

# ESSEX COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ESSEX TOWN-EST.1763 ESSEX ICT.-EST.1892 ESSEX COMM. HISTORICAL SOCIETY-EST.1991

## CONTENTS:

1. President's Message
2. Dr. Butler, by Tim Jerman
5. Research
6. Essex History Grows
6. Help!
7. My Life in the Early Days, by  
Caroline Chapin Church
8. Board of Directors
9. Membership form

## President's Message

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The Historical Society, along with the Essex Parks and Recreation Department, sponsored a Sing-A-Long Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony in December. Carol Baker, from Founders Memorial School, brought her chorus to lead the singing. Those attending enjoyed sweet treats provided by the Girl Scouts after the lighting ceremony. The Essex Police helped with traffic on this busy night.

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Thank you to our members for your continued support. If you would like to share some of your memories with us about growing up and living in Essex, please feel free to contact one of our board members. We look forward to recording your memories as part of Essex history. Essex Community Historical Society is always looking for new members and volunteers to assist in sustaining the operation of the museum and the Society in general.

Eva C. Clough, President



## THE ECHO

The newsletter of the  
Essex Community Historical Society  
Essex and Essex Junction, Vermont  
Published twice a year, spring and fall.  
Spring 2011

Edited by Mildred "Molly" Brown

Essex Community Historical Society  
P.O. Box 8388  
Essex, VT 05451

E-mail address:  
essexcommunityhistoricalsociety@myfairpoint.net



## Dr. Lucius Castle Butler—Essex Civil War Historian

By, Tim Jerman

There are two good reasons why this is a good time to recall Essex historian Lucius Castle Butler. First, 2011 marks the 150th anniversary of the onset of the American Civil War, which was documented locally in great detail by Doctor Butler. Second, 2013 will mark the 250th anniversary of the charter of the Town of Essex, granted by New Hampshire Royal Governor Benning Wentworth in 1763. Butler also chronicled the early history of Essex in several publications which received wide distribution.

Lucius, or L.C. Butler, was a true son of Essex. He was born in 1820 to Bille Bishop Butler and Sara Castle Butler. Sara was a daughter of Abel Castle, an early Essex settler who lived to be 95, and had 95 living children, grand and great grandchildren when he died in 1830! L.C.'s grandfather, Stephen, was the first Butler to settle in Essex in 1794. A Green Mountain Boy who fought in the Revolution, Stephen had come to Vermont from the same town as the Allen brothers from Connecticut. Butler's Corners in Essex was named after Stephen's son Roswell, who had a successful business there. Roswell was Bille's brother and L.C.'s uncle.

L.C. attended public schools in Essex and Bradford Academy. (His father, Bille, helped build the old stone school which later became the Essex Classical Institute.) He studied with Drs. George Howe of Jericho and Leonard Marsh of Burlington, then attended medical college in Woodstock, VT. He married Hannah Drury in 1845. Hannah was the daughter of Colonel Samuel Page of the War of 1812 fame, who settled Page's Corners, the town's first settlement. L.C. and Hannah had two children, Edward Page Butler and Mary Alice Butler. L.C. practiced in Clintonville, NY for seven years, then returned to Essex and practiced for nine more. In 1859, he moved to Bradford for a year, then took a job in Philadelphia as an editor with a prestigious publication, *The Medical and Surgical Reporter*. He returned to Essex again in 1862 and stayed. He later was President of the Vermont Medical Society and helped establish the Vermont State Board of Health. A medical biography describes him as a "most sympathetic and skillful physician."

In 1866, Dr. Butler wrote an extraordinary Memorial Record of Essex, VT, a 60-page history of every person in town who served in the cause of the Union between 1861—1865. The narrative contains personal stories of soldiers and details the internal debate in town about raising tax dollars to pay bounties to induce volunteers for the many federal calls for more troops. The Town printed 600+ copies of the Memorial Record and distributed one to every Essex family! It is likely that as the town physician, Butler knew many of the young men he wrote about; his later recollections of the pre-war period were drawn in large part from his own memory and stories told to him by the pioneer generation preceding his.

