

Mussel Ridge News

*A Free Publication of the Mussel Ridge Historical Society
Owls Head, Maine*

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MY COUSIN SARAH

I grew up in Rockland and lived “away” until returning to Maine for my retirement. My husband Pete and I settled in Thomaston for fifteen years and then decided to look for a house on one floor. Three years ago, we found the house of our dreams in Owls Head, on the corner of North Shore Drive and Oak Run.

As we were looking at the lot plans, we saw a cross, denoting a cemetery, just beyond the edge of our property. Intrigued, we immediately investigated and found the six gravestones of the Cooper family, all of whom died in the 1800’s. Soon after we moved in, two members of the Cemetery Committee visited to give us information on the cemetery. I decided to try cleaning the stones, and they gave me instructions on what to use and how to do it.

As I was working, I wondered who these folks were and what their lives had been like. Carolyn Philbrook and I looked up old records on George Cooper, the father, and found that he was not (and could not have been) involved in the Civil War. Since then, Lea Carver, for the Cemetery Committee, has researched George and discovered that he was a veteran of the War of 1812! A veteran’s flag has been placed in front of his gravestone.

I had questions about Sarah Killsa Cooper, the mother. We knew nothing about her, except that she was the mother of at least four children, those buried with her in the Cooper Cemetery. You can imagine my delight and surprise when Carolyn Philbrook recently informed me that I am related to Sarah, through a connection with the Heard/Crockett family!! To fill in more information, I called my brother-in-law Lowell Thomas, who does genealogical research as a hobby and has already investigated our family tree. He immediately complied, and discovered that Sarah is my first cousin, six times removed! Sarah’s grandfather, Oliver Robbins, is my sixth great grandfather. Oh my, how interesting and exciting!!

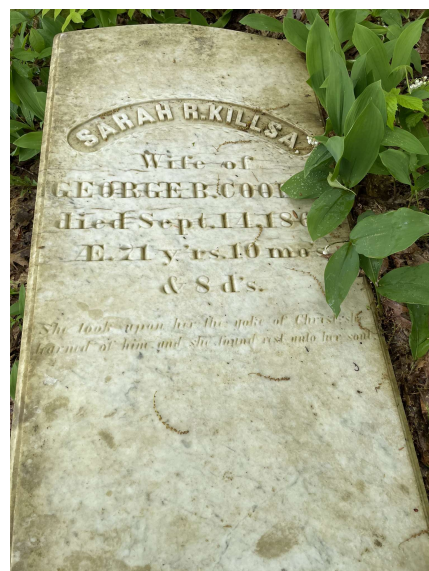
All I know so far about Sarah is that she married George in 1818 and died in 1864. She and George apparently had eight children, four more in addition to the four buried in the Cooper Cemetery. Here’s the list, which I believe to be accurate:

Nancy H., 1818-1892.

Eliza (Bartlett), 1820-1887. She is not in the Cooper Cemetery.

George B. Junior, 1822-1844 - George was lost at sea transporting lime to New Orleans.

John Edward, 1824-1831



Richard B., 1826-1841

Lois K., 1828 - 1912. Lois married George Hall and is buried in a cemetery in Appleton.

Sarah H., 1830-1912. Sarah married Edward C. Spaulding and is buried in the Achorn Cemetery, Rockland.

Adriel W., 1832 - 1863.

One thing about Sarah that we know for sure is that she must have been a very busy mother! I hope to learn more about this family. After all, it isn't every day that a person moves into a new neighborhood and discovers that she has relatives living next to her - relatives who have been there a lot longer than she has!!

Gail Ladd

Upcoming Dates to Remember

Owls Head Community Building

Voting Day Bake Sale June 14th

The Old Homestead is open Wed. 2-4 pm from July thru Sept

Summer History Talk - TBD

Written For AH Crockett @1840 from a booklet found at the Old Homestead in Ash Point ...

In reflecting on the scenes of our past lives, one thing looms with peculiar weight on my mind; that is our misspent time. How many of those golden moments God hath lent has already run to waste. How many privileges we might enjoyed have we already let slip. How much time allotted for improvement have we left unimproved. Those scenes and privileges we can never recall; therefore, let us by the help of God begin to mend our ways; for of late we have had warning after warning, to be prepared for death. Our friends, & relatives have been snatched away by deaths resistley hand. Time after time have we been called to pray the last sad tribute of respect to those that was near & dear to us by the ties of nurture and friendship. And how soon our friends will be called to hollow our lively remains to the cold and silent grave, we know not how necessary it is then that we should remember that we too one day must die; and that we should strive to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, when neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal; where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be forever at rest.

