

All That's New Is Sometimes Old

# Nahum Bachelder, East Andover Farmer

By Lorraine S. Merrill, Commissioner  
NH Department of Agriculture  
Markets and Food

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Bulletin

Matt Chauncey loaned me his copy of *New Hampshire Agriculture: Personal and Farm Sketches* published in 1897. Many of the issues, challenges, and opportunities described are similar to those of farming today. The biggest difference may be how agriculture's tables have turned from a position of predominance on the economic and social scene to that of little-understood minority.

The author relates the story of how Nahum Bachelder of East Andover was selected in 1887 by the State Board of Agriculture (predecessor to the Department) as its secretary (head). He had demonstrated his executive ability and become widely known among the state's farmers as secretary of the State Grange.

This account caught my eye, as Nahum Bachelder was later elected governor of the state.

After a short stint in teaching, the future governor had gone into extensive market gardening for a time. But then he turned his energy and resources to dairying, supplying some of the leading hotels of the day with "gilt-edged" butter.

Bachelder subsequently served as National Master of the Grange, Patrons of Husbandry, in addition to being elected governor of New Hampshire in 1903.

A little Internet research on Nahum Bachelder revealed that he was a national advocate (quoted in the August 5, 1906 *New York Times*) for the commercial development of denatured alcohol as a fuel. Then National Grange Master, Bachelder testified to Congress on the vast potential he saw for growth in "the use of the farm engine and the alcohol lamp" for alcohol made from "corn, potatoes, sorghum, beet sugar, molasses, and other farm products from which alcohol can be distilled, with consequent direct benefits for the agricultural interests of the country."

A biographical sketch of Peterborough native Prof. William H. Caldwell contains the story of how the American Guernsey Cattle Club (AGCC) came to be headquartered in that town. Orphaned before the age of two and raised by a maiden aunt, Caldwell distin-

guished himself as a student at the Massachusetts Agricultural College and went on to graduate study and teaching and research at the Pennsylvania State College. In 1894 he resigned to take the position of secretary and treasurer for the AGCC and returned to the "delightfully located" farm he had purchased in Peterborough. The Guernsey Cattle Club operated out of an office in his farm home, with two clerks maintaining the national herd book registry of Guernsey cattle. The AGCC's many publications were all edited by Caldwell, who was also a respected agricultural writer.

Caldwell's herd is described as "butter bred cows, full blood and grade Guernseys." The selection and breeding of the herd are described in detail, as are the innovative "Bidwell stalls" that allowed the cows "great freedom and comfort" without being tied. Not wide enough for an animal to turn around, the stalls prevented cattle from crowding or stepping on each other.

The herd was "under the inspection of a veterinarian at all times," and "every means taken to secure the health, cleanliness, and comfort of the animals." Careful records were kept of milk production and butterfat tests of each animal.

As farmers and gardeners find their way through this particular spring, with early heavy rains followed by an early warming trend, I am reminded of another excellent historic account of farming in New Hampshire. Jerold Brown based *The Years of the Life of Samuel Lane, 1718- 1806* (University Press of New England, 2000) on the detailed diaries and papers kept by Lane. Reading this story of a prosperous farmer and entrepreneur in our home town of Stratham, I found Lane's descriptions of farming and community life eerily familiar. We use different equipment now and no longer harvest saltmarsh hay, but the geography and soil conditions and the unpredictable weather that had to be coped with from season to season are recognizable to a 21st century seacoast farmer.

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# HPLA Announces Highland Lake Summer Activities

By Jim Cooley  
President, HPLA

It's the start of another summer season at Highland Lake in Andover, and the Highland Lake Protective Association (HPLA) invites you to join us in activities around the lake. It's a good way to get to know your fellow Andover residents and show your support for keeping Highland Lake a clean, safe, and healthy place to live and play.

This year, our annual whimsical boat parade will be on Saturday, July 3, at 4 PM (with good viewing at the town beach), followed by the lighting of the

flares around the lake at 9 PM. Parade boats will gather on the west side of the lake to begin the procession around the whole lake.

The next day, on Sunday, July 4, after enjoying the parade festivities in town we will host an ice cream social at 6:30 PM at the East Andover Fire Station.

Our annual meeting will be on Saturday, July 24, at 10 AM, also at the East Andover Fire Station, where we will announce the winner of our first Highland Lake Photography Contest.

We hope you will join us in celebrating the summer at Highland Lake.

## Highland Lake Photo Contest

HPLA press release

We all love the views on and around Highland Lake! Here's a chance to prove your photography skills to your friends and neighbors in Andover.

The Highland Lake Protective Association (HPLA) is sponsoring a contest of photographs of the Highland Lake area within one mile of the lake's edge. Judging will be for quality, content, and beauty. The winner will be announced at the HPLA Annual Meeting on July 24 at 10 AM at the East Andover Fire Station.

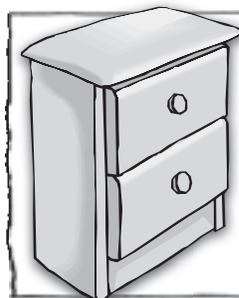
You're on your honor to submit photos that are taken by you in the past 12 months and are of the Highland Lake area, not other beautiful areas of New Hampshire, and certainly not of Vermont, Maine, or Massachusetts! Any "appropriate" images in black and white or color are acceptable. This is an amateur contest, so professional photogra-

phers are asked not to participate.

Submit your photographs by July 17 either as a digital image, able to be enlarged to 8" by 10" size, to JamesCooley@rcn.com or send your 8" by 10" photograph to HPLA Photo Contest, PO Box 252, East Andover 03231. Entry fee is \$2 per photo. Your entry should include your name, age, address, e-mail address, and phone number. You may want to include information about where and how you took the picture and with what equipment, but these data are not required.

The winner of the contest will receive half of the entry fees for the contest and bragging rights! The other half of the entry fees will be used to support the water testing program at Highland Lake.

The HPLA will not own the images and will be happy to return to the owner any pictures submitted, if requested.



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