

LISBON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MOMENTS IN HISTORY – FEBRUARY 2019

PHYSICIANS IN LISBON, LYMAN AND LANDAFF

When the Lisbon Health Clinic in the old Carleton Block on North Main Street closed in 2005, our three towns were without a physician in close proximity for the first time in almost 200 years. Residents have to travel elsewhere unless they receive medical care at home supplied by special agencies such as North Country Home Health and Hospice in Littleton, N.H.

At the beginning of settlement in our three towns there were traditional home remedies used, and some women were known locally for specializing in herbal treatments and assisting with childbirth. The first trained physician in our three towns was Dr. John French (1780-1873) who was born in South Hampton, N.H. and first practiced medicine in Warren, N.H. before moving to South Landaff as early as 1808. He married Mary Gale of Kingston, N.H., and they had ten children. By 1822 the French family had moved to Bath, N.H. where Dr. French practiced until 1857 when he moved to Beloit, Wisconsin to be near his children. He died there on Christmas Day. His wife died in 1855. Dr. French left a manuscript containing a record of the 2,336 births at which he assisted during his long tenure as a physician in our part of New Hampshire.



Dr. Samuel Hoskins was born in Grafton, N.H. and received his medical degree from Dartmouth College. He began practicing medicine in Lyman in 1817, married Harriet Cushing of Salisbury, N.H., and began a family eventually settling on Parker Hill near the intersection of Parker Hill Road and Pettyboro Road in what was later known as the Olin/Stephens Farm. By May of 1832, Hoskins was appointed Lyman Postmaster. He practiced medicine in Lyman into the 1850s, and by 1860 he was living with his son in Maine and still practicing medicine. He died in Chelsea, Massachusetts.

Dr. Samuel Hoskins (1795-1873)

Dr. William Merrill of Warren, N.H. was the first physician in Lisbon, probably around 1830. He died of typhoid fever a few years after he came to town.

Dr. Moses Hibbard (1800-1863) was born in Bath. After graduating from Dartmouth College, he married Jane Sutherland of Bath. Dr. Hibbard studied with Dr. French of Landaff and Bath. Dr. Hibbard then practiced medicine in Greensboro, Vermont before moving to Lisbon as early as 1840. He lived in Lisbon in a house that used to be on the site of today's Shared Ministry's Brick Church at the corner of Depot and Main Streets and practiced in Lisbon until 1857. By 1860 he was practicing medicine in Townshend, Vermont where he died of typhoid fever.



Lisbon home of Drs. Richardson, Thompson, and Brown during the years 1835-1882

Dr. Bernice Richardson (1785-1859) came to Lisbon from Vermont with his wife, Olive (Harnden) around the year 1835. He built a 2-story house with pillars. The house was remodeled around 1900 and is today a red house and ell with barn on the right side of Route 302 beyond Henry Pond just after leaving Lisbon toward Littleton. The Richardsons had seven children. Their son, Dr. Darwin Richardson (1812-1860) married the next-door neighbor, Jane Cobleigh, daughter of Levi Cobleigh who was then owner of the old Young Tavern. Darwin practiced medicine in Lisbon until 1847 when he and his wife went westward as converts of the Mormon church. Dr. Bernice Richardson then sold his home to Dr. Benjamin Thompson who probably took over his practice.

Dr. Benjamin Thompson (1799-1854) was born in Vermont and came to Lisbon with his wife Rebecca (Powers) in 1848. He lived and practiced in the former Dr. Richardson house until his death. Benjamin Thompson's son, Dr. John Fletcher Thompson (1823-1902), known as a botanic, lived on South Main Street in Lisbon and also practiced medicine in Lisbon until his death. Dr. John Fletcher Thompson may have been related to or influenced by Dr. Samuel Thompson b. 1796 in Alstead, N.H., who is considered the father of American herbalism.

Dr. Samuel Brown (1819-1901) was born in Moultonborough, N.H. He came to Lisbon in 1855 to care for his parents, Samuel and Martha, who lived in the Dr. Benjamin Thompson home and farmed the property. Dr. Brown and his wife, Mary, who was Dr. Benjamin Thompson's daughter, continued to live in the old Thompson home, and Dr. Brown took over his father-in-law's medical practice. Dr. Samuel Brown practiced in Lisbon from 1855 until 1882 when he moved to Concord, Vermont where he practiced medicine until he died. The property is now a private home.



Dr. Charles Hart Boynton (1826-1903)



The School St. home and office of Dr. C. H. Boynton

Dr. Charles Hart Boynton was born in Meredith, N.H. and earned his degree from Berkshire Medical College in 1853. He married Mary Cummings in Lisbon in 1854 and practiced in Alexandria, N.H. before the couple moved to Lisbon in 1858 where Dr. Boynton practiced for 28 years from his home on School Street. The c. 1902 Boynton Block on Main Street was built under Dr. Charles Boynton's sponsorship. Dr. Edgar Crossman and Dr. Harry Perrin later owned and practiced out of Dr. Boynton's School Street home. The property is now an apartment house.



