

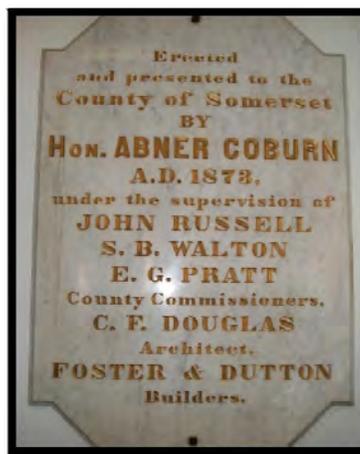
## PHILANTHROPY AND LEGACY

During his lifetime, Abner Coburn helped many people, especially the poor, as well as many charitable causes. He generously gave funds to help educational institutions such as Waterville Classical Institute, Colby University (now Colby College) and the Maine State College of Agriculture & Mechanic Arts (now the University of Maine at Orono). He served on Colby's Board of Trustees for 40 years, including as President. He also served as President of the Board of Trustees at Maine State College of Agriculture & Mechanic Arts.

In 1872, Abner Coburn erected and presented the Court House to Somerset County. This allowed Skowhegan to replace Norridgewock as the "shiretown" of Somerset County.



from stereoview



Courtesy of Kristen Washburn

He and his brother, Philander, donated a portion of the land for use as the South Cemetery in Skowhegan.

He gave Harry Haines his one-half ownership interest in the lot on which the Hotel Coburn was built, and Haines thereafter named the hotel in his honor.

He was secretary for an organized effort for foreign missions through the Bloomfield Baptist Church.

He donated the uniforms for the local militia group and they in turn honored him by calling themselves the Coburn Guards. The group was expertly drilled, wore handsome uniforms and could be seen at Skowhegan parades and events.

Through the Skowhegan Hall Association, later renamed the Coburn Hall Association, he built a large building on Water Street in downtown Skowhegan, with an auditorium that could accommodate 1200 people. He gave the Town of Skowhegan a perpetual lease on part of the building for Town purposes, including a Town Office and Selectmens' Offices. Town meetings and elections were also held there.

Upon his death, Abner Coburn bequeathed his fortune to not only his family, but also to many worthy causes as follows: (Note: \$100,000 then is worth about \$2.5 million today):

<b>Maine Insane Hospital</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>
<b>Maine General Hospital (Portland)</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Maine State College of Agriculture &amp; Mechanic Arts</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Colby University</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
<b>American Home Mission Society</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
<b>(with the condition that ½ of this amount to be used to help fund Freedmen’s schools)</b>	
<b>Wayland Seminary, Washington D.C.</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>
<b>American Baptist Missionary Union</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Maine Baptist Convention</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Waterville Classical Institute</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Houlton Academy</b>	<b>\$ 5,000</b>
<b>Maine Industrial School for Girls</b>	<b>\$ 5,000</b>
<b>Baptist Church &amp; Society in Skowhegan</b>	<b>\$ 18,000</b>
<b>Bloomfield Academy (to open the school free of tuition)</b>	<b>\$ 7,000</b>
<b>Trustees of Bloomfield Academy (to fund the library)</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>



from postcard

<b>Town of Skowhegan worthy poor</b>	<b>\$ 20,000</b>
<b>(1/2 to be expended by the Ladies Aid Society)</b>	
<b>Skowhegan Hall Association</b>	<b>\$ 15,000</b>
<b>Town of Skowhegan</b>	<b>a lot for a park on south side of Water Street, now known as Coburn Park)</b>

**Abner Coburn lived an incredible life and was very generous to Skowhegan, Somerset County, and the State of Maine. His life has been the subject of a book and some articles and his greatness is evident by having many places and things named in his honor. Here are a few:**

**Coburn Park, Skowhegan (originally considered to be too far from the village to be of much use)**



from postcard



from postcard



from postcard

**Coburn Park, Waterville, (now renamed Veterans Memorial Park)**

**Coburn Hall, Water Street, Skowhegan (housed some merchants, as well as, Town offices and an auditorium; it burned down in 1904)**



Courtesy of Skowhegan History House



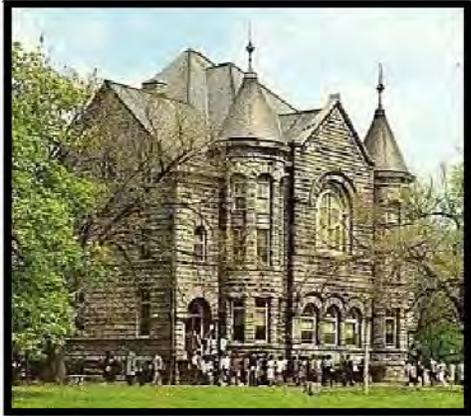
from postcard

**Coburn Classical Institute (it was originally in Waterville, but later moved to Vassalboro; it was formerly known as Waterville Classical Institute and was renamed in Abner Coburn's honor; later it became Oak-Grove Coburn and it now houses the Maine State Police Academy)**



from postcard

**Coburn Hall, University of Maine at Orono (initially housed the library, later housed the Departments of Agriculture and Natural History)**



from postcard

**Abner Coburn Hall, Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia (Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King have both spoken in the building)**