There is no doubt of Butler's patriotic devotion to the Union, even though his political affiliation was to the Democratic party, which favored a peaceful resolution to the war without necessarily ending slavery. His Memorial Record introduction states:

*(The flame of Patriotism) vibrated through every nerve and muscle. It quickened to a feverish glow the pulsations of every heart. It hushed the tumult of rancorous passions then culminating into ripened animosity. It instinctively drew men of all parties and shades of political opinions together, and each found the heart*



*of his fellow beating in unison with his own. Throughout the North not a discordant note was heard or uttered.*

Of Essex's involvement, Butler wrote:

*In this conflict, now so happily terminated, this town has borne an honorable and praise-worthy part. It has had representatives in nearly every regiment that has been raised in the State, and in a large proportion of the hardest-fought battle fields. A few have been buried upon the field of victory they helped to win. Some have found a resting place among their kindred at home. Some have brought back the evidence of their valor in the wounds they received upon the battlefield, and in the mutilations of their persons. Many have passed unscathed through all their perils of camp and battle and prison. Most of them have merited the gratitude of their townsmen, and we today place upon enduring record their bravery and their patriotism.*

Interestingly, there is just one reference to the struggle against slavery in Butler's writings, but it is a strong one:

*Peace, with her Olive branches crowned, has once more gladdened the hearts of the entire nation, and with the brightness of her coming has passed away that unmitigated curse to any nation, human slavery. Well may an emancipated nation rejoice at the result.*

His uncle Roswell's brick house, most recently the 1820 Coffee House, is listed as an "underground railroad" stopping point for fugitive slaves on the way north to Canada. Butler's own house would have been another logical stop heading north, but this writer found no record of the Page house in that effort. Butler also recognized the contributions of the town's women, if in somewhat stilted language:

*Nor would this memorial be complete without allusion to the patriotic efforts of the Ladies of the Town to supply those delicate necessities to the sick and wounded soldier which the gentle hand and tender heart of woman alone can supply....Meetings were held from time to time—social gatherings at which all these contributions were prepared in the manner thought to be most convenient and useful. In this way one or more album quilts were made, several bed quilts, numerous cotton and flannel drawers and shirts, pillows, towels, socks, handkerchiefs, pin-cushions, slippers, napkins, bandages in rolls, wine of home manufacture, dried fruit, maple sugar—in fine, everything which the ingenuity and sympathy of the ladies could devise.*

Essex Town sent 140 men to war. 26 died, mostly from disease in camp. 7 were killed in battle, 9 taken prisoner, 8 deserted (not uncommon), 13 wounded. Most of the battle casualties came in Virginia at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864. The town spent \$37,500 for bounties and expenses, a large sum for the time, driven by a competition among neighboring towns to fulfill their enlistment obligations voluntarily, without a forced draft. As the war dragged on, opposition to this local tax grew and made for lively exchanges at Town Meetings, but Essex never failed to support the war effort. A large stone tablet still adorns Memorial Hall's entrance with the names of all town residents who died in service from 1861—1865.

By the 1880s, L.C. Butler was clearly the town elder. He served in the legislature in



1863-4, and was his party's primary candidate for Speaker of the House. He was chosen as keynote speaker of the 1883 Centennial of the settlement of the Town of Essex. As part of festivities, Butler delivered a long history of the Town to a packed gallery at the Congregational Church in what is now the village. He was a life-long member of the church; his son and a brother became Congressional ministers. In addition to his historical writings, Butler even tried poetry. This portion of a sad poem shows that he was thinking of his own mortality:

*O give me not the tombstone to tell  
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L.C. did not get his wish about his tombstone. He died in 1888 at the age of 68, and was buried in the old cemetery in the town with a solid monument, near so many of his family and the early town residents whose stories he preserved for our generation. As we approach our 250th anniversary, more of those stories will certainly emerge as we honor our local history. This year, we can focus on our Civil War involvement through the poignant record bequeathed to us by Dr. Lucius Castle Butler. Readers can access the full text of the Memorial at [www.openlibrary.org](http://www.openlibrary.org).

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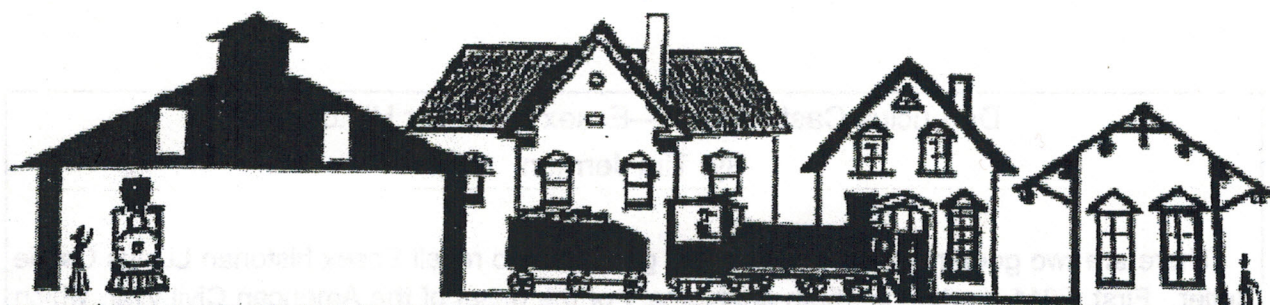
*Essex and Essex Junction*, Richard and Lucille Allen, 2004.



