



CUMBERLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P O Box 82

4A Blanchard Road

Cumberland, ME 04021

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MISSION STATEMENT:

The purpose of the Society shall be to collect and preserve artifacts pertaining to the Town of Cumberland and its history, making it available to groups, schools, and individuals.

MARCH THOUGHT:

No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow. ~Proverb

The plans for the Memorial Day Yard Sale table seem to be moving along. People have been letting us know what sorts of things they are collecting to add to the table. We will have a Saturday workshop to sort and price the items in May, a couple of weeks before the Memorial Day weekend. Keep those things in mind that you would like to donate.

The 501c3 committee has been very hard at work getting things prepared for application. It is a lot of detail work, and adjustments have had to have been made in order to comply with IRS standards. The standards are quite rigid, and, being the IRS, need to be followed closely.

We were given a scrapbook from the Falmouth Historical Society that has several Cumberland items pasted in it. In return, we were able to give them a folder of Falmouth items that have been in our possession.

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Last fall we received a request for some information on Jacob Webber, a man who taught school in Cumberland in the mid 1800's, from his great nephew, Richard Webber from Pennsylvania. After sending back to him what information could be found, Mr. Webber sent the following for our use in the newsletter:

***( I am transcribing a diary and other notes from a distant relative from back in the mid 1860's. He lived in South Freeport and prior to, and during his time attending Bowdoin, he taught in several district schools (Cumberland, Scarborough, Yarmouth, Freeport, etc.)***

**Jacob Webber** was born August 23, 1836 in Westbrook and from early childhood until his death he lived on the family "farm" with 6 sibs in South Freeport on what is now Lambert Rd. His father was a stonemason/farmer who built several of the local road bridges. Much of his childhood schooling was in a Freeport "district" school. He attended Westbrook Seminary (which seems to have evolved into some part of the present University of New England). Taught in several district schools in the region - Cumberland, Scarborough, Yarmouth, Brunswick and Freeport (not chronologically listed). Attended and graduated from Bowdoin - class of 1863. Some of his teaching gigs were during his college years. His death on September 9, 1863 was just a month after his college graduation.

An 1882 "**History of Bowdoin College, with Biographical Sketches of its Graduates from 1800 to 1870, Inclusive**" indicates: "**JACOB BRACKETT WEBBER** was born in Freeport, August, 1863. He graduated with honor, having made his way through college amid great discouragements; was just commencing active life as an assistant teacher in Westbrook Seminary when he was seized with typhoid fever, and in a few days died, September following

JACOB BRACKETT  
WEBBER



August 23, 1836 - September 9, 1863

## **PREFACE**

The original documents which make up this collection consist of three major sections:

**MEMOIR – Page 1**, which is a “diary” penned by Jacob B. Webber. He started this on his 21st birthday, by writing recollections of his life from as far back as he could remember – about age 2 - and then continued it as a daily journal. He stopped just a few days before his death, at age 27. Why did he keep a diary? His stated purpose, in his own words, was: *“I do not intend that any one else, shall ever see it; but to keep it as long as I live, it may be of a great deal of interest to me, at some future time.”* So much for “intentions”.

**REGISTER – Page 237**, included are compositions, thoughts, “ideas” and copies of letters written by J.B. Webber between 1854 and 1863.

**COMPOSITIONS – Page 321**, “school” compositions from 1858 to 1863. These were written as assignments at Westbrook Seminary and Bowdoin College

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I have also included an **ADDENDUM, Page 438**, which provides related pictures, maps and explanatory information.

Additionally there is an **APPENDIX, Page 501**, which includes newspaper articles from the “Brunswick Telegraph” and the “Bowdoin Bugle” relative to occurrences noted in JBW’s Memoir, a copy of his declamation at his “Senior Exhibition” and biographical sketches of his college class.

**Richard G. Webber - 2013**  
JBW’s great nephew

Wednesday 22 Had a talk with the ten larger boys. They promised to do right for the rest of the term.

Saturday 25 no school, but such a furious storm, that I did not go anywhere. I staid at home, studied, read, and played.

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Jan 26 - Feb 1.

Sunday 26 Attended Church. It rained hard last night, and this morning the crust would bear me more than half the time.

