

Excerpts from the Journals of John Furbish (1864-5) Collections of Pejepscot History Center

[June 1864 through late that year]

Gen Chamberlain: This community were pained to receive news of the severe wounds received by this great citizen in a conflict before Petersburg Va. while leading on his brigade. Lieut Gen Grant made him a Brigadere [sic] General on the field. He lay months very low, but even with the awful wound, God saw fit to spare his life, and before well he started for the field of strife.

President Lincoln by two calls ordered the draft, if not before filled by volunteers, of 500,000. men for the army and navy. Brunswick's quota was filled by volunteers and (Substitutes, put in before the draft, as by law provided. Bounty paid by the town \$500.00 for 3 years men, contrary to State law, but done anticipating the action would be legalized by State Leg')

Several vessels have been built here during the year, even with the present high prices of material. The timber has been brought mostly from the Sandy River valley by R.Road. There has been but little house building going on, and trade only fair. At the Presedential [sic], Abraham Lincoln, our present worthy president, received a good majority, and our people rejoice in his re-election.

The Union shall be preserved!

Victories by our armies, in the fall of the principal ports of the South have cheered the hearts of our people, while the calls for troops by our chief magistrate have been answered as promptly as could be expected, many of the vetrans [sic] reenlisting: the town paying bounties of 300, 400, & 500. dollars for 1, 2 & 3 years men.

[April 1865 end of war & Lincoln's Assassination]

(The news of the fall of Richmond reached here Monday noon April 4th, but was not generally accepted, until confirmed by subsiquent [sic] dispatches, loyal people were perfectly happy, for it had been their prayer for four years, but there were some slavery lovers who looked blue. Still the great mass, are as they ever have been true. Truly Babylon has fallen! _?_)

Following the fall of Richmond came the daily report of the vigorous pursuit of Lee's routed army, always accompanied with the expressed expectation of its capture, until finally Monday Morning April 11th at about 8 o'clock came the official news of Lee's surrender, together with the balance of his army. This woke our people up. The bells sounded the result and work was at end. Guns, flags, music, and processions filled their appropriate places right merrily, and as Rev Mr Ballard said it was every person's duty to make all the noise they could, and let externals go.

A general illumination was observed throughout the village, nearly every building on Maine Street, together with the colleges and private dwellings on nearly every street. Every thing was impromptu, and very appropriate. I believe it is the first real live acknowledgement of a fact I ever saw given in Brunswick. One particular feature was the acknowledgement of God's hand in all of these great victories. Our fellow citizen Professor, or rather General Chamberlain distinguished himself, and in one of the battles received fresh wounds. Honorable wounds!

(The final of our excitement for that day was the burning of the Stable and part of the shed of the Poor Farm, destroying a fine horse, two or three cows, &c. There was a tragedy with all. A miserably ugly, half crazy man named "Bill Storer" who was let out of the Lunatic Asylum only two weeks before, and has served one or more terms in the State Prison, for various offences: stabbed one Wm Card, (a like character) in the back whereupon he was locked up: and confessed that he set fire to the barn, and tried to fire the house also: telling them to go and see for themselves. His principal reason for his act seemed to be, that old Pomp (the horse) should not carry him to Augusta again. He let a calf out, saying he thought it would be too bad to burn an innocent calf. Such can only be the acts of an insain [sic] man: but he is a fearfully ugly one, as his past life is a good evidence.)

The snow was nearly all off April 1st: and there being no frost of any consequence [sic]. The water was absorbed by the earth instead of running into the river. The air has been very good and farmers are busy plowing, some even planting potatoes. Every thing now bids fair for a favorable season, and we may well thank God for his many blessings to us.

Assassination of President Lincoln. April 14th Friday evening at about 10 o'clock at Ford's Theater
Washington
John Wilkes Booth the villain
Funeral Services

Our citizens, indeed the whole country, were thunderstruck to hear that our much loved, and noble President, Abraham Lincoln!, had been shot (dead) at the theater in Washington, where he had gone by special invitation to witness a patriotic play. The newspapers of the day give all the particulars, and it only belongs to me to record the doings in Brunswick. The feeling here was the most intense imaginable: people only looked and thought for hours, feelings were too deep for utterance. Soon people began to move, and arrangements were soon made for a meeting at 1st Parish Church, at 3 o'clock, at which hour the church was filled, and the services continues over two hours. It was a solemn occasion, and it does seem that the death of our President has united our people even more than ever before. Party lines disappear, and we see all paying just tribute to his greatness, and universal goodness: and all of this is sincerity.

The churches are all to a greater or less extent draped in mourning, while all the Sabbath services were deeply solemn. Dr Adams before commencing the services Sabbath morning called upon A G Tenny Esq, Editor of Brunswick Telegraph to read the telegrams received during the morning. We were all made glad to hear that Mr Seward & son who were assaulted (about the same time) in their house, were alive and improving.

The assassin of President Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth (Actor) has not been arrested as yet. Oh miserable wretch! May thy days be short!

Wednesday April 19th being the day appointed for the funeral services at Washington, and in conformity with a request of government. Services were held at the Mason St Church, conducted by Rev A D Wheeler, assisted by other clergymen.) Text Mark 2d Chpt 19 verse, it being his Fast Day discourse anticipated. All places of business closed from 12 o'clock to 3 o'clock. A solemn day for our country. God our help!

[April 21 to May 3, 1865] Funeral procession to Springfield Illinois [sic].

[April 26, 1865] Death of Booth

July 10th Returning Soldiers

(All along the rout [sic] of procession there was the most deeply expressed grief, but at New York City the excitement was intense, and all night long the crowd passed by to get a last glance at the people's dead. No such a scene was ever witnessed in this land. A nation in mourning for their head. Expressions of grief come even from rebels in arms, for they too seem to feel that the best friend of humanity had been foully murdered.) Still the crime seems to rest in high places.

(The news of the death of "Booth" was received here with a general feeling of satisfaction that he was so quickly disposed of. While the arrest of his accomplices: and the offer of a reward of one hundred thousand dollars for "Jeff Davis", chief conspirator [sic], and his subsequent [sic] capture in his wife's petticoats [sic], all helped to relieve the feeling of gloom.)

(With the close of the war, our citizen Soldiers are now returning, and we see in the streets, and in the trades, those who for three long years have bourn the musket in defense of right, now laying of the garb of war, assuming the ways of old.) What a spectral [sic]! To-day a nation in arms, to-morrow, peace! Thank God for so great a blessing, and a birth in this noble land. God bless our native land! Happy land where freedom can so fully dwell!