**Coburn Hall (now demolished, it once stood on the old Colby campus on College Avenue in Waterville)**



from postcard

**Hotel Coburn (on corner of Elm St. and Madison Ave. in Skowhegan; burned in 1918)**



from postcard



from postcard

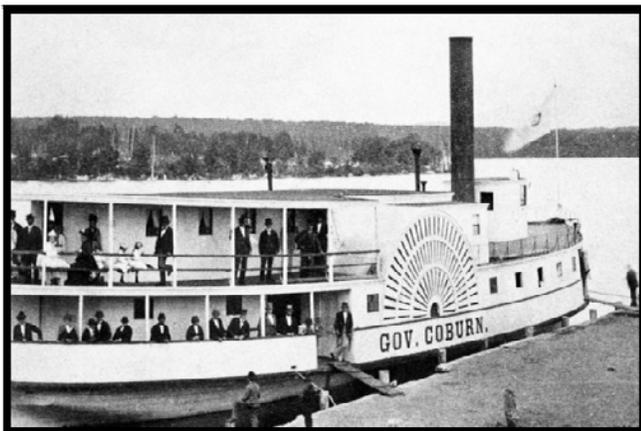
**Coburn Mountain (near Jackman, Maine; it was named after Abner and Philander Coburn and was formerly the site of Enchanted Mountain Ski Resort and today the summit is the highest groomed snowmobile trail in the State)**



from postcard



Courtesy of Coburn Summit Riders



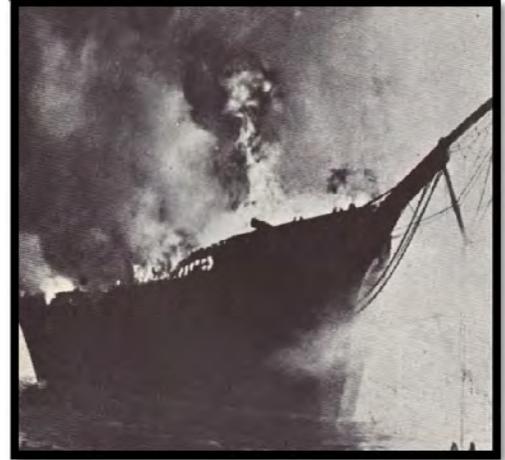
from ebay

**The Governor Coburn (steamboat used on Moosehead Lake from 1871 to 1895)**

**U.S.S. Abner Coburn (an international sailing ship that operated from 1882 to 1925 and then was burned and the metal salvaged; the ship is also the subject of paintings by famous artists)**



from State Library of Victoria collection



from Progress is fine, but it's gone on for too long website

**In 1875, a bust of Abner Coburn was permanently encased at the Somerset County Courthouse in Skowhegan. The bust was created by by Skowhegan sculptor, Edwin W. Marble.**



Courtesy of Kristen Washburn

**Governor Coburn, a Maine Central Railroad steam locomotive (placed in service in 1870)**

**Coburn Gore, Maine**

**Camp Coburn, Augusta (a Civil War Training Camp)**

**Coburn Township, North Dakota and Coburn County, North Dakota (now renamed Ransom County)**

**Abner Coburn's solid family values, high integrity and keen business skills allowed him to enjoy a lifetime of accomplishments, great wealth and philanthropy.**

**After Abner Coburn died in 1885, Governor Robie delivered a message commemorating Coburn to the Maine Legislature, "His life is a monument of great usefulness, of high public spirit and patriotism...Called to the office of Governor during the most trying period of the late war, he displayed firmness, sagacity and patriotism of the highest order. His life, character and achievements are an honor to Maine, and proud is the State that can claim the birth and citizenship of such a man."**

**Former U.S. Secretary of State and U.S. Congressman, James G. Blaine wrote of Coburn: "Governor Coburn was altogether a remarkable man. With only rudimentary training in early life, he has proved our most liberal and discriminating patron of classical education. With no gift for public speaking, he has constantly exerted a wise and beneficent influence on public opinion. He was, if humanity can ever attain perfection, an absolutely just man in all his dealings. And beyond the severe demands of justice, he was always kind and even generous to his fellow man. Singularly quiet and unobtrusive, the world had little knowledge of the constant flow of his charity, of the numberless good deeds which adorned his daily life."**

**In honor of all that Abner Coburn has done for the Town of Skowhegan and State of Maine and the exemplary life he lived, the Selectmen for the Town of Skowhegan have Proclaimed March 22<sup>nd</sup> forevermore to be ABNER COBURN DAY!**