Monday 27 Froze hard last night, and this morning a man can walk across fields anywhere. After school, went out to slide. Mr. Leighton rigged a sail on his sled; one of the boys who had a sled lent me his skates, good wide ones, and I skated more than an hour. The wind blowing furiously. This evening, one of the scholars was in. A shiftless, gambling, good-for-nothing concern, but of course I had to make myself as agreeable as possible.

Tuesday 28 Mr. Eaton went to Yarmouth, and at noon I wrote a letter for home. [*Not found in Register, though possibly letter listed as Jan, 16th*]

Friday 31 received a letter from Scott Larabee. He is attending school at Gorham. He writes about girls, and stories of Mr. Watsons folks' telling. I dont [*sic*] think his state of mind when he wrote was one very profitable to be in. In the evening, went over to Squire Rideouts and had another good time. The Squire was just the same as when I was there before, and his girls much more talkative.

Saturday, February 1st, 1862 Uncle Samuel called on his way to his uncle John's, and left my umbrella, and and [*sic*] a message for me that if I would like to go home with him he would take me down on his return. So I went down. I found his folks all glad to see me. Little Hattie "climbed up", and told me stories of their school and of other things, while her father was busy. Most of the interest was in seeing how this

"Memoir"

1861

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Oct. 26 - Nov. 16

Saturday 26 received a kind letter from Reubin and also one surrendering the school and recommending me to the Agent. As it was late in the evening and pitchy dark couldnt [sic] go home till morning.

Sunday 27 walked home. Found the folks all well and in pleasant circumstance.

Monday 28 early in the morning walked down to Uncle Samuels and he readily went with me to see the Agent. After some talk the matter was left in this shape. If I do not hear from him by Saturday I am to have the school for thirty dollar. I returned here in the cars without returning home.

Saturday Nov. 2 1861 there was no letter for me this evening and I feel pretty sure of the school. I am not easily elated nor I hope cast down.

Sunday 3 Dr. Adams preached remarkably well. It was a sufficient recompense for a dozen dull ones.

→ Monday 4 Got a letter from Mr. Hicks saying he would give me twenty-six dollars per month and board. Got one also from Asa about some money.

→ Tuesday 5 wrote to Mr Hicks accepting his offer. Wrote also to Uncle Samuel that I had engaged the school. [REGISTER, p. 309 & 310]

Thursday 6 [sic] Wrote to Asa in return. [REGISTER, p. 310] Yesterday and to day have been almost sick with a bad cold and sore throat, but am getting better.

Sunday 10 An excellent sermon each service.

Saturday 16 reconed [sic] up the clubs bills, and our board only one dollar and sixty-three cents. Bills are most all settled. My services give me more than six dollars, and my lighting the end enough to make more than ten. Received a letter from Asa, and some money to pay my bills.

Uncle Johns, of going down to Lionels last night, of going from there to Portland and then to Mr. Larrabees with my reasons, of seeing Sam. Jordan and of his prospects, of returning here to night, of Fathers being at Lionels last Sunday, and concludes, after speaking of when and how I shall come home, with a somewhat earnest exhortation to Asa and Margaret, to teach themselves, and the children.

Asa W. Webber Yarmouth Me. J.B. Webber. Mr. (95)

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Jan. 1862

Cumberland Center, Dec. 28/61.

Dear Sir -

Enclosed please find four dollars and sixtyfive cts (\$4.65) it being the annual payment Due Jan. 1st on my policy of life insurance in the Worcester Company of Mass.

Please send me a receipt to this address.

Respectfully,

Mr. W.D. Little, Insurance Agent,  
Exchange St., Portland, Me.

(96) J.B. Webber.

Cumberland Center Jan 16t/62

Dear Brother -

Mr. Eaton has concluded to go to mill this afternoon, so I must write my letter in a hurry. This letter goes on to make an appointment for meeting him at yYarmouth junction, a week from next Saturday. It concludes -

Mr. Asa W. Webber, Your loving Brother,  
Yarmouth, Maine.

(98) J.B. Webber.

March. 1862

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Cumberland, Apr.[Feb] 7,/62.

Dear Brother -

I have finished the school to-day. This letter goes on to speak of my success here, which has been very good - of being at the Agents this evening - of the pleasant times I have had whenever I have been visiting in the evening - It gives some hints about the training of my two little brothers to study, and concludes, Saturday, I have this morning, the pleasant feeling of a man who has tried hard to do his duty in a difficult position, and who has succeeded even better than he expected.