Alvan Heard



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Ginn's Point Neighbors & Guests

When I was rummaging through some old photographs that Ed Coffin gave the MRHS, I found this fabulous color photograph of his neighbors who were attending the annual picnic at Ginn's Point in 1953 or 1954. On the back of the photo, Ed had written the names of some of the people he knew who appear in the photo, but many people were not identified.

Please let us know if you recognize any of the people in this photograph by sending us a short email to history@musselridge.org. Thanks Rod Weeks

Back row Men Standing L to R

- | | |
|----|---------------------|
| 1. | 6. Ralph Calderwood |
| 2. | 7. Edgar Crockett |
| 3. | 8. Roy Hunter |
| 4. | 9. David Campbell |
| 5. | |

2nd Row Women Standing L to R

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

People sitting in chairs L to R

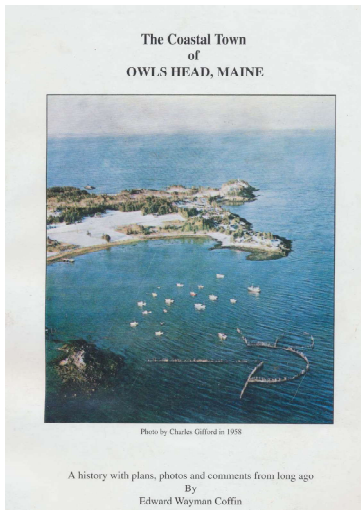
1. Arthur Robinson
2. Mabel Robinson
3. Edna Small
4. Doris [Small] Calderwood (wife of Ralph Calderwood)
5. Sally Heller (with sunglasses on)
6. Carolyn Hunter (wife of Roy Hunter)

Front Row - Women seated on the ground L to R

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. (with the red coat) | 5. |
| 3. | 6. Barbara Coffin (in the yellow sweater – Ed Coffin's wife) |
| 7. | |



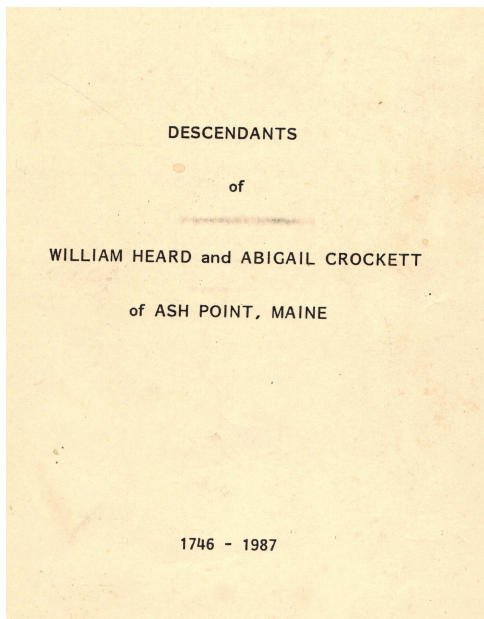
Products for sale



**\$32 - The Coastal Town of Owls Head, ME
by Edward Coffin (limited quantities)**



\$56- 1873 of Owls Head canvas chart 16" x 20"



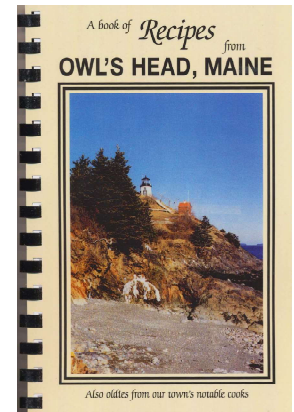
**NEW Item!!
Reprint with over 300 pages \$41**

**Descendants of
William Heard and Abigail Crockett
of Ash Point, Maine**

by Charles Candage



**NEW!!!
Ash Point, ME 1930s
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J. Rodney Weeks
DVD - \$15**



**\$15 - Recipes
of Owls Head, Maine**

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Prices include ME state sales tax

