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Photograph: Lobster clam bake crew at Murray Hill Indian Carry 1938

A Window to the Past

Boothbay Region Historical Society News

September 2021

Researching and preserving our history

Your stories will not be forgotten

From Our Archives



Charles Sullivan McCobb.
b. 1837. d. July 3, 1863

Charley McCobb as I assume he appeared while a Bowdoin student in the late 1850s.

Courtesy of Bowdoin College Archives

Charley McCobb: Civil War Soldier, Part I

By Barbara Rumsey, 2013

These articles on Civil War soldier Charley McCobb were exceedingly difficult to write because of the many conflicting accounts. Much of the information came from early 1900s local historian Bess Reed. She recorded her family versions of major events in Charley's life, as well as others' accounts. Her notes included both family letters and published accounts. She wrote that a Boston Globe article, probably written by Southport native Win Thompson and reprinted in the June 4, 1892 Register issue, was full of inaccuracies. Many of its errors were corrected in the July 2, 1892 Register issue by letter from Rev. William Leavitt of Norfolk, Neb., who had been minister at the Harbor's Second Congregational Church from 1862 to 1864. Leavitt recorded many details of Boothbay soldiers' deaths which he'd described in a "memorial discourse" on August 23, 1863 in Boothbay. All accounts vary in large and small ways. Such is history — if only one account survives, that's taken as gospel, though perhaps or almost certainly a little wobbly.

trust the information in the Maine Adjutant General's reports when other accounts differed, which I've done. Luckily we have Bess Reed's copies of those huge reports, properly called for instance, "Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Maine for the Years 1864 and 1865," which is 1,300 pages.

Charley's youth and enlistment

Charles S. McCobb was born in Boothbay in 1837 to parents who died soon thereafter. After their deaths, one of Charley's McCobb or Fisher uncles brought him up. Charley did something very rare for Boothbay boys in the 1800s by going to Bowdoin College, class of 1860.

He also was said to have gone to its medical school, which existed from 1820 to 1921, in 1860-1861. If he did so or intended to, perhaps he was prompted to do so by his Fisher grandfather who came to Boothbay as a doctor. However, Bowdoin's records do not list him as a non-graduating student at the medical school, pointing up one of the many inconsistencies found in Charley's story.

Charley McCobb was one of the first Boothbay fellows to volunteer, along with seven others, in June 1861. They were John Auld, Jason Carlisle, James Beath, Robert Clisby, Harvey Giles, Cyrus Hagan and Elisha Whitney. They joined Company E of the 4th Maine Regiment on June 15, 1861, probably after walking or taking a boat to Damariscotta.

Earl Leavitt explained some fine points to me. "The Regiment formed up in Rockland, but the 4th itself was recruited from the Midcoast region per a long-standing districting plan. Per that plan, Company E was recruited and formed up in Damariscotta."

Earl explained that Maine's first 10 regiments were all state-funded volunteer militia that immediately were federalized once the president called for them. Given that Maine's Hannibal Hamlin was vice-president, the state had a fine response to the request to send its militia units. Earl wrote, "Maine saw the handwriting on the wall and decided on its own to gear up big time" after the initial request.

Charley and Lizzie

There are a lot of small, seemingly insignificant treasures in the historical society in Boothbay Harbor. One such artifact on the wall in the museum is a plainly framed penciled letter with some dried flowers. Charley McCobb sent them from Washington, D.C. on June 21, 1861 to his close friend Lizzie Blair, mother of Bess Reed mentioned above.

Street, later living in the house that was built on family property just 150 feet south, the present museum. Lizzie was 21 and unmarried; Charley was 24, also unmarried. There was an assumption in town they might marry.

Next time: The text of Charley's letter to Lizzie and his imprisonment a month later at Libby prison in Richmond, Va.

For more articles by Barbara Rumsey about the Boothbay region check our website
www.boothbayhistorical.org/out-of-our-past

BRHS 2021 Speaker Series



William Keller presents

"Boothbay Harbor's Wharfscape:
Structures, Territory, and Life at Water's Edge"

Thursday, September 23, 4:30 pm

Available through Zoom only.