"REGISTER"

Mr. Isaac B. Choate  
Westbrook Me.

(89) J.B. Webber

Brunswick, Oct 14, 1861

Cousin Reubin -

Your kind letter although written a week ago, was postmarked the 11<sup>th</sup>. I received it the next day - Saturday - and I answer by return mail. This letter goes on to thank him for offering me a school which he had engaged, but does not intend to teach. It says that I shall gladly accept the chance, and asks many questions about how to obtain it. It concludes with some remarks about our family, and the folks at Westbrook. It concludes - Again thanking you for your favors, and hoping to hear from you as soon as possible,

Mr. Reubin B. Jordan,  
West Poland, Maine.

I remain,  
Your ob't servant,

(90) Jacob B. Webber.

Brunswick, Nov 5<sup>th</sup>/61.

→ Mr. Hicks, Dear Sir -

I received your letter last night, and I answer by return mail. This letter goes on to accept his school for next winter, for twenty-six dollars per month and board, which was the price at which his letter offered it. It concludes - Nothing in Providence [*sic*] preventing I shall be ready

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Nov. 1861.

to commence your school on the Monday after Thanksgiving which is the time you mentioned.

Mr. Joseph Hicks,  
W. Cumberland, Me.

Respectfully Yours,

(91) J.B. Webber.

Brunswick, Nov 5/61

→ Dear Uncle [*sic*] -

Thinking you would be glad to hear how we succeeded with Mr. Hicks, I take this time to write a few words. The letter goes on to tell him of Mr. Hicks offers, and of my accepting the one that leaves them to provide a boarding place. It has a few words of thanks for assistance, a



short statement of my condition here, and concludes, Hoping to see you all some time in Thanksgiving week, I remain,

As ever,

Mr. S. M. Brackett,  
Cumberland, Me.

J.B. Webber, (92)

Brunswick, Nov. 7/61

Dear Brother -

I received your letter and the five dollars, Monday night. This letter goes on to make arrangements about my coming home, to tell of my success in getting a school, sends my respects to all at home, mentions my having a bad cold just at present, and concludes - I am going to put all the clothes on the bed, it is evening recollect, put a long stocking round my neck and - retire.

Good night,

Mr. Asa W. Webber,  
Yarmouth Maine.

(93) J.B. Webber.

Dec 1861

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Cumberland, Dec 4, 1861.

→ My Dear Brother -

Mr. Eaton, with whom I board, is going to mill this morning, and I have a chance to sent this to Yarmouth. This letter goes on to tell them at home of my situation, and gives rather a dismal picture of my prospects; for six out of the last seven masters, have not kept their schools out, and I have got a hard time any way I can work. The letter tells them what they all tell me here, that the scholars all go to school to have a good time, and for nothing else. It speaks of the difficulties whatever course I take, tells when I shall go to Westbrook, and when I shall write about coming home, on some Saturday. It concludes - Remember me to Margaret, and to all at home.

Mr. Asa W. Webber,  
Yarmouth, Maine.

