

D. A. R.  
DEDICATION of  
FLAG POLE

Houlton, Maine

DEDICATION OF NEW  
FLAG POLE AT HAN-  
COCK BARRACKS ON ~~ON~~  
GARRISON HILL, HOUL-  
TON, MAINE, JULY 4, 1926

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ADDRESS BY JUSTICE  
CHARLES P. BARNES ~~ON~~

## FOREWORD

The Flag Pole was erected by the Lydia Putnam Chapter, D. A. R., from funds raised by the Chapter for the purpose, assisted by a most generous gift from Mrs. Geneva Philbrick Brown, a former resident of Houlton now living in Boston.

The pole is 85 feet in height, set in concrete and made in two pieces with a cross tree half way up. In the bottom of the pole a slot was made in which was placed a copper box containing the roster and history of the Lydia Putnam Chapter and data about Hancock Barracks, a copy of the Aroostook Pioneer and one of the Houlton Times, containing a write-up of the finding of the parchment in excavating for the foundation of the new pole, as published in the issue of the Times for June 30.



## ADDRESS DELIVERED BY JUSTICE CHARLES P. BARNES

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Madame Regent, Women of Lydia Putnam Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, neighbors, and friends:

Our "natural resources" are said to have been the lure that attracted and brought settlers to this land.

Be it so, this particular township, in the valley of the Meduxnekeag, had nothing to barter in the marts of the world, one hundred years ago, except spar timber, the choicest of the pine.

And it is doubtful if many spars were floated from Houlton into the St John river.

In the summer of 1805, the first settler, Mr. Aaron Putnam, began clearing land here. But for four years his business was that of a store-keeper, a general merchant, on the St John, where is now the city of Woodstock.

In 1807, the family of Joseph Houlton came. By a spring, on the west side of this very hill, <sup>on</sup> "Lot 21", next this lot on the ~~west~~ <sup>south</sup>, he built his house of logs. Joseph Houlton's wife, Sarah, was a sister of Aaron Putnam.

Mr. Houlton was a man of property, and the arrangements made by this family were complete and wisely planned. They brought the implements of husbandry and ordinary housekeeping, but also china and silverware; and their log home, and later the frame house of their son James became a centre of refinement and good cheer. Their oldest child, Sarah, had married Samuel Cook, and had lived some time in Monmouth, in this state, then a province of Massachusetts, and this young couple followed her father and established their home on lot 14, next east of where we stand, and here the first wheat was grown.

Then came the war of 1812.

Of common laborers there may have been a few before this date. The River was the only highway and a man seeking employment may have gone west from the River, to "the states", as well as toward the east. The first artisan of whose coming we know was a carpenter from Alfred, in York county, Samuel Wormwood by name.

He brought his family up the River in 1813, and his daughter, Christiana who was nine years old when they made the long journey, told me, years

ago, that when they arrived the only people here were Mr. Cook, wife and four children, Mr. Joshua Putnam, wife and five children, Joseph Houlton, wife and three children, James Houlton, wife and one child, Ebenezer Warner, wife, Polly, daughter of Joseph Houlton, and one child, Aaron Putnam, his wife and four children and his mother, your Revolutionary ancestress, Lydia Trask Putnam, Dr. Samuel Rice, wife and four children, Greenleaf Kendall, his brother Samuel and his sister, Sally.

With Aaron Putnam lived also Joseph Goodenough, whom he had taken to "bring up," before he left Massachusetts.

In the Dr. Rice family lived Putnam Shaw and his sister, Hannah, cousins of Mrs. Rice, forty-one souls, as the chroniclers of old would say.

It's true the deeds to their lands recited that they were living west of the boundary line between the United States and British possessions, but where the line would fall, if it were marked on the face of the earth, no one had as yet authoritatively said. Our Yankee notion was that Parks' Hill was in Canada, and Mr. Houlton's Mill-Stream, known to us as Cook's Brook, in the United States.

It goes without saying that Britannia would spread her tent as far westward as her might could throw it.

How early in the life of this settlement the British army first attempted to dictate to our forefathers here we are not certain; but in the summer of 1813, a sergeant and detail of soldiers, in the hated red coats, appeared on this hill "to disarm the settlers and keep the peace." The only offensive or defensive armament that he found was a fowling piece that belonged to James Houlton. The sergeant stated his orders, "to seize all arms". Mr. Houlton said, in a way peculiar to him, "Yes, yes, by jolly, you can't have that." And the sergeant didn't take it.

