# The Journey of Hannah (Watts) & Rebecca Weston

June 12th, 1775

The Hannah Weston Chapter for the Daughters of the American Revolution had published in 1925 a booklet which aptly describes the life and events of this area in the spring of 1775.

The heroic story of Hannah W. Weston and her sister-in-law, Rebecca Weston, brings up vividly before one the thrilling times in which they lived.

The events at Machias which lead up to the battle of the Margaretta are very well known to our area. Communications were very slow between the towns in 1775 so –“When this news of the arrival of British ships was brought to Chandler’s River (Jonesborough), it was quickly spread from house to hours, and the men responded in full force to what they knew was their country’s call. All who could leave their homes (about twenty in number) hastened without delay to join the forces at Machias, hastily equipping themselves with such meager ammunition as they had on hand, they gathered naturally, at the home of one who had always been a leader among them, Josiah Weston. There they quickly made arrangements for the journey of sixteen miles to Machias through the dense forests. They planned to blaze a trail for those who might join them later. It was part of Hannah Weston, with keen sense of the seriousness of the situation, to make a careful note of the number of men and the equipment. With characteristic bravery she helped the little band set off. Among them was her own husband, as well as her brother Samuel who, though only eighteen, was to take a valiant part on the morrow.”

“When Hannah made her survey of the ammunition with which the little party was equipped, she saw how inadequate the supply was and, she perceived that more power must be sent at once to Machias. Hastily collecting all the power must be sent at once to Machias. Hastily collecting all the power, lead an pewter which she and her sister-in-law, Rebecca could find, the two girls started eagerly on Monday, June 12, 1775 through what was practically an unbroken forest. It was to be a strange and rough journey with only a few blazed trees marked by the men who had gone before them. As the afternoon wore on, they made an error on nearing the Machias River and their journey was much lengthened. Hannah did her best to encourage the weary Rebecca.”

They traveled on but, Rebecca grew more and more exhausted and found the journey all she could stand without carrying her share of the powder. They were now at the site of Whitneyville today. Rebecca was nineteen and Hannah only seventeen and they were attempting to carry a load of thirty to forty pounds. Hannah took up the double load and they now continued their journey following the course of the river.

Together they hastened on to Machias, where they were welcomed at the first house, that of Gideon O’Brian. The family was only too glad to give the girls an opportunity to refresh themselves with food and rest.

The men had the happy news to tell of the capture of the Margaretta. Hanna and Rebecca received the generous words of appreciation from the admiring citizen, and twelve yards of camlet was given to them as a slight token of the warn appreciation of their share in the defense of Machias.

In her later years, Hannah saw great changes in the little town. She witnessed its incorporation on March 4, 1809 and Maine becoming a state in 1820. She lived on her homestead until her death at age 97 in 1855. The grateful citizens of these valley towns will never forget this characteristic incident of her courage and patriotism.

Here grave on the hill slope of her homestead still overlooks this small quiet town of the twentieth century, but her character still lives in the hearts and minds of all the people of Jonesboro and the surrounding area. For here they still exemplify this same Down East spirit of 1775. Here that burning sense of patriotism and determination for independence still exists to remind our governing powers that the old flame of self-reliance still is kindled and does erupt form time to time.

In this bi centennial year, many a Washington County native has resented the encroachment on the basic rights won by the American Revolution, and said, ‘They fought in 1775 for what they believed and we can continue to retain it in 1975, for if we don’t, then their battle and those since have all been in vain.” We pray that this flame will never go out.