Good bye,

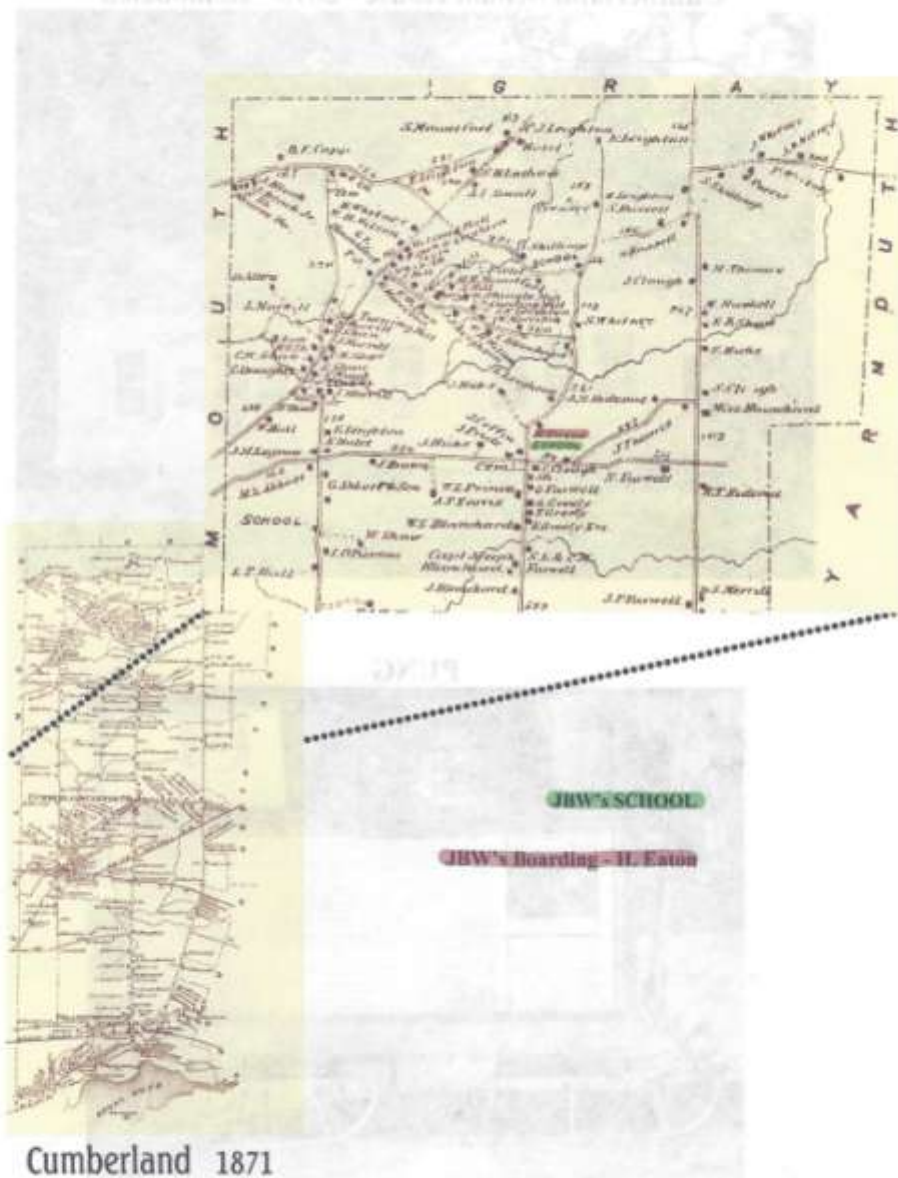
(94) J.B. Webber.

Cumberland, Dec. 14/61.

Dear Brother -

I am in good health, and pretty well contented. This letter goes on to speak of my school, of seeing Uncle Samuel, of going up to his

# ADDENDUM



**Cumberland School House –2013 - Remodeled**



**PUNG**



***Pung – a horse drawn sleigh, with a box-like body with runners***

things from my boarding-master, and from the agent. I was into the school-house to-day. It is a large high room with two stoves. Peltons Outline Maps hang against a pretty good blackboard. [*Cale Pelton was a 19th century American publisher of maps and educational material for schools and academies. He specialized in Outline Maps - that is maps without textual labels used to test and teach school children geography. He also compiled teacher's aids and geographic text books. Pelton was well regarded in his field for the size and beauty of his school wall maps as well as for the effectiveness of his textbooks. Pelton graduated from Yale University in 1840*] The windows let down at the top with pulleys, and on the whole it is a very good school-house. [ADDENDUM, p. 476 & 477]

Sunday 24 Attended church at Cumberland Center. The preacher was from Yarmouth and was decidedly "tonguey", and I think that is all. I saw Ferdinand Winslow who is teaching at Cumberland Center. I walked back with a man who lives in this district; and he told me, of his own accord, the same story that Mr. Rideout and the others did. In fact they are not at all backward, they tell it with great gusto. They know too, that I am the "same feller" that tried to keep Poplar Ridge school. I have good courage and strength, but I have made up my mind for a hard time.

Monday 25 Commenced School. I find the school just as it was represented, but I believe [sic] I can make friends with all of them, and, whatever may happen, I have not as yet found any one that I think I shall be afraid of. I let them take pretty much their own course to-day, and I find that it is inclined to be a noisy one.