Thus through the years of the war, and for ten years afterward, the citizens of Houlton held a strip of land claimed by two sovereigns, cut off by the trackless forest from assistance on the part of Massachusetts and the Federal Government, with the King's garrison, at Fredericton, watching all that was going on and chasing deserters until they were caught, without a thought of a boundary line.

Excellent spirits were dispensed at Woodstock, and recruiting for His Majesty's army, as against Yankees,

was frequently carried on in this wise: a man from this side might be cajoled into taking a drink with the recruiting squad at Woodstock.

After a drink or two he would be handed a glass of spirits "in the King's name." Then a piece of money would be placed in his hand, also in the King's name. This was called an "enlistment", and the worst feature of the next morning after a carouse would be confinement in a guard house of the King's army, with long years of service ahead of him,—the only escape being desertion. Many stories are told of the sheltering of deserters and the arrogance of the British army, culminating in the historic arrest of Baker, of Fort Kent.

In the mean time, one hundred years ago this year, Squire Jonah Dunn, from Cornish, in York county, had moved to Houlton, where he bought the Wormwood property, later known as the Washburn place, on North Street.

At the instance of this man and with the assistance of Col. John Hodgdon, a petition was drawn and forwarded to Congress, praying that Houlton be made a Military Post, and an appropriation granted for its support. This prayer was promptly

granted and Houlton was connected, at least in sentiment, with the rest of the new nation.

The boundary line question, however, was not settled for many years. In July, 1817, the British and the United States Commissioners had established the "source of the River St. Croix", a half mile or so below what is now the north-east corner of the town of Amity, in this county, and had there set a great cedar post, with appropriate witness stones, in which they chiselled the date, their initials etc., stones that can now be read by any visitor to the site of the cedar post. A substantial iron shaft was later substituted for the wooden marker; a concrete monument, with copper pin stands today at the source of the St Croix, and in 1924, the original cedar post, weathered and worn, and encrusted with lichens and moss, was discovered in its swampy bed, resurrected and conveyed to the office of the State Librarian, at Augusta, where its original lettering is read by the curious with appreciative interest.

The Boundary Commission ran a tentative line as far north as Houlton, but Mr. Bouchette, of the British commission, and Col. Turner, of the United States commission, were not dip-

lomats, as we of today understand the term, and falling into a disagreement over what were the "highlands" named in the treaty that determined the line, the former challenged Col. Turner to a duel, and the work of that commission stopped, our side claiming to the foot of Parks' Hill, and the British claiming to various points west of Houlton, some point in the vicinity of what is now the town of Sherman being the most westerly location the settlers spoke of, so far as I have heard.

In 1828, Mr. Joseph Houlton conveyed by deed to the United States twenty-five acres of "lot 20", the lot upon which we stand, as the site of the garrison.

But, four weeks before that day, as the document your industry unearthed in preparation for the erection of the present flag pole informs us, on June 27, 1828, the Post was established in Houlton. It is said to be the first "barracks" established under the United States flag, and was named Hancock Barracks. Mr. Houlton's deed is dated the twenty-fifth day of the following month.

Of the four companies of soldiers mentioned in the recovered document, Company C first marched into the

settlement from the south, coming from Bangor over the waterways to the "Indian Carrying Place" in Danforth, and thence by trail and corduroy road, over the Weston, Amity and Hodgdon hills to the Garrison Hill, in Houlton.

The other three companies of the Second Regiment, U. S. infantry accompanied the supplies and equipment, (not the least of which were four 6 pound guns,) by the canoe route to the mouth of Beaver Brook, and thence assisted the contractors in building a road from Mattawamkeag to the Garrison.

The men did not arrive until fall, and much of the supplies was transported on sleds in the early winter. But Uncle Sam's vigilant eye was over the inhabitants of Houlton. From that day on "the line" might run anywhere through the swamp by Park's Hill, it should not enclose the Garrison Hill.

A fever of building seized upon the little settlement.

Officers' quarters, barracks for the soldiers, a magazine for supplies and a hospital had to be erected at once, and the Post was to be surrounded by a stockade.

Only a fourth of the soldiers were

here the first summer, and that the settlement had become populous is evidenced by the report of the commanding officer that the payroll to civilian laborers ran from \$1500.00 to \$1800.00 per month. All the men of the vicinity who could be spared from home duties, down to boys eight and ten years old were put at work, and paid in the gold coin of the country. The army furnished a ready market too for all surplus food-stuffs, the first Houlton market.