Dr. Lucius Castle Butler and  
Dr. Butler's gravestone monu-  
ment. Photos courtesy of Tim  
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Dr. Lucius Castle Butler and  
Dr. Butler's gravestone monu-  
ment. Photos courtesy of Tim  
Jerman.







The Molloy-Delano House, where L. C. Butler lived, located on Butler's Corners. Can anyone identify the people in this photo? If so, please contact Eva or any other board member! Thank you, Mary Gauthier, for donating the above photograph!

## RESEARCH!

With the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, there will be numerous events throughout the state to commemorate the anniversary of the war. The Essex Community Historical Society is engaged in researching the people from the area that were somehow involved in this war.

More information on Hannah Clark is being looked into. Hannah was married to Tim Bliss of Essex, and he was one of the first signers of statehood in 1791!

Penny Pillsbury is conducting research and interviews about the people of Essex. She is hoping to compile this information into ongoing programs of various themes. A title she suggested was "Notable and Nuts." Eva mentioned the Civil War soldier, Norman Woodworth. His diaries tell of life in the 1830s—1860s, the weather, crops, with the final page written in by his family of his dying in Philadelphia, PA from wounds he obtained from the Civil War.



## ESSEX HISTORY GROWS!

Laurie Jordan is continuing Ron Clapp's tradition of walking tours in Essex Center. She has expanded with talks into some of the classrooms in Essex Junction.

Walking tours around the Essex Common for the town's second graders continues each year with Laurie, and the help of Barb Chapin and Kathy Dodge. Laurie wishes to acknowledge the many Essex people whose interviews, phone chats and written memories and research have given Laurie the opportunity to share stories of the way Essex life used to be.

This past year, Essex Community Historical Society has expanded the second grade talks to Summit Street School with photos and accounts about the village history. A village Cub Scout Troop and Essex Girl Scout Troop 30256 toured the museum as they also listened to Essex historical personal stories.

In March, Laurie enjoyed giving the Essex Senior Bus Tour. She was able to add even more details about the early settlers on Weed Road and about the former Essex "centers" at Butler's and Page's Corners. Laurie is excited that Frank Bent's research and Harriet Powell's written account for a tour all around Essex is coming alive, as well as the many other accounts that she has read about and listened to.

For those of you who have not enjoyed a walking tour, the tour encompasses: Lincoln Hall, Brickyard Kiln, Butler's and Page's Corners, Chapin and Towers Roads, Museum and Common, Whitcomb House, Naylor and Weeds Roads, and Bixby Hill sugar house.

## HELP!

We have added several creamery bottles to our collection and **we need help identifying where these creameries were located.** Please contact Eva Clough by phone or email if you can help!

1 Pint Liquid  
Fred Yadow  
Milk and Cream  
Essex JCT, VT  
Registered B11

1 Quart Liquid  
Fred Yadow  
Milk and Cream  
Essex JCT, VT  
registered B13

One Pint  
The Knoll  
Essex Junction, VT

1 Pint Liquid  
Drury Lane Dairy  
Pure Jersey  
Milk  
Essex JCT, VT

1 Pint Liquid  
Tyler Milk CO  
R. C. Place  
Pasteurized  
Pure Milk  
Essex Junct  
MTC B11

One Quart Liquid  
Cedric Davis  
Milk and Cream  
Essex JCT, VT  
Registered 258

1/2 Pint  
Ethan Allen Creamery (front)  
Essex Junction, VT  
Why Not Serve (back)  
Cottage Cheese  
Tomorrow?

Racine Bros. Essex Jct, VT

One quart liquid. Brooknell, L.H.  
Marvin, Essex Jct, VT



## **My Life in the Early Days**

**By—Caroline Chapin Church**

*(The following is an excerpt from tapes that Caroline Chapin Church made for her nieces and nephews, who requested that she record her history.)*

### **Chapin Farm Seasons**

#### **Autumn Apples**

South of the house and west of the road, was our old orchard. The trees had been set too close to each other, and in the fall, the ground would be completely covered with apples. No place to step, except on the apples. But it was fun to walk there and eat, and eat, and eat. There were Bayors and Duchess. Peach apples. Pow sweets. And others beside pears and other fruits. Dad would put about ten or twelve bins in the cellar for winter use. We had apples just about the year around.