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The U.S. Life Saving Service
Whitehead Island Maine Lifesaving Station
1874 - 1944

In the last issue of the MRHS Newsletter, an article from the Courier Gazette was republished in part about a Mr. Jacob Eric Hajgard, a single young man who came to Maine from the Faroe Islands and worked as a lobster fisherman off of Green Island. Mr. Hajgard lived with the [Leroy & Florence] McConchie family at the *Wellesley* room & boarding house located near the end of Ash Point Drive. The article described how Mr. Hajgard was attempting to move some of his traps to Ash Island when he evidently lost his balance and fell overboard and drowned. When dusk came and he did not return home, volunteers and the crew of the Whitehead Lifesaving Station were called up and a search for Mr. Hajgard began in earnest. Despite their best efforts Mr. Hajgard's body was not found until the following day.

Whitehead Lifesaving Station

The Whitehead Lifesavings Station was established in 1874 as part of the U.S. Life-Saving Service (the fore-runner of the U.S. Coast Guard). It was one of many life saving stations authorized by Congress to be built all along the eastern seaboard of the United States. The Whitehead Island Station was located on Whitehead Island, a 90 acre island off the northeast coast of St. George. In addition to the life saving station, the island was also home to the Whitehead Island Lighthouse. From 1874 until 1944 the all volunteer crews of the Whitehead Life Saving Station were the only people

you could call in the event of a disaster at sea. Many stories are documented in the annals of the Life Saving Service where the volunteer crews not only came to the rescue of drowning fishermen and crewmen but they also helped with the securing of ships that ran aground so cargo could be safely unloaded and saved. In 1944, the station and lighthouse were merged into the U.S. Coast Guard and the volunteer life saving crews were disbanded.



The Whitehead Island Life Saving Station and Lighthouse are still in existence today and the Life Saving Station is one of the best preserved of the five stations built by the service off the coast of Maine and New Hampshire. It is now privately owned and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

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**Mussel Ridge Historical Society
Volunteer – Membership - Donation Form**

Date _____
Name _____ Phone _____
Mailing Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____
Email Address _____

Our newsletter is sent to everyone on our email list and we don't share addresses with anyone.

____ I Would Like TO HELP Preserve the History of Owl's Head in the Following Ways

____ Develop programs ____ Help with fundraising ____ Help on restoring the Homestead

____ Bring food for events or sales ____ Help with events

____ Staff the Homestead ____ I have pictures that could be scanned

____ Research. I am particularly interested in the following areas _____

Have talent/service I could donate _____

____ I would like to help in another way. (Please tell us how) _____

____ I have historical items I might like to donate or loan

____ I am joining the MRHS at the Following Level & My Check is Attached

____ 1 Year Regular (\$10) ____ One Year Family (\$30) ____ 1 Year Sustainer (\$100) ____ 1 Year Benefactor (\$500)

____ 1 Year Business Sustainer (\$250) ____ 1 Year Business Benefactor (\$750)

____ I am making a Tax Deductible Donation to the MRHS for _____ & My Check is Attached

I Would Like the Funds to go to the Following Area

____ General Operations ____ Mussel Ridge Learning Center

____ Old Homestead ____ As the MRHS thinks is best

Signature of Person Accepting the Form _____

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MUSSEL RIDGE LEARNING CENTER

Lost Treasures

As many of you know, the Mussel Ridge Historical Society is in the middle of a capital campaign to raise money to build a small building behind the Owls Head Community Building to permanently house our Town's history and its related documents, photographs and artifacts.

Some of the items we hope to place on permanent display are the signs of the old restaurants and rooming houses that were in business in Owls Head during the 1920s and 1930s. We have located signs for Trail's End, The Crescent Beach Inn, and Ledgemere, but we are still trying to locate the signs for the Wellesley and for Otis Villa (*).



We are also still trying to locate the hand made/painted wooden "Honor Roll" sign (created by Everett Blethen) which listed all of the names of the young men from Owls Head, Maine who served in the armed forces during World War II. The Honor Roll sign was given to and was proudly displayed for years in the Owls Head Grange Hall, No. 563 at the corner of North Shore Drive and Ash Point Drive.

The Mussel Ridge Historical Society would like very much to learn what happened to all these priceless pieces of our local history and if at all possible recover them for our collection. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of any of this treasures, please call Rod Weeks at 207-593-1494 (or you can e-mail him at ledgemere1@gmail.com) – Thank you!