That so many laborers could be found, only 15 years after the summer when the inhabitants numbered but 41, inclines one to the view that the quality of the early settlers of this place made it very attractive to home seekers. Up to the coming of the army Houlton had certainly nothing to offer other than a home among the best of the blood of colonial New England, and the opportunity to share the life of the devoted men and women who had left all and journeyed into the wilderness that New Salem Academy might receive \$5000.00 by the sale of its half township of land.

The original settlers needed no incitement to awaken patriotism within them. Lydia Trask Putnam was nursing her first-born, when the news

of the death of her father was brought to her.

That father died with Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham, and that first-born, hastening to the fray, after Lexington, gave his life for the country, as his grand-sire had done.

Mr. Joseph Houlton's earliest recollection of work was "doing chores" to keep the household going while his grandfather spent the years of the Revolution in the Continental Army.

But the chubby boys and girls, Ly-sander Putnam's age and younger, had never seen the proud flag of the conqueror of the British, the flag that had been the cerement of the grave for menfolk of every family of the original group, and we may well conclude it was a gay company that saw "Old Glory" broken out to the breeze, here where we are assembled, on May 23, ninety-seven eventful years ago. We may well believe that after doing honor to the flag the military band discoursed sweet music, and the woods rang with Bandmaster Schenig's "Holton Quickstep."

Eyes that were dulled with years of toil and privation flashed to youthful keenness as they counted with ease the stars and stripes; and the furtive glance of fugitives who sought cover

when the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew were flaunted in the sunlight steadied to calm assurance as they fell on the banner of the free.

We have historic spots in and about Houlton. At your right as you leave Cary's Mills, when riding to the Lake, you may still see evidences of the corduroy the belated companies fought flies and fever to lay, that we might have an outlet to the Penobscot

In a few years more everybody will know the way from the Calais Road to the "Monument", now unknown save to surveyors and fishermen. This spot, and the hitherto forgotten "city of the dead", in the next lot corner will be more often visited in the future. And you do well, Daughters of the American Revolution, to set this graceful, towering mast, that on the loftiest pinnacle of land within the sweep of the eye the emblem of our Country may float in benison over our smiling valley.

Its coming, in the dawn of the last century, brought peace, and stability, under the law

So now, raise it to the peak. A hundred years have only made its white more glistening, its red more compelling at the call to arms, and its blue more of a solace and assurance



to the down-trodden wherever it flies.

Where first planted in the last century, we who are of the blood of the Salem adventurers, we who are of kin to those who travelled at its birth, and we who have chosen and accepted the blessings that flow where it flies,—we all do vow, with burnings of the heart that shall quicken in succeeding generations till time shall be no more, that here, and in all high places of this our land, the last century shall see it proudly floating, when the last Lydia Trask shall have borne and nurtured in patriotism the ultimate American.

## FLAG POLE TO BE REPLACED

### AT HANCOCK BARRACKS

(The following from the Houlton Times of June 23, 1926 is self explanatory)

While excavating for the Flag pole which the local chapter of the D. A. R. are to erect on Garrison Hill, a discovery of an historical interest was unearthed.

The new flag pole is to be located on the same spot where the original pole was placed, and while digging the workmen discovered a bottle in a hole in the ledge underneath the base, containing data written on sheepskin and well preserved, which establishes the date of the location of the Post, as well as the date of the first flying of the Colors as will be seen by the following:

#### Hancock Barracks

This Post established and Barracks commenced under the direction of Brevet Major Newman S. Clarke, June 27, 1828.

Garrisoned by four companies of 2nd Regt. of U. S. Infantry to wit:

Company C

Comdr. Brevet Maj. Newman S. Clarke

Company K

Comdr. Capt. Greenleaf Dearborn

Company F

Comdr. Capt. Thos. Staniford

Company E

Comdr. Capt. B. A. Boynton

The flag of the United States was first raised at this post on the 23rd day of May, 1829, and the National Salute was fired.

**Officers Present**

(This was obliterated with age and could not be deciphered)

On the reverse side was a Quickstep with the music written out,—  
"Holton Quickstep by F. Schenig, Teacher of the band, 2nd U. S. Infantry".

This has been given over to the Lydia Putnam Putnam Chapter, D. A. R., and will be properly framed and preserved for future generations by the Chapter.

TIMES PUBLISHING CO., NOULTON, MAINE