safe house, and hopefully have a better defense than on their own in their individual cottages. The Society thanks Garrett for all the research and effort he has put into studying the native population, and we look forward to finding out more.

## COMING SOON...

- In our next issue, find out more about the Clarendon election “hat dance”, and the discovery of another blacksmith shop in Town!
- We meet every third Wednesday of the month. Our next meeting is November 15<sup>th</sup>, and will take place in the Town Clerk’s side of the Town Hall, as the Select Board has a meeting that night as well.
- We are still looking for volunteers for oral histories!
- Thank you for your support and we hope to see you at a meeting!
- Clarendon map used with permission from Middlebury College.