

One Hundred Years Ago

Throughout the year, North Yarmouth Historical is supplying a “History Minute” to be read at the beginning of each Select Board meeting. Chair Brian Sites recently read the following, written by Dixie Hayes of North Yarmouth Historical Society.

Historians, professional and amateur like to look at change over time, so when we turned the corner from 2021 to 2022, I looked back to see what was happening in North Yarmouth 100 years ago.

The 1921 Town report is remarkably similar to the reports we receive today. It includes reports from Boards and Committees, budget information, info about town roads, and articles to be voted on at Town Meeting. The meeting was held at 10 AM on Monday, Feb. 23. (Readers might ask themselves why that would be the case.)

At the time North Yarmouth shared a school superintendent with Cumberland and Falmouth: DF Lunt, for whom the Lunt School in Falmouth was named. He reported that there were 210 school aged children in North Yarmouth. The average daily attendance was 106. The school year was only 31 weeks long. A major school expense for 1921 was the purchase of new geography books, deemed imperative because of the changes resulting from World War I.

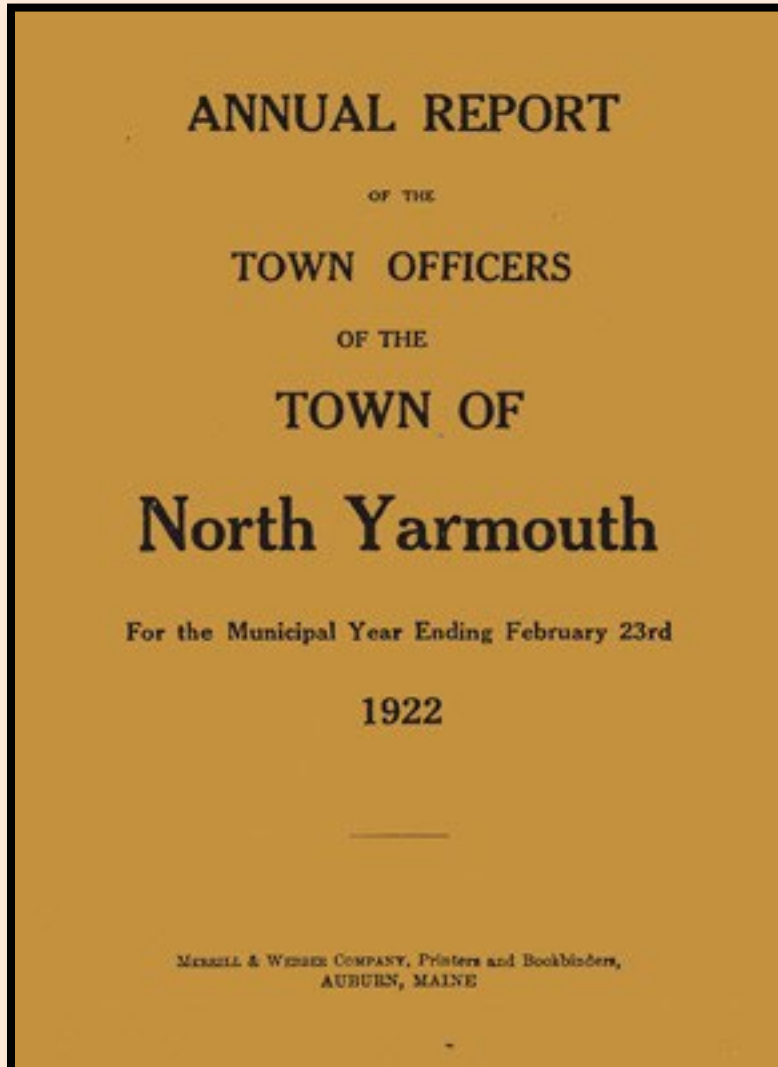
In 1921 citizens were asked to pay for a cattle pass to be built under the road “between James Lawrence and the Moses True place” (on North Road). They also paid for chickens killed by wild animals and sheep killed by dogs. They paid for the lodging of tramps, for the burial of veterans, and even the taxes of Civil War veterans. The town spent a total of \$34 for the labor, painting, lumber, carting, and setting of auto signs—probably the first ones in town. The automobile was becoming a real presence!

The report of the North Yarmouth Memorial Highway Committee listed all donors who gave to the construction of four large stone posts on Route 9. Ninety residents—15% of the town—and 26 out-of-towners gave from \$2 to \$100 each. In-kind donations included a gift of one day’s work with team by Robert Hoey. History repeats itself: Hoey’s great-grandson, Robert Anderson, has generously donated labor and equipment for the Old Town House Project.

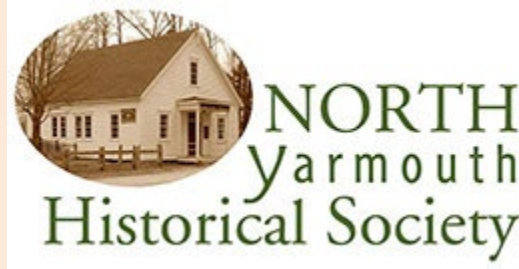
Until the early 1960s the clerk’s report included births, deaths, and marriages in town. 1921 saw the birth of Warren Buckley Barter, Isaac Edmund Hayes, and Norman Leighton Smith. Each of them lived their entire life in North Yarmouth, serving the town in many capacities, including as Trustees for the North Yarmouth School Fund. In 2021 their children, Blaine Barter, Dixie Hayes, and Nelson Smith serve as School Fund Trustees. History repeats itself, especially in small town USA!

Read at the February 1, 2022, Select Board Meeting

Be sure to read more about 1921 in an upcoming Gazette. And consider joining North Yarmouth Historical Society, the most fun group in town!



Interested on our local history? Start with the North Yarmouth Historical Society's website <https://www.northyarmouthhistorical.org/>



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