(*) These signs **have been located** but are still in the possession of their current owners and won't be released to the MRHS, if ever, until our new building is built.



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Recollections of a Summer Kid growing up on Ash Point in the 1950s & 1960s

NEVER LEARNED HOW TO SWIM

By: Rodney B. Weeks

Summer time in Maine meant only one thing to me - being outside and being in or on the water. I loved walking "down the hill" to Trails' End around 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon and helping the local fishermen who were coming in after a day's fishing. I would carry their oars, buckets and other equipment up to the baithouse or help with the tow line which was used to haul the row boats up the ramp. Afterwards, if it was a particularly hot day, I would go swimming off of the small stone beach there or begin walking south down the shore to my grandfather's place where I could play in the large tide pool he called the "bathtub".

One day while I was playing in the water I realized that I never saw any of the fishermen go into the water. Not even to clean off their boots or equipment. When I asked why, I was shocked to learn that none of them knew how to swim! I had been swimming since I was a small boy and here were these grown men, many of them in their 40s, who not only didn't know how to swim, but who were not interested in learning how to swim either. I learned later that most of the lobstermen were fatalistic about their chances of survival if they ever fell overboard or their boat sank. They told me that a man can only live about 15 minutes in the cold waters of Penobscot Bay before he would perish due to hyperthermia.

I never could accept this excuse for not learning how to swim and the following article from the September 18, 1956 issue of the Courier Gazette explains why. It tells the story of how we almost lost Ote Lewis in about 8 feet of water just off of Ash Island. In last month's issue, we told the story of another lobster fisherman (Eric Hajgard) who lost his life just off of Ash Island because he never bothered to learn how to swim either.

Fortunately for Ote the other rule of the sea (that of always watching out for other boats nearby in case of an emergency) saved his life.

WEIR STAKE PUNCHES LOBSTER BOAT HULL, OTE LEWIS NEAR DROWNING IN SUNDAY INCIDENT

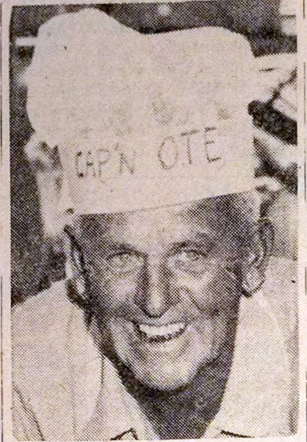
Capt. Ote Lewis of Trails End, Ash Point, nearly wound up his lobstering days in the passage between his home and Ash Island Sunday noon, as his 25 foot lobster boat went down under him.

Ote was lobstering in the narrow passage, maneuvering in the fast running ebb tide driven by a easterly wind. He made two passes at a lobster buoy and was set off by the tide. On the third pass, he was intent on the task at hand and for a moment forgot the many stakes in the area, left from abandoned sardine weirs. The next thing he knew, a stake from the Hurd weir had slashed through the bottom of his boat, tearing a hole on the port side amidships two and one-half feet long and a foot or more wide.

The small craft started to fill rapidly as Lewis attracted the attention of other lobstermen working nearby. It was noted later that seldom are lobstermen working their traps in the area at the same time.

Maurice Harvey was close by and closed in to take Ote off. However, Ote stayed with his boat as she settled and he had to take to the top of the house after his boots had filled as the rail became awash.

Harvey tried to pull the boat off the stake and snapped a line. Alfred Fredette, who heard the alarm by marine radio brought his boat up as the line parted and passed a larger line to the sinking boat. He managed to start Ote to the beach on Ash Island but could not get over the bar with his big



Capt. Ote Lewis in Festival Dress

boat and passed the tow back to Harvey who was assisted by Don Lewis, Ote's son, who had been called as he was making his boat fast to the moorings a short distance away.

The boat was beached on Ash Island and patched with canvas and strapping at low water. She was later floated and put on her mooring for repairs Monday morning.

There is considerable damage to the motor and batteries aboard the boat.

Lewis is an officer of the Maine Lobstermen's Association and for several years was head chef of the Maine Seafoods Festival.

Had it not been for the nearness of other boats and their ready assistance, both Lewis and his boat could have been lost.



Jason Philbrook

jason@rockbound.net
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