Nov. 20 - Dec 6

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Saturday 30 No school to-day. Have had a pretty good school this week. They are a terrible noisy, unmannered set. There's [sic] no knowing how it will result. I went down to the Center, to visit Mr. Winslow's [sic] school, but he had no school to-day, and had gone home.

Sunday Dec. 1 1861 Attended Church.

Monday 2 things go on about the same.

Tuesday 3 I have found that they will not keep still, unless I do something more than stand them in the floor, or anything of that kind. I

"MEMOIR"

Nov 17 - 23

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Sunday Nov 17, 1861 Prof Smyth, very well in the forenoon. Prof Whittlesey in the afternoon. [ADDENDUM, p. 475] Went to prayer-meeting in the afternoon evening.

Monday 18 My choice in taking books from the Pencinian library, was the thirty-second, and in the Athenean, the thirty-sixth, so that I got about half the books I wanted.

Tuesday 19 Examination passed off very well. At half past twelve took the cars for home. Found the folks all well. Father and Asa busy in the pasture. Margaret and the children as usual.

Wednesday 20 Father went to get a man to plow; but he said he could not come and Father went to Yarmouth. Shortly he came, and as Father was absent, I went down to make up the crew, and so I helped plow almost all day.

Thursday 21 Thanksgiving Day spent the day pleasantly at home, with nothing in particular to distinguish it, except an "independent leisure".

Friday 22 As I had rubber boots Father got me to take up the water-fences. In the afternoon went to Yarmouth to get me a pair of thin boots.

→ Saturday 23 Father was going to Portland and he took me to my boarding-place; where we arrived a little before noon. I think I shall like my boarding-place; if they will set up late enough and will be content to let me read a greater part of the time for I believe [sic] that their conversation is not going to be very edifying. In the evening went over to Mr. Rideouts to get my certificate. He had heard of me, and had written my certificate. For formalities sake he asked me one question. He told me, in so many words that there was a set of big boys here who

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Nov 23 - 25

went to school merely to have a good time, that they never had learned anything, and probably never would, that if I did not let them do as they were a mind to, I should have trouble; and if I did, I should have no school; that the last winters school was good for nothing, and no teacher had ever satisfied, late years at least, both scholars and parents. I hear the same

came home, went up into the work-shop, and planed out a ferule. Mr. Eaton and I, went down to see "school-master Greely", this evening; and had a good time. His boys are about all the decent scholars there are in the school.

Wednesday 4 Mr. Eaton went to Yarmouth, and I wrote to Asa for him to carry the letter to the Office.[REGISTER, p. 310] I told him just how it was. That for the last seven years there has been but one master who has kept out his school, and that one did it by "soft soap and gass [sic]": those are things that I shall not, because I cannot use; and if I am smarter than the six teachers, and keep out the school, I shall yet have a hard, heavy, disagreeable, school. I feel pretty good courage, and shall make a hard try, for I appreciate well what is depending on my success. I have as yet faith in myself.

Friday 6 stopped some, (eight) of the large boys and had a talk with them. They seemed to talk fair. I thought I would ~~have~~ treat them like men, at least, for a time, till I can no longer. Went over

174 Dec 7 - 11  
to Squire Rideouts and had a pleasant time. I asked him about a writing school in the evening, and he said that he should be opposed to it, and he thought that two thirds of the dist. would be too. I dont [sic] care, I'd just as lives [?] they would, if they cannot blame me for it.

Saturday 7 have had a very still school to-day, but all the noisy ones were not there. In the afternoon, Mr. Jaynes, who is teaching in the dist. above here, came in, and stopped till night. In the evening went down to see the Agent as I have not called on him yet. Had a very pleasant time, though they wanted to talk contrary politics rather more than I wished. I varied the conversation however just as I pleased. The old Mr. Hicks, almost helpless from the Rheumatism [sic], was very sensible and talkative.

Sunday 8 Attended church at the Corner. In the evening Mr. school-master Greely came in, and talked till almost ten. He was going by, he said, and only called in for a minute.

Monday 9 a full school, and I have kept it pretty still. I think this week will decide the question, and I think, in my favor. Mr. Eaton and Wife went to Portland. I sent for some fools-cap paper, and he gave five cents more



attention to the singing. I get along well at my boarding place. Mr. Eaton has showed me his farm and wood-lot his house and cellar, and seems to prise [sic] my good opinion.