For a Zoom link, please email us at brhszoom@gmail.com.

Admission is free.

William Keller is an architecture historian interested in the landscapes we experience in the course of our daily lives. Wharfscape is the place where the town meets the water's edge, and Keller will examine Boothbay Harbor's wharf environments -- created by fisheries, shipbuilding, and other marine-oriented businesses -- for their key role in

them? This illustrated talk will explore the past and present world of the harbor's edge.

William Keller was a librarian for 40 years in New Haven, Baltimore, Washington, and Philadelphia, retiring as Fine Arts Librarian at the University of Pennsylvania.

For more information on this talk and the rest of our Speaker Series check our website [here](#).

CHEESE GLORIOUS CHEESE



Our Handcut Grafton Village Cheddar Cheese is Back for 2021!

Friday, October 8, 10am - 2pm

Purchase scrumptious cheese

at the Boothbay Region Historical Society

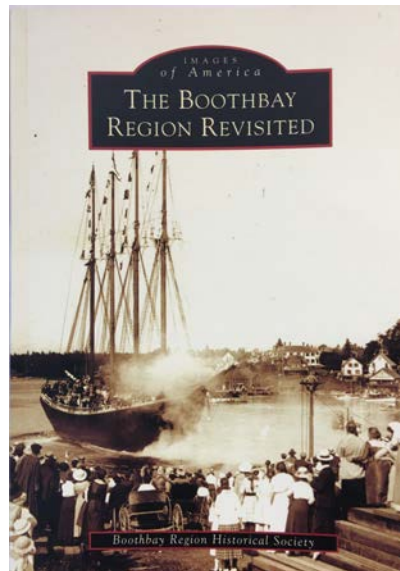
72 Oak Street, Boothbay Harbor

Saturday, October 9, 10am - 2pm

Come to the museum for cheese AND a delicious bake sale

Our cheese supply has been limited this year, so come early!

MUSEUM STORE



Beautifully illustrated with archival photographs, this history of the Boothbay Region depicts life as it was in earlier days. The chapters cover such topics as shipbuilding, summer communities, marine trades ashore, and commerce. Photographs and captions capture how people lived, worked, and played, and they include notable scenes, buildings, and people. If you love this region, you will love this book.

It is available for \$19.99 through our [museum store](#).

You can buy it in person, online, or over the phone at 207-633-0820.

RECIPE(S) OF THE MONTH

cheese (yellow mild American), 2 cups soft bread crumbs, 2 tablespoons minced parsley, 1 small can pimento, 6 tablespoons butter, 2 tablespoons minced onion, 2 cups scalded milk, 2 eggs well beaten, 2 teaspoons salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper. Cook macaroni in 4 cups boiling, salted water until tender. Drain and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ - to 1-inch pieces. Combine with all other ingredients. Pour into buttered ring mold and steam bake. Unmold and fill center with creamed fish, meat or vegetables. Serve hot. Temperature, 350-degree oven. Time, 35 minutes. Amount, 10-inch ring mold. Eight to 10 servings.

HOME-MADE SAUSAGE

Thirty-seven lb. mixed lean and fat pork, $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups salt, 1 cup sage, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pepper, 1 tablespoon ginger, 1 tablespoon mustard. Sprinkle seasoning over pork, then put through food chopper. Press into cloth bags, keep in cool place.

The ring sounds good, but what is "steam bake"? Anyone?

I can vouch for home-made sausage, it's very delicious.

From the East Boothbay Cookbook, published in 1947

Let's celebrate our cultural heritage together

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Boothbay Region Historical Society

72 Oak Street
 Post Office Box 272
 Boothbay Harbor, Maine 04538
 207.633.0820

*We're (normally) open year-round,
 Thursday through Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm.*

Please check our website for COVID-19 restrictions.

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