#### **Spring Syrup**

When I was quite young, our old sugar house was built between the road and the ledge that is half way to the Slater place. The horses or oxen would bring the sap from the woods in the gathering tank and empty it into a big tank outside the sugar house. From there it would be piped to a tank inside the sugar house, then piped to the evaporator with the flow controlled to bring the sap as needed. The syrup was tested for thickness by letting it drip from a scoop. When it leathered, it was done. Oooh-eeeh! Was it ever good! It was sticky and dirty and fun. The fire would have to be stoked continually to keep the sap boiling, to get rid of the surplus water. The syrup has to weigh eleven pounds to the gallon when done.

When Claude was a little fellow, he built a little arch of bricks out back of the sugar house. He begged the bread tin from our mother, and started boiling sap with his own rig. When I was old enough, I did too.

#### **Summer Surprise**

In the summertime, our young cattle were pastured in the sugar orchard. One day in mid-summer, I was just roaming around and happened to go into the sugar house. When I pushed open the door, there stood a heifer inside with the door closed. She had pushed the door open, gone inside, and was trapped. How long she had been there, no one knew...without water or anything. I was some surprised and ran home to tell the men folks.

#### **Was it Ever Good**

At that time, there were no stores to buy ready-cooked foods or ready-made clothes, except ladies' wrappers or house dresses, and men's clothes. There were no place to buy even a loaf of bread. Everything must be made at home; all bread, cakes, donuts, cookies, even cottage cheese. But was it ever good! Made with *plenty* of eggs, cream and butter, maple sugar, and other good ingredients. We really lived well! I remember the frosted three-layer cake, roll jelly cakes, the huge loaves of bread, Johnny cake, maple rag muffins, the tin quart pans of donuts.



About two or three times a week, the four huge loaves, two or three times a week, besides biscuits.

Then there were butchering times after which we lived high on the hog as they say. Then the rolls of sausage, and dried beef, bacon, ham. Wow! Was it ever good! The hams were cured with maple sugar and they were smoked with corn cobs, and there were barrels of salt pork.

Here I am to tell the tale at ninety-six years. No one is more astonished than I am....This cassette was dated April 22, 1985.



### Essex Community Historical Society Board of Directors , 2010—2011

(Denotes year of term expiration)

Eva Clough, President (11)  
42 Brigham Hill Road  
879-0849

Katherine Reynolds (11)  
88 Park Street  
878-2193

Sherry Norton, Vice President (13)  
9 Mapelawn Drive  
879-7334

Polly McEwing (12)  
5 Doubleday Lane  
879-6862

Laurie Jordan, Secretary (13)  
259 River Road  
879-6467

Tim Jerman (12)  
41 South Hill Drive  
878-2972

Ann Gray, Treasurer (11)  
28 Rosewood Lane  
878-4088

John Duby (11)  
62 Learned Drive  
Westford, VT 05494  
879-1841

Barb Chapin (11)  
129 Chapin Road  
922-1230

Mary O'Neil (13)  
10 South Hill Drive  
878-8214

William Parkinson (12)  
P.O. Box 40  
Hinesburg, VT 05461  
482-3113

Kathy Dodge (13)  
P. O. Box 8264  
Essex, VT 05451  
878-4272



*All addresses are Essex Junction, VT 05452, unless otherwise noted.*



# Essex Community Historical Society

P.O. Box 8388  
Essex, Vermont 05451

## Membership Form

Please consider becoming a member or renewing your membership at this time.

Or you can pass this on to someone who would like to be a member.

Thank you!

Your dues will help us to add to our collection of Essex memorabilia, maintain the museum, publish the ECHO, and sponsor historical programs.

\_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal of membership

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family Membership \$15.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Membership (60 and over) \$ 5.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime: individual, married, civil union \$100.00

Make checks payable to:  
Essex Community Historical Society.

Thank you!



Essex, Vermont 05451

P.O. Box 8388



## UPCOMING EVENTS...

### MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

May 28, 2011

Wreath ceremony is at 9:30 A.M.

Parade starts at 10:00 A.M.

This year's theme for the float is:

"Lest We Forget."

### BLOCK PARTY

July 23, 2011

### MUSEUM'S GRAND OPENING

June 5, 2011

1:00 P.M.—4:00 P.M.

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, the museum will have a Civil War program and display. The Austin family, the first family to join the cause, will be honored this year by the museum. The exhibit honoring these men will be unveiled at the grand summer opening. Summer hours are Thursdays 7:00—8:30 P. M. and Sundays from 1:00—4:00 P.M.