Monday 23 for the last fortnight the ground has been bare, the going good, and the weather

178 Dec 23 - 31  
very mild. This morning when I arose, it was snowing; and it has continued with little intermission through the day and evening. Had but thirty-three scholars to-day, so that I have had quite a resting season.

Tuesday 24 a furious storm, only fifteen scholars at school, most of them have to ~~come~~ nearly a mile to come, and when it storms badly, only a small part of them can be here.

Wednesday 25 no signs of Christmas here. They dont [sic] seem to know when it comes.

Thursday 26 received a letter from Asa. Kind and sociable, and enclosing five dollars to pay on my life insurance.

Fryday [sic] 27 the last days school for this week. I think the school has been getting better all the time. Uncl [sic] Samuel called at night, and I went down to the corner with him.

Saturday 28 a very windy, cold, uncomfortable, day. I studied and visited the school above here. Mr. Jaques has a small, still, well-ordered, school.

Sunday 29 attended church. Saw Mr. Gilmore who is teaching in Uncle Samuels district.

Monday 30 had a very still, and very full, school. Sent my life insurance premium to Mr Little.

Sunday 31 The scholars here, most of them, have never been accustomed to study, nor to keep good order. Those I find are very noisy if left alone, and I beleive [sic] very angry if spoken to. I try to be as kind and

heard from me. They had not heard of Mothers [sic] death. Scott is at Gorham at school. I should have liked to see him, but no matter. They had a summer school this year, which did not amount to anything. Mr. Fosdic has just been dismissed. Who will be their next Teacher no one knows. Mr. C. Thornton and some others with whom I was acquainted, have gone in company C, Maine 12th. Mr. Larrabees folks keep themselves, I beleive [sic], almost too much reserved from their neighbors. Mary did not seem so well and active as she was when I was here, though she professed good health. I never enjoyed visiting at any other place, so much as I do here, and the cause is almost a mystery to me. I find that the absense [sic] of any one, does not materially alter the impression; but everything seems perfect friendship, I say nothing that I regret, and hear nothing that I regret; and so I shall go there as often as I can.

Aunt Mary got me to copy an old record, and at seven I started for Mr [sic] Eatons. Hurt my foot within about a mile of there, and by the time I arrived was quite lame. Wrote to Asa giving an account of to-day ... [?]. [REGISTER, p. 310]

Dec 15 - 23

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Sunday 15 am lame; for the first time almost since I can remember. Had a to stay at home. Mr. Eaton brought me a letter from Asa. Folks are all smart, and seem to be getting along first-rate. Father has finished plowing, and sold his oxen for ten dollars more than he gave for them. Cyrus Eaton carried my letter to the office, as he returned to Mr. Ad Merrill, for whom he works.

Saturday 21 Saw Uncle Samuel as he returned from his Uncle Johns. Told him what I beleive [sic] is the fact, that the school is getting on finely. I believe that I am liked well by the scholars, and the school is much stiller than it was. Four evenings in this week I have been visiting at the houses of the parents. I have been well and sociably received, and if there were no deception in the world I should think I was liked extremely well, and as it is I think I am liked very well, and hope I shall be better.

Sunday 22 attended Church of course. In the afternoon especially, had a most excellent sermon. The new thousand-dollar- three-hundred-pipe Organ, gave most excellent music; but the performer bore on harder than I suppose he will after the people get willing to give part of their



## Membership Application

**2013 -2014**

CUMBERLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P O Box 82

Cumberland, ME 04021

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN or CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you your newsletter sent by email \_\_\_\_\_ or by USPS \_\_\_\_\_ ?

WINTER ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATES THAT THE WINTER ADDRESS APPLIES: \_\_\_\_\_

IF YOUR BUSINESS IS INTERESTED IN BEING A CORPORATE SPONSOR, PLEASE INDICATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues are \$10.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate membership is \$100.00. \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to the furnace fund \_\_\_\_\_

COMMITTEES:

501c3 \_\_\_\_\_ Old House \_\_\_\_\_ Program \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments \_\_\_\_\_ Special Events \_\_\_\_\_

Publicity \_\_\_\_\_

75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cumberland Historical Society \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks to SEVEE & MAHER , our corporate sponsor.