Dr. Oren Hart Boynton (1834-1909) The “doctors’ house” at the corner of Main and Central Streets

Dr. Charles Boynton’s brother, Oren Hart Boynton, was born in Meredith and first learned the carpenter’s trade before studying medicine at Dartmouth College School of Medicine from which he graduated in 1860. He moved to Lisbon to practice medicine and married Alice Hollister. Her parents owned one of the oldest homes in Lisbon on the south corner at the intersection of Main and Central Streets. Dr. Oren Boynton lived in and practiced out of that house. So many doctors lived and practiced in that house over the years that it became known as “the doctors’ house.” The front section was added on by the Hollister family in 1831, and the rear ell was the original house built by William P. Beane as a coffee house and tavern c. 1800. From 1862-1866, Dr. Oren H. Boynton also practiced in Bath while its resident physician Dr. William Child served as a surgeon in the Civil War.



Harry Hollister Boynton (1869-1934)



Perry Sanborn Boynton (1866-1961)

Dr. Oren Boynton’s son, Harry Hollister Boynton gradually took over his father’s practice in the late 1800s after studying at Dartmouth and the Medical University of Baltimore. Dr. Harry Hollister married Anita Bradford of Barre, VT in 1895. She died eight months later from pneumonia. In 1904 he married Jeanie McCargo in New York. “Dr. Harry” practiced in Lisbon for 42 years. In April of 1934 he suffered a heart attack while at the movies in Woodsville and never recovered. He had made house calls in Lisbon on the day of his death. Boynton family physicians had served Lisbon for decades, and with the death of “Dr. Harry,” the town was without a Boynton physician for the first time in over 75 years. The practice and house were sold to Dr. John Eckels who soon moved to Littleton and left the area after serving in WWII. The Boyntons were all dedicated physicians and country doctors. Regardless of the type of patient, location, or time of day, they could be counted on to make a house call. Dr. Oren Boynton’s other son, Perry Sanborn Boynton, attended Dartmouth College and spent his career practicing medicine in New York City where he was a surgeon.



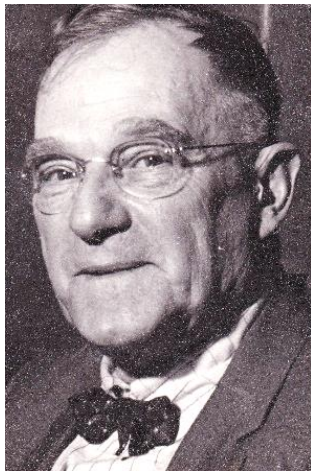
Lisbon District Nurse Miss Ellen Bone

Dr. Harry Hollister Boynton was instrumental in founding the Lisbon District Nursing Association which formed in 1908 and sent members to give nursing care to patients in their homes and assist physician house calls. The salary for visiting nurses at that time was \$80 per month. Nurse Ellen Bone of Lisbon was one of the most well-known.

Dr. George Martin (1842-1906) was born in New York and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. He married Addie Snow of Columbia, N.H., and by 1880 they were living in Lisbon where Dr. Martin practiced homeopathic medicine from his Main Street home. His wife died in 1888 in Littleton, N.H., and by 1900 Dr. Martin had moved to Iowa where he died.

Dr. Wilmington Thomas for a short time practiced medicine out of the old c. 1883 Lisbon library building on North Main Street.

Dr. Ella Higginson practiced medicine in Lisbon for seven years until she died in 1917.



Dr. Harold C. Pickwick (1897-1972)



Dr. Harold Pickwick and Hazel Ash Pickwick home

Dr. Harold "Pick" Pickwick was born in Rhode Island and lived in Connecticut and Manchester, N.H. He graduated from Tufts Medical School in 1922 and came to Lisbon in 1923 to begin his long tenure in Lisbon. He lived and practiced in the former Moore home across from the "doctors' house" on Central Street. He was the last quintessential country doctor in Lisbon and made house calls to everyone in all locations. He had a car adapted with skis for snow travel. "Pick" was known as an exceptional diagnostician, and his wife, Hazel (Ash), who was descended from some of the earliest settlers in Lisbon and Lyman, worked with him as a bacteriologist. The property is now an apartment house.



Dr. Eugene Bowles McGregor, who grew up on Highland Avenue in Lisbon, returned to his hometown in 1948 to practice medicine after graduating from Dartmouth College and Rush Medical School in Chicago, serving in WWII in the U.S. Army and completing his residency in Portland, Maine. His ancestors had settled in Lisbon on Sugar Hill in 1797. Dr. McGregor lived and practiced in the “doctors’ house” until retiring in 1985. When Dr. McGregor began practicing, he charged \$2 for office visits and \$3 for house calls. As was the custom, there were no appointments, and patients just showed up at the office for care. It wasn’t until 1971 that Dr. McGregor began making appointments for patients. Dr. McGregor’s wife, Phyllis (Prescott), whom he met while in Maine, was a registered nurse, and early in his practice she was his assistant and took care of his office, both exceptionally well. Dr. McGregor and Dr. Pickwick took alternating days off so there would always be a doctor available in town.

Dr. Eugene B. McGregor (1916-2008)

After Dr. McGregor retired, a number of different doctors saw patients in the old office in “the doctors’ house” until Littleton Regional Hospital arranged to have a clinic in the old Carleton Block as mentioned at the beginning of this article. The old “doctors’ house” is now an apartment house with a rented hair salon business.