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LOWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023, Volume 56, Number 2

The mission of the [Lowell Historical Society](https://www.lowellhistoricalsociety.org) is to collect, preserve, and publish materials related to Lowell and to encourage and promote the study of the city's history.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,
This is our second edition of the Society's eNewsletter. All members past and present with valid email addresses will receive this Newsletter, but **starting with the next edition only members paid through 2023 will receive the Newsletter.**

If you haven't done so PLEASE RENEW YOUR 2023 MEMBERSHIP TODAY.

Please remember to include your email with your membership renewal or send an email to membership@lowellhistoricalsociety.org so you won't miss out. The LHS does not provide email addresses to third parties. You will not get "spammed".

The Society will also send complimentary Newsletters to various local institutions, community leaders, and our corporate sponsors.

In addition to getting the Newsletter, your membership donation, no matter what size, contributes to our mission to collect, preserve, and publish materials related to Lowell and to encourage and promote the study of the city's history. The LHS will be able to send you timely email notices of our Programs, Exhibits, and Hybrid Zoom events.

Thank you for your continued support.

Phil Belanger



- ✓ Self-Guided Tour of Veterans' Graves: Civil War to Gulf War
 - ✓ Merrimack Manufacturing Co. begins operations - 1823
 - ✓ Annie Powell (1859 - 1952) - Photographer of Lowell
 - ✓ Annual Meeting and Program - Wed. May 10, 7:00 via Zoom
 - ✓ The Lowell Humane Society - 150 years of service
 - ✓ The Lowell Five Cent Savings Bank's "New" Building
 - ✓ From the bookshelf - *Northwest of Boston* by Stephen O'Connor
 - ✓ New England's Greatest Air-Meet and Exposition - 1928
 - ✓ Springtime in Lowell 100 years ago
 - ✓ New acquisitions
 - ✓ Events
-



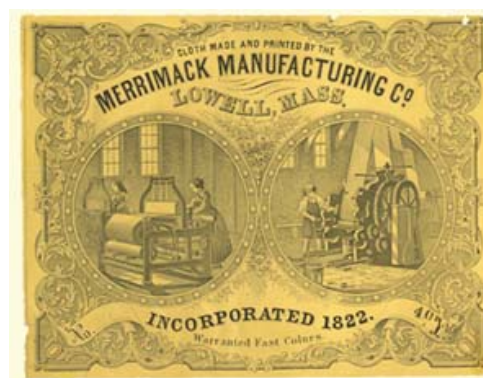
Self-Guided Tour of Veterans' Graves: Civil War to Gulf War

On **Saturday, May 20, 2023**, from 10 am to noon, the Lowell Cemetery will host a free self-guided tour of selected graves of veterans.

Participants may begin the tour at either cemetery entrance (Knapp Ave or Lawrence Street) where they will receive a tour map and then proceed at their own pace to the designated graves.

Cemetery volunteers will be at each of the graves to tell the stories of the veteran buried there and to answer questions about the cemetery.

As part of this event, the Lowell Historical Society will display within the cemetery military artifacts from its collection.



Countdown to the Bicentennial

Before Lowell was Lowell

1823 - Merrimack Manufacturing Co. begins operations

"The opening of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company . . . in 1823, marked the beginning of America's first industrial city.

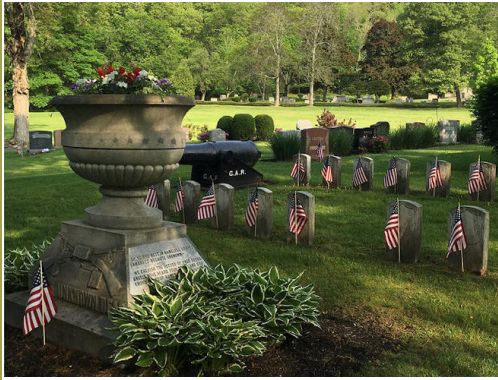
"The Merrimack was the largest of Lowell's mill complexes. By 1848, it employed over 2,000 workers and produced more than 7,000 miles of cloth each year. Like its parent company in Waltham, the Merrimack combined all of the steps of cloth production under a single roof. No longer were carding, spinning, and weaving performed in separate mills. This integrated manufacturing system succeeded on a large scale for the first time in Lowell.

"When it closed in 1958, the Merrimack was one of Lowell's last surviving mills. It was razed in the 1960s, a victim of the wrecking

For more information, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/even ts>.

ball."

- From the Lowell National Historic Park marker on French Street



Please click here for more information about the Merrimack Manufacturing Co.

Hiding in plain sight

In an "invisible" career, Annie Powell (1859-1952) captured over 2,500 beautiful images in the streets and mills of Lowell.



Annie Powell, age 68, seems posed as a lawyer crossing Lakeview Ave. in this "selfie" she set up for the Lowell City Engineers. A cable release hidden by the tracks or an assistant tripped the shutter. Click

SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Meeting and Program - Wednesday, May 10, 2023

The Annual Meeting of the Lowell Historical Society is scheduled for **Wednesday May 10, 2023 at 7p.m. in a Zoom format**. President Phil Belanger will conduct a brief business meeting that will include the report of the Treasurer and the report of the Nominating Committee. There will be an election for some at-large member seats.
A program will follow the business meeting -

Restoring photo master Annie Powell (1859-1952) from a Highlands basement, a forgotten church, and a famous cemetery

The recorder of beautiful Lowell streetscapes, mills and neighborhoods eluded historians. She didn't advertise or sign her work, even though her husband did. **Speaker Bernie Zelitch** combined curiosity, persistence and luck to make him believe she was a real person whose remarkable work and life was worthy of examination.

For more information please visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/>

information to access the meeting....

Topic: Lowell Historical Society Annual Meeting

Time: May 10, 2023 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84434975480?pwd=TndrREZLU0o2K2R6Vm1CR05CSG5LQT09>

Meeting ID: 844 3497 5480

Passcode: 895791



100 years ago . . .

The Lowell Five Cent Savings
Bank Moves To Its New Building

In 1854, a group including
Reverend Horatio Wood and Judge

Photo credit: Anthony Sampas

This is part 2 of a series appearing in this year's newsletters honoring 150 years of service of the Lowell Humane Society.

Nathan Crosby started a bank that would accept deposits as little as five cents.

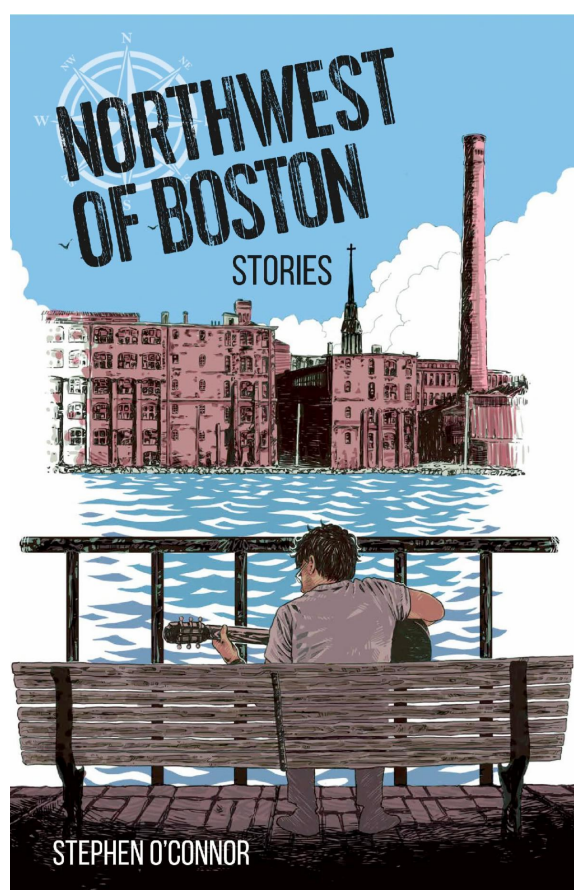
In its 69th year the bank moved to a "new" building on John Street that serves as its main office.

[Click here for Part #2 on the history of the Lowell Humane Society](#)

[Click here for more information on this historic building](#)

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

By Pauline M. Golec



The city has stories from historical annals and accounts to current newspaper articles. And now there is *NORTHWEST OF BOSTON* by Stephen O'Connor, master of the short story. This book, its attractive cover depicting the city's iconic river and mills, captures a "feels right" essence of Lowell. There are familiar local settings often with a little extra tidbit - "Cupples Square.....named for Lorne Cupples, a WWI soldier," and a passing reference to Arthur, famed long time bartender at the Old Worthen.

In addition to stories based in Lowell, readers are treated to a remembrance of Paris and a Lowellian's memorable time in Ireland after inheriting a house there.

Of course, the book's focus is on the stories' characters - the hardworking, the flawed seeking satisfaction or redemption, the heroic (Tony Dos Santos), the faithful (Agnes). One of my favorite characters is Tom Quinn.

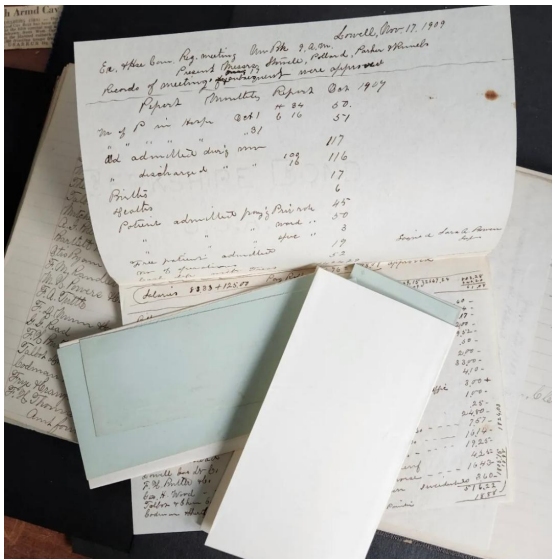
In "Blind in Darien," he is a teacher who, at least for a while, fights the good fight against distracting technology, indifference, and, yes, resistance.

Humor, often of the dark kind, is found in this book as are quoted lines of rich beautiful poetry.

Consider giving a copy of NORTHWEST OF BOSTON (published by Loom Press) to Lowellians in your life. They'll thank you for it.

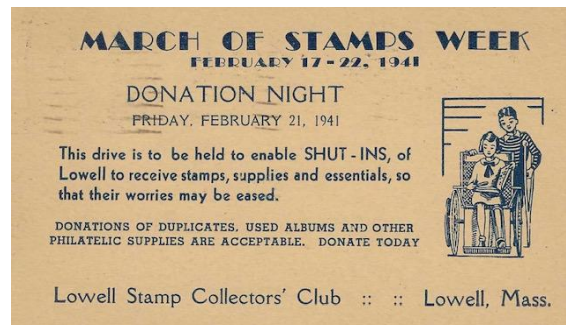
NEW ACQUISITIONS

- The Lowell Historical Society (LHS), over the years, has amassed an extensive collection of Lowell materials through the generosity of donors, who freely give their items to LHS for preservation and accessibility for the greater good. We seldom purchase items. However, from time to time, things come on the market that are unique and would be great additions to our collection. Due to the generosity of donors who have contributed to the memory of a loved one, the LHS has acquisition funds available to purchase unique items that support our mission of collecting, preserving, interpreting and sharing Lowell's rich history. Recently, we were able to acquire some intriguing items with those funds.



Lowell General Ledger and Assorted Documents

Hand written Journal, Record Book and Ledger from the Lowell General Hospital, containing records from 1905 - 1908. Includes Records of the Executive and House Committee of the Trustees of The Lowell General Hospital; Committees on Grounds, Buildings and Repairs, etc. 300 pages of Meeting Notes, Ledgers, Monthly Reports, Bills Paid, Payments received and more!



1941 — March of Stamps
postcard from Lowell Stamp
Collectors' Club Charity — Found in
Greenfield, NH



[Click here to read about and see more of our new acquisitions.](#)

The Westford Historical Society donated to LHS 13 photos of
"New England's Greatest Air-Meet and Exposition"

held at the Lowell Airport in June, 1928.

The photos were taken by Charles Hildreth (1879-1968)
of 25 Boston Road, Westford.

Many thanks to our sister organization the Westford Historical Society!



[Click here for the photos and more information about the Air-Meet and the Lowell Airport](#)

Springtime in Lowell - 100 years ago

THE WEATHER Fair, not much change in temperature tonight and Wednesday; local frosts tonight.	THE LOWELL SUN	6 O'CLOCK
ESTABLISHED 1878	LOWELL MASS. TUESDAY MAY 1 1923	14 PAGES TWO CENTS

Merrimack Runs Amuck

FLOODS CAUSE DAMAGE OF SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS

**Merrimack River a Raging Torrent,
Reaches Highest Flood Stage in 21
Years at Height of 9 Ft. Over Dam**

**Power Plants Menaced, Boott Mills Forced to Curtail Work,
Boulevard Under Water, Scores of Homes Isolated and
Beaver Brook Bridge Torn Away by Tremendous
Freshet—Crisis Believed Passed and Recession of Waters
Anticipated by Nightfall**



From the [The Lowell City Engineers Collection](#)

Read the past newsletters -

The 2005 - 2020 newsletters of the Lowell Historical Society are available online!

Click here to see the past newsletters

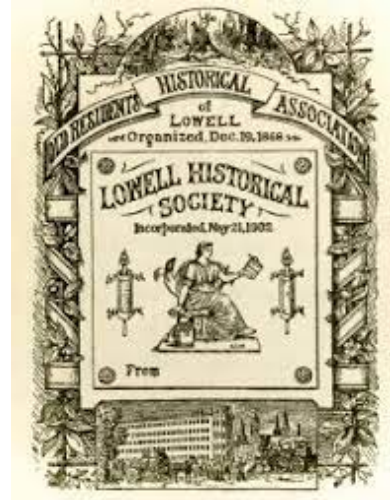


*** EVENTS ***

Wednesday May 10, 7:00 PM - Annual Meeting and Program via Zoom

Saturday, May 20, 10 am to noon, at the Lowell Cemetery - Self-Guided Tour of Veterans' Graves: Civil War to Gulf War

[Click here for more information about both of these events](#)



Become a member!

We welcome all of those interested in history and Lowell to join! Membership is open to the public and all contributions are tax-deductible.

[Click here for more information](#)

Thank you to our Corporate Donors who help to guarantee that Lowell's history, stories, and artifacts are maintained